

Synod15 - Final Report of the Synod of Bishops to the Holy Father Francis (24 October 2015), 24.10.2015

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Here is the text of the Final Report of the Synod of Bishops to the Holy Father Francis, at the end of the XIV Ordinary General Assembly (October 4 to 25 2015) on "The vocation and mission of the family in the Church and in the contemporary world".

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (18 November 1965)
AG Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Ad Gentes* (7 December 1965)
CCC Catechism of the Catholic Church (15 August 1997)

<i>CiV</i>	Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter <i>Caritas in Veritate</i> (29 June 2009)
<i>A.D</i>	Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, Instruction <i>Dignitas Connubii</i> (25 January 2005)
<i>DCE</i>	Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter <i>Deus Caritas Est</i> (25 December 2005)
<i>DeV</i>	Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter <i>Dominum et Vivificantem</i> (18 May 1986)
<i>GS</i>	Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution <i>Gaudium et Spes</i> (7 December 1965)
<i>And is</i>	Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter <i>Ecclesia de Eucharistia</i> (17 April 2003)
<i>EG</i>	Francis, Apostolic Exhortation <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i> (24 November 2013)
<i>EN</i>	Blessed Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation <i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i> (8 December 1975)
<i>EV</i>	Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter <i>Evangelium Vitae</i> (25 March 1995)
<i>FC</i>	Saint John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation <i>Familiaris Consortio</i> (22 November 1981)
<i>THE</i>	III Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, The pastoral challenges on the family in the context of evangelization, <i>Instrumentum Laboris</i> (24 June 2014)
<i>LF</i>	Francis encyclical <i>Lumen Fidei</i> (29 June 2013)
<i>LG</i>	Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution <i>Lumen Gentium</i> (21 novembre 1964)
<i>LS</i>	Francis, Encyclical <i>Praise You</i> ' (24 May 2015)
<i>MV</i>	Francis, Bubble <i>Misericordiae Vultus</i> (11 April 2015)
<i>NA</i>	Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree <i>Nostra Aetate</i> (28 October 1965)
<i>NMI</i>	Saint John Paul II, Apostolic Letter <i>Novo Millennio Ineunte</i> (6 January 2001)
<i>RM</i>	Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter <i>Redemptoris Missio</i> (7 December 1990)
<i>VS</i>	Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter <i>Veritatis Splendor</i> (6 August 1993)

INTRODUCTION

1. We Fathers, gathered in Synod around Pope Francis, thank him for having called us to reflect with him, and under his guidance, the vocation and mission of the family today. To Him we offer the fruit of our work with humility, aware of the limitations that it presents. However, we can say that we have constantly kept in mind the families of the world, with their joys and hopes, with their sorrows and anxieties. The disciples of Christ know that "nothing that is genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. Their community, in fact, is composed of men who, united in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of the Father, and received a message of salvation intended for all. Thus the Christian community feels truly and intimately linked with mankind and its history "(*GS*, 1). We thank the Lord for the generous fidelity of so many Christian families respond to their vocation and mission, even before obstacles, misunderstanding and suffering. These families should be the encouragement of the entire Church that united with her Lord and supported by the action of the Spirit, he knows he has a word of truth and hope to be addressed to all men. The recalled Pope Francis in the celebration which opened the last leg of this journey Synod dedicated to the family: "God has created the human being to live in sadness or to be alone, but for the happiness, to share paths with another person that is complementary [...]. It's the same pattern that Jesus [...] summarizes with these words: "From the beginning of creation [God] made them male and female; for this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh "(*Mk* 10.6 to 8; cf. *Jan.* 1.27; 2.24). " God 'unites the hearts of a man and a woman who love each other and unites them in unity and nell'indissolubilità. This means that the goal of married life is not only to live together forever, but love each other forever! Jesus thus restores the original order and the originating. [...] Only in the light of the madness of the availability of the Easter of Jesus will understand the folly of the gratuity of a unique conjugal love and *even unto death* "(Homily at the Opening Mass of the Synod, October 4, 2015).

2. Lap joys and trials, the family is the first and fundamental "school of humanity" (cf. *GS*, 52). Despite signs of a crisis of the family institution, in various contexts, the desire of the family remains alive among the younger generations. The Church, expert in humanity and true to its mission, announces with deep conviction the "Gospel of the family" received the Revelation of Jesus Christ and constantly taught by the Fathers, by the Masters of spirituality and the church's magisterium. The family takes to the path of the Church a special significance: "Such was the love that [God] has begun to walk with humanity, he began to walk with his people, until he reached the ripe time and gave the sign greater than his love: his Son. And where his son sent him? In a palace? In a city? Doing business owner? He sent in a family. God came into the world in a family. He could do so because the family was a family that had a heart open to love, had the door open "(Francis, Address to the Feast of Families, Philadelphia, September 27, 2015). Families today are sent as "missionary disciples" (cf. *EG*, 120). In this sense it is necessary that the family will rediscover as a subject essential for evangelization.

3. On the reality of the family, the Pope called to reflect the Synod of Bishops. "Already agree in unum around the Bishop of Rome is an event of grace, in which episcopal collegiality is manifested in a process of spiritual discernment and pastoral" (Francis, Address at the Prayer Vigil in preparation for the Extraordinary Synod on the family, October 4, 2014). Within two years it took place the Extraordinary General Assembly (2014) and the Ordinary General Assembly (2015), who have taken on the task of listening to the signs of God and of human history, in fidelity to the Gospel. The result of the first round Synod, to which the People of God has given his important contribution, merged in *Relatio Synodi*. Our dialogue and our reflections were inspired by a triple attitude. Listening to the reality of the family today, in the perspective of faith, with the complexity of its lights and its shadows. The look on Christ, to look back with renewed freshness and enthusiasm revelation, transmitted the faith of the Church. The confrontation in the Holy Spirit, to discern the ways in which to renew the Church and society in their commitment to the family founded on marriage between man and woman. The Christian who regards the family is really good news. The family, as well as urged to respond to today's challenges, is especially called by God to take ever new awareness of their missionary identity. The synodal assembly has been enriched by the presence of couples and families within a debate that concerns them directly. Preserving the precious fruit of the Assembly earlier, dedicated to the challenges on the family, we have turned their eyes to its vocation and mission in the Church and in the contemporary world.

PART I

THE CHURCH IN LISTENING TO THE FAMILY

4. The mystery of the creation of life on earth fills us with delight and amazement. The family based on marriage of man and woman is the magnificent and irreplaceable personal love that transmits life. Love can not be reduced to the illusion of time, love is not an end in itself, love seeks the reliability of a "you" staff. In the promise of mutual love, in good times and bad, love wants continuity of life, until his death. The fundamental desire to form the network loving, solid and intergenerational family looks significantly constant, beyond the cultural and religious boundaries and social change. In the freedom of the "yes" exchanged by man and woman for life, it is noted and we experience the love of God. For the Catholic faith marriage is sacred sign in which becomes effective for the love of God his Church. The Christian family is therefore part of the Church lived: a "domestic church".

The couple and life in marriage are not abstract realities, remain imperfect and vulnerable. Therefore it is always necessary to convert the will, to forgive and to start again. In our responsibility as pastors, we care about the lives of families. We want to listen to their reality of life and their challenges, and accompany them with the loving gaze of the Gospel. We want to give them strength and help them grasp their mission today. We wish to accompany them with great heart even in their concerns, giving them courage and hope from the mercy of God.

Chapter I

The family and anthropological context-cultural

The socio-cultural context

5. Docile to what the Holy Spirit asks of us, we get to today's families in their diversity, knowing that "Christ, the new Adam [...] fully reveals man to himself" (*GS*, 22) the .Volgiamo our attention to contemporary challenges that affect many aspects of life. We understand the orientation of the main anthropological-cultural changes, because of which individuals are less supported in the past by social structures in their love life and family. On the other hand, we must also consider the development of an exaggerated individualism that distorts family ties, giving precedence to the idea of a subject that is built according to their wishes, removing power to each bond. Think of the mothers and fathers, grandparents, brothers and sisters, relatives back, and the bond between two families that weave every wedding. We must not forget the lived reality: the strength of family ties continue everywhere to keep alive the world. It remains great dedication to the care of the dignity of every person - man, woman and child -, ethnic groups and minorities, as well as the rights of every human being to grow up in a family. Their loyalty is not honored unless it reaffirms a clear conviction of the value of family life, in particular by relying on the light of the Gospel in the different cultures. We are aware of the major changes that the anthropological cultural act determines all aspects of life, and we remain firmly convinced that the family is the gift of God, the place where he reveals the power of his saving grace. Even today God calls man and woman in marriage, accompanies them in their family life and is offered to them as a gift ineffable; is one of the signs of the times that the Church is called to scan and interpret "the light of the Gospel, so that, in language intelligible to each generation replies to the continual human questionings on the meaning of the present and future life and their mutual relations . We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its expectations, its longings and its often dramatic features "(*GS*, 4).

The religious context

6. The Christian faith is strong and alive. In some regions of the world, there is a significant drop in the incidence religious in the social space, which affects the lives of families. This approach tends to relegate the religious dimension in the private and family life, and risks reducing the witness and mission of the Christian family in the modern world. In social welfare advanced, people are likely to entrust all hopes to the frantic quest of social success and economic prosperity. In other regions of the world, the negative effects of an unjust world economic order to induce forms of religiosity exposed to sectarian extremism and radicals. We should also mention the movements motivated by political and religious fanaticism, often hostile to Christianity. Creating instability and spreading chaos and violence, they are the cause of so

much misery and suffering to the lives of families. The Church is called to accompany the religious lived in families to direct it towards an evangelical sense.

The anthropological change

7. In different cultures, the relationship and membership are important values that shape the identity of individuals. The family offers the opportunity to the person to be realized and contribute to the growth of others in the wider society. The same Christian and ecclesial identity received in Baptism blossoms in the beauty of family life. In today's society we observe a multiplicity of challenges that manifest themselves in greater or lesser extent in various parts of the world. In different cultures, many young people show resistance to the definitive commitments regarding relationships, and often choose to live with a partner or just to have casual relationships. The falling birth rate is a result of various factors, including industrialization, the sexual revolution, the fear of overpopulation, economic problems, the growth of a contraceptive mentality and abortion. The consumer society may also dissuade people from having children just to maintain their freedom and their way of life. Some Catholics have difficulty to lead their lives in accordance with the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage and the family, and to see that teaching the goodness of God's creative design for them. Marriages in some parts of the world decreased, while separations and divorces are not uncommon.

The cultural contradictions

8. The cultural conditions that affect families in large areas of the world show a mixed picture, even under the influence of mass media. On the one hand, marriage and family they enjoy high esteem and is still the dominant idea that the family represents the safe haven of the deepest feelings and most rewarding. On the other hand, the image sometimes has the traits of excessive expectations and consequently of mutual claims exaggerated. The stresses induced by an exaggerated individualistic culture of the possession and enjoyment generated within families dynamics of intolerance and aggression. You can also mention a certain vision of feminism, denouncing motherhood as an excuse for the exploitation of women and an obstacle to its full realization. Moreover, it reports the growing tendency to conceive of the generation of a child as a mere tool for self-affirmation, to achieve by any means.

A cultural challenge today of great importance emerges from the ideology of "gender" that denies the difference and reciprocity nature of man and woman. It envisages a society without gender differences, and empties the anthropological foundation of the family. This ideology leads educational projects and legislative guidelines that promote personal identity and emotional intimacy radically decoupled from biological diversity between male and female. Human identity is given to an option individualistic, also it changes over time. In the vision of faith, sexual difference human bears in himself the image and likeness of God (cf. *Gn* 1,26-27). "This tells us that not only the man took to himself the image of God, not only the woman taken in isolation is the image of God, but also the man and the woman, as a couple, they are the image of God. [...] We can say that without the mutual enrichment in this report - in thought and action, feelings and work, also in faith - the two can not even fathom what it means to be a man and woman. The modern and contemporary culture has opened new spaces, new freedoms and new depth to the enrichment of the understanding of this

difference. But he has also introduced a lot of doubts and skepticism. [...] The removal of the difference [...] is the problem, not the solution "(Francis, General Audience, April 15, 2015).

Conflicts and social tensions

9. The affective and spiritual quality of family life is seriously threatened by the proliferation of conflicts, from depletion, the migration processes. Violent religious persecution, particularly in respect of Christian families devastate whole areas of our planet, creating movements of exodus and huge waves of refugees that exert great pressure on the capacity of the land of welcome. The families tried as they are, very often, are forced eradication and conducted the threshold of dissolution. The fidelity of Christians to their faith, their patience and their attachment to the countries of origin is in all respects admirable. The efforts of all the political and religious leaders to promote and protect the culture of human rights is still inadequate. We must still respect the freedom of conscience and promote harmonious coexistence among all citizens on grounds of nationality, equality and justice. The weight of economic and social policies unfair, even in prosperous societies, impacting severely on child support, the care of the sick and the elderly. Dependence on alcohol, drugs or gambling is sometimes expression of these social contradictions and discomfort that follows the lives of families. The accumulation of wealth in few hands and the misuse of resources allocated to the project family increase the impoverishment of families in many regions of the world.

Fragility and strength of the family

10. The family, the fundamental human community, in today's cultural and social crisis, suffering painfully her weakening and its fragility. Nevertheless, it shows we can find in themselves the courage to confront the inadequacy and failure of official institutions towards the formation of the person, the quality of the social bond, the care of the most vulnerable. It is therefore particularly necessary to properly appreciate the strength of the family, to be able to support the fragility. Such strength lies in his capacity to love and to teach to love. As the wound can be a family, it can always grow from the love.

Chapter II

The family and the socio-economic

The family irreplaceable resource for society

11. "The family is a school for human enrichment [...] is the foundation of society" (*GS* , 52) .L'insieme of kinship, beyond the small family unit, offers valuable support in 'children's education, the transmission of values, in the custody of the links between the generations, in the enrichment of the spiritual life. While in some regions of the world this figure belongs to the culture profoundly widespread social, elsewhere it appears subject to attrition. Surely, in an age of heightened fragmentation of life situations, the many levels and facets of relations between family members and relatives are often the only points of connection with the origins and family connections. The support of the family network is even more necessary where labor mobility, migration, disaster and escape from their land for the stable parental unit.

Policies in favor of the family

12. The authorities responsible for the common good must be seriously committed against this primary social good which is the family. The concern that must guide the administration of civil society is to enable and promote family policies that support and encourage families, primarily those of modest means. You need to recognize more specifically the compensatory action of the family in the context of modern "welfare systems": it redistributes resources and performs tasks essential to the common good, helping to re-balance the negative effects of social inequity. "The family deserves special attention by those responsible for the common good, because it is the basic unit of society, which brings strong links of union that underpin human coexistence and, with the generation and education of his children, ensure the renewal and the future of society "(Francis, Address at the Airport of *El Alto* in Bolivia, July 8, 2015).

Loneliness and insecurity

13. In the cultural contexts in which relationships are made fragile by selfish lifestyles, loneliness is increasingly becoming a common condition. Often only the sense of God's presence supports people before this void. The general feeling of impotence in the face of a socio-economic oppressive, increasing poverty and the lack of job, imposes increasingly seeking work away from the family, in order to support it. This need causes long absences and separations that weaken relations and isolate family members from each other. It is the responsibility of the State to create the conditions and legislative work to ensure the future of young people and help them realize their project to found a family. Corruption, which undermines sometimes these institutions, deeply affects the confidence and the hope of future generations, and not only them. The negative consequences of this mistrust are evident: the demographic crisis the educational difficulties, fatigue in welcoming newborn life all'avvertire the presence of the elderly as a burden, to the spread of an emotional distress that sometimes results in aggression and violence .

Economy and equity

14. The packaging material and has an economic influence on family life in two ways: it can contribute to its growth and facilitate its bloom or hinder his blossoming, its unity and its coherence. The economic coercion exclude household access to education, cultural life and active social life. The current economic system produces various forms of social exclusion. Families suffer particularly issues concerning labor. The possibilities for young people are few and the job is very selective and precarious. The working days are long and often burdened by long transfer times. This does not help the family to meet among themselves and with their children, so as to feed their daily relations. The "growth equity" requires "decisions, programs, mechanisms and processes specifically aimed at a better distribution of income" (*EG*, 204) and an integral promotion of the poor becomes effective. Adequate family policies are needed for family life as a precondition for a future livable, harmonious and worthy.

Poverty and exclusion

15. Some religious and social groups to be found anywhere on the margins of society: immigrants, gypsies, homeless, refugees and displaced persons, according to the untouchables caste system and those who are suffering from diseases with social stigma. Even the Holy Family of Nazareth has experienced the bitter experience of marginalization and rejection (cf. *Lk 2.7*; *Mt 2.13* to 15). The word of Jesus on the final judgment, in this respect, is

unequivocal: "Every time you did this to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40). The current economic system produces new types of social exclusion, which often make the poor invisible in the eyes of society. The dominant culture and the media serve to exacerbate this invisibility. This is because "in this system the man, the human person has been removed from the center and has been replaced by something else. Because it is an idolatrous worship of money. Because it is global indifference "(Francis, Address to the world meeting of popular movements, 28 October 2014). In this context, particular concern the plight of children: innocent victims of exclusion, making them true "social orphans" and tragically marks them for life. Despite the enormous difficulties they face, many poor and marginalized families strive to live with dignity in their daily lives, relying on God who does not disappoint and does not abandon anyone.

Ecology and family

16. The Church, thanks to the efforts of the papal magisterium, calls for a profound rethinking of the orientation of the world system. In this perspective, working to develop a new ecological culture: a thought, a policy, an educational program, a lifestyle and a spirituality. Since everything is intimately connected, as Pope Francis Encyclical *praise be yours'*, it is necessary to explore aspects of an "integral ecology" that includes not only environmental, but also human, social and economic development sustainable and caring. The family, which is part of a significant human ecology, should be adequately protected (cf. John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 38). Through the family we belong to the whole of creation, we contribute specifically to promote ecological care, we learn the meaning of the body and the language of loving male-female differences and work together to design of the Creator (cf. *LS*, 5, 155) . The awareness of all this requires a real conversion to be implemented in the family. In it "the first habits you cultivate love and care for life, such as the proper use of things, the order and cleanliness, respect for the local ecosystem and the protection of all creatures. The family is the place of integral formation, which unfold the different aspects, intimately related to each other, of personal maturity "(*LS*, 213).

Chapter III Family, inclusion and society

Seniors

17. One of the most serious and urgent needs of the Christian family is to preserve the link between generations for the transmission of the faith and the fundamental values of life. Most families respects the elderly, surrounding them with affection and treats them a blessing. A special appreciation goes to associations and family movements that operate in favor of the elderly, under the spiritual and social, in particular in collaboration with the priests in care of souls. In some contexts, the elderly are perceived as an asset by ensuring stability, continuity and the memory of families and society. In highly industrialized societies, where their number is increasing while the birth rate decreases, they risk being perceived as a burden. On the other hand the care that they require often put a strain on their loved ones. "The elders are men and women, fathers and mothers who were before us on our own street, in our own home, in our daily battle for a dignified life. They are men and women from whom we have received much. Elder is not an alien. Elder us: soon, among much, inevitably anyway, even if we do not

think. And if we do not learn to be nice to the elderly, so treat us "(Francis, General Audience, March 4, 2015).

18. The presence of grandparents in the family deserves a special attention. They are the link between the generations, and ensure a psycho-affective through the transmission of traditions and habits, values and virtues, where the youngest can recognize their own roots. Moreover, the grandparents often work with their children in economic, educational and transmission of the faith to their grandchildren. Many people may find that their grandparents owe their initiation into the Christian life. As the Book of Sirach: "Do not disregard the discourse of the aged, for they themselves learned from their fathers; from them you will learn the discernment and how to respond in time of need "(*Sir* 8,9). We hope that in the family, over successive generations, faith is communicated and preserved as a precious heritage for the new families.

Widowhood

19. Widowhood is a particularly difficult for those who lived through the choice bed and family life as a gift. However, it presents to the eye of faith different possibilities to be exploited. The moment you are living this experience, some show to be able to pour their energies with even more dedication on their children and grandchildren, in this expression of love finding a new educational mission. The void left by the deceased spouse, in a sense, is filled by the love of family that enhance people widows, allowing them to keep so even the precious memory of his marriage. Those who can not count on the presence of relatives of fun and from whom to receive affection and proximity, should be supported by the Christian community with particular attention and availability, especially if you are destitute. The widowers can celebrate a new sacramental union without detracting from the value of the previous marriage (cf. *1 Cor* 7:39). At the beginning and in the development of its history, the Church has expressed special attention towards widows (cf. *1 Tim* 5.3 to 16), which has even set up the "*ordo viduarum*" which might now be restored.

The last stage of life and death in the family

20. The illness, injury or old age leading to death have an impact on the whole family life. The experience of mourning becomes especially heartbreaking when the loss concerns small and young. This painful experience requires special pastoral attention also through the involvement of the Christian community. The enhancement of the final phase of life is now all the more necessary the more you try to remove in any case the time of death. The fragility and dependence of the elderly are sometimes unfairly exploited for mere economic advantage. Many families tell us that you can face the last stages of life enhancing the sense of fulfillment and integration of all existence in the Paschal Mystery. A large number of older people is welcomed into church structures where they can live in a peaceful and family on the material and spiritual. Euthanasia and assisted suicide are serious threats to families worldwide. Their practice is legal in many states. The Church, while firmly opposes these practices, feels obliged to help families who take care of their elderly and sick members, and to promote in every way the dignity and worth of the person until the natural end of life.

People with special needs

21. A special look should be addressed to the families of persons with disabilities, where the handicap, which bursts into life, generates a challenge, deep and unexpected, and upsets the balance, desires, expectations. This causes mixed emotions and difficult decisions to manage and process, while imposing duties, urgencies and new responsibilities. The familiar image and the entire life cycle are deeply troubled. They deserve great admiration families who accept with love the ordeal of a disabled child. They give to the Church and to society a valuable witness of fidelity to the gift of life. The family will be able to discover, together with the Christian community, new gestures and languages, forms of understanding and identity, in the way of welcome and care of the mystery of fragility. People with disabilities constitute for the family a gift and an opportunity to grow in love, in mutual aid and unity. The Church, God's family, want to be cozy home for families with disabled people (cf. John Paul II, Homily for the Jubilee of the community with disabilities, December 3, 2000). It works to support their relationship and family education, and offers ways of participation in the liturgical life of the community. For many disabled abandoned or left alone ecclesial institutions are often the only host family. To them, the Synod expresses deep gratitude and deep appreciation. This integration process is more difficult in societies where the stigma and prejudice persists - even theorized in key eugenics. By contrast, many families, communities and ecclesial movements discover and celebrate the gifts of God in people with special needs, particularly their unique communication skills and aggregation. Special attention should be paid to disabled people who outlive their parents and the wider family who supported them throughout life. The death of those from which they were loved and that they loved them particularly vulnerable. The family that agrees with the eyes of faith that people with disabilities be able to recognize and guarantee the quality and value of every life, with his needs, his rights and his opportunities. It will encourage care and services, and promote the company and affection, at every stage of life.

Unmarried people

22. Many people who live without marriage not only are devoted to their family of origin, but often make great services in their circle of friends, in the ecclesial community and in professional life. Nevertheless, their presence and their contributions are often overlooked, and this gives them a sense of isolation. Among them, quite often, you can be found noble motives that engage them fully in art, science and for the good of humanity. Many, then, put their talents at the service of the Christian community in the name of charity and volunteering. Then there are those who do not marry because they have given their lives for love of Christ and neighbor. Their dedication, the family, the Church and society, it is very glorious.

Migrants, refugees, persecuted

23. Of particular note is the pastoral effect of migration on the family. It affects, in different ways, entire populations, in different parts of the world. The Church has had in this area a major role. The need to maintain and develop this gospel witness (cf. *Mt* 25:35), is today more urgent than ever. The history of mankind is a history of migrants: this truth is inscribed in the life of peoples and families. Even our faith makes this clear: we are all pilgrims. This belief should inspire in us understanding, openness and responsibility and the challenge of migration, much of that experienced with suffering, how much of that thought as an opportunity for life. Human mobility, which is the natural historical movement of peoples, can bring enrichment time for the family to emigrate since the country that welcomes. Another thing is the forced

migration of families, resulting from situations of war, persecution, poverty, injustice, marked by the vicissitudes of a journey that often puts lives at risk, traumatizes people and destabilize families. The accompaniment of migrants requires a specific pastoral families in migration, but also to members of the families remained in their places of origin. This must be implemented in accordance with their cultures, human and religious formation from which they come, the spiritual richness of their rites and traditions, including through a specific pastoral care. "It is important to look not only to migrants according to their status as regular or irregular, but above all as people who, protected in their dignity, can contribute to the welfare and progress of all, especially when they take a responsible duties to of those who receive them, observing with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of their host country, obeying its laws and contributing to his charges' (Francis, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2016, September 12, 2015). Migrations are particularly dramatic and devastating to families and individuals when they place outside the law and are supported by international networks of human trafficking. The same is true when involving women or unaccompanied children, forced to longer stays in places of passage, in refugee camps, where it is impossible to start a process of integration. Extreme poverty and other situations of disintegration induce sometimes even families to sell their children for prostitution or for organ trafficking.

24. The encounter with a new country and a new culture is made all the more difficult when there are no conditions of genuine warmth and acceptance, while respecting the rights of all and a peaceful and fraternal coexistence. This task directly concerns the Christian community, "the responsibility to provide hospitality, solidarity and assistance to refugees is primarily the local Church. It is called to incarnate the demands of the Gospel, reaching out without distinction towards these people in their time of need and loneliness "(Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* and Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Refugees, a Challenge to Solidarity , 26). The sense of disorientation, the nostalgia for lost origins and difficulties of integration show today, in many contexts, not to be overcome and reveal new suffering in the second and third generation migrant families, fueling phenomena of fundamentalism and violent rejection by of the host culture. A valuable resource for overcoming these difficulties is revealed the meeting between families, and a key role in the processes of integration is often done by women, by sharing the experience of growth of their children. In fact, even in their precarious situation, they bear witness to a culture of family love that encourages other families to welcome and protect life, by practicing solidarity. Women can pass on to future generations the living faith in Christ, that he incurred in the difficult experience of migration and they have been strengthened. The persecution of Christians, as well as those of ethnic and religious minorities, in many parts of the world, especially in the Middle East, are a big test: not only for the Church, but also for the entire international community. Every effort should be supported to facilitate the stay of families and Christian communities in their native lands. Benedict XVI said: "A Middle East with little or no Christian is no longer the Middle East, as Christians share with other believers so particular identity of the region" (Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in the Middle East* , 31).

Some unique challenges

25. In some societies still maintain the practice of polygamy; in other contexts remains the practice of arranged marriages. In countries where the presence of the Catholic Church is a minority are many mixed marriages and disparity of cult, with all the difficulties they entail with regard to the legal form, the Baptism, the education of children and mutual respect from the

point of view the diversity of faith. In these marriages may exist the danger of relativism or indifference, but there may also be a chance to promote the spirit of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue in a harmonious co-existence of communities living in the same place. In many contexts, and not only Western, is spreading widely the practice of living together before marriage or even that of cohabitation not geared to take the form of an institutional bond. Added to this is often a civil legislation that undermines marriage and the family. Because of the secularization, in many parts of the world, the reference to God is greatly diminished and the faith is no longer socially shared.

The children

26. Children are a blessing from God (cf. *Gn* 4,1). They must be in first place in the family and social life, and constitute a priority for pastoral activity of the Church. "In fact, how children are treated can be judged now, not only morally but also sociologically, it is a free society or a slave society of international interests. [...] The children remind us [...] we're always children [...] .And this always brings us back to the fact that life does not succeed we given us but we received it "(Francis, General Audience, March 18, 2015). However, children often become the subject of contention between parents and they are the real victims of family lacerations. Children's rights are neglected in many ways. In some areas of the world, they are considered a real commodity, treated workers as cheap, used to make war, the subject of all kinds of physical and psychological violence. Migrant children are exposed to various types of suffering. Sexual exploitation of children is then one of the most scandalous and perverse of the present society. In societies crossed by violence due to war, terrorism or the presence of organized crime, they are growing family situations degraded. In big cities and their hinterland is worsening dramatically the so-called phenomenon of street children.

The woman

27. She has a crucial role in the life of the individual, family and society. "Every human life has a mother, and almost always has her very existence of their next of human and spiritual formation" (Francis, General Audience, January 7, 2015). The mother keeps the memory and the sense of birth for a lifetime: "But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart" (*Lk* 2,19.51). It remains true, however, that the status of women in the world is subject to large differences arising primarily from socio-cultural factors. The dignity of women needs to be defended and promoted. It is not simply a problem of resources, but of a different cultural perspective, as highlighted by the plight of women in many late developers. In many contexts, still, being a woman provokes discrimination: the gift of motherhood is valued rather than penalized. On the other hand, be sterile for a woman, in some cultures, it is a condition discriminating socially. Nor should we forget the growing phenomena of violence of which women are victims within the family. The exploitation of women and violence on their bodies are often linked to abortion and forced sterilization. Added to this is the negative consequences of practices related to procreation, which the surrogate mother or the market of gametes and embryos. The emancipation of women requires a rethinking of the duties of the spouses in their reciprocity and common responsibility for family life. The desire for a child at any cost has not resulted in happier family relations and strong, but in many cases has actually exacerbated the inequality between women and men. It can contribute to the social recognition of the role of women a greater appreciation of their responsibilities in the Church: their involvement in

decision-making, their participation in the government of some institutions, their involvement in the formation of ordained ministers.

Man

28. The man plays an equally decisive role in family life, with particular reference to the protection and support of the wife and children. Model of this figure is St. Joseph, the just man, who in the hour of danger, "took the child and his mother by night" (*Mt* 2:14) and brought them to safety. Many men are aware of the importance of their role in the family and live with the qualities peculiar dell'indole male. Father absence marks severely family life, raising children and their integration into society. His absence may be physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual. This deficiency deprives children of an appropriate model of paternal behavior. The increasing use of women working outside the home has not found adequate compensation for a greater commitment of man in the home. In today's context sensitivity of man to the task of protecting the wife and children from all forms of violence and degradation it has weakened. "The husband - says Paul - is to love his wife" as their own bodies "(*Eph*5:28); love her as Christ "loved the Church and gave himself for it" (v. 25). But ye husbands [...] you understand this? Love your wife as Christ loves the Church? [...] The effect of this radicalism of devotion asked the man, for the love and the dignity of women, following the example of Christ, it must have been enormous, the Christian community itself. This seed of the new gospel, which restores the original dedication of reciprocity and respect, has matured slowly in the story, but eventually prevailed "(Francis, General Audience, May 6, 2015).

Young people

29. Many young people continue to view marriage as the great yearning of their life and the project of their own family as the realization of their aspirations. They take practice, however, different attitudes with regard to marriage. Often they are induced to postpone the wedding for economic problems, work or study. Sometimes for other reasons, such as the influence of ideologies that devalue marriage and family, the experience of failure of other couples that they do not want to risk, the fear towards something that they consider too big and sacred, social opportunities and economic benefits arising from cohabitation, a purely emotional and romantic conception of love, fear of losing their freedom and independence, the rejection of something conceived as institutional and bureaucratic. The Church looks with apprehension to the distrust of many young people towards marriage, and suffers from the haste with which many faithful decide to put an end to marital commitment instaurarne another. Young people should be encouraged to not hesitate baptized before the wealth that their projects of love procures the sacrament of marriage, the strong support they receive from the grace of Christ and the opportunity to participate fully in the life of the Church. It is therefore necessary to distinguish more carefully the motivations of renunciation and discouragement. Young people can gain greater confidence in the choice double thanks to those families who, in the Christian community, offering them the example of a reliable witness durable.

Chapter IV family, affection and life

The importance of emotional life

30. "He who wishes to give love must also receive a gift. Of course, man can - as the Lord tells us - become a source from which rivers of living water (cf. *Jn* 7,37-38). Yet to become such a source, one must constantly drink anew from the original source, which is Jesus Christ, from whose pierced heart flows the love of God (cf. *Jn* 19, 34) "(*DCE*, 7). The need to take care of themselves, to know interiorly, to live better in tune with their emotions and feelings, to seek emotional relationships of quality, must be open to the gift of love of others and the desire to build reciprocity creative, empowering such as family and solidarity. The challenge for the Church is to help couples in the maturation of the emotional dimension and emotional development through the promotion of dialogue, of virtue and trust in the merciful love of God. The full commitment of dedication required in Christian marriage, is a strong antidote to the temptation of an individual existence turned in on itself.

Training to give themselves

31. The style of family relationships accounts for a primary affective formation of the younger generation. The speed with which you carry out the changes of contemporary society makes it harder to the accompaniment of the person in formation of affection for his maturation. It also requires appropriate pastoral action, rich in depth knowledge of Scripture and Catholic doctrine, and with appropriate educational tools. An appropriate knowledge of the psychology of the family will help it to be transmitted effectively to the Christian vision: educational work is started already with the catechesis of Christian initiation. This training will take care to make appreciable the virtue of chastity, designed to supplement the affections that favors the gift of self.

Fragility and immaturity

32. In today's world there is no lack cultural tendencies that seek to impose a sexuality without limits that you want to explore all sides, even the more complex ones. The issue of emotional fragility is very timely: a narcissistic affectivity, unstable and changing does not help the person to achieve greater maturity. They should be denounced firmly: the prevalence of pornography and commercialization of the body, also favored by a distorted use of the internet; the forced prostitution and exploitation. In this context, couples are sometimes uncertain, hesitant and struggling to find ways to grow. Many are those who tend to remain in the primary stages of emotional and sexual life. The couple crisis destabilizes the family and can go through separation and divorce, to have serious consequences on adults, children and society, weakening the individual and social ties. The population decline, due to anti-birth mentality and promoted by global policies of "reproductive health", threatens the link between generations. This is also a generalized economic impoverishment and loss of hope.

Technical and human procreation

33. The biotechnology revolution in the field of human procreation has introduced the ability to manipulate the generative act, making it independent of the sexual relationship between man and woman. In this way, human life and parenthood have become reality modular and separable, subject mainly to the wishes of individuals or pairs, not necessarily heterosexual and regularly conjugated. This phenomenon occurred in recent times as a novelty on the scene of humanity, and is gaining increasing popularity. This has profound implications for the dynamics of the relationships in the structure of social life and in legal systems, which intervene for

groped to regulate practices already in place and different situations. In this context the Church feels the need to say a word of truth and hope. Necessary to start from the belief that man comes from God and lives constantly in his presence: "Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves" the creative action of God "and it remains forever in a special relationship with Creator, its only end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one, under any circumstance, claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being "(Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction Donum vitae* , Introd., 5; cf. John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* , 53).

The challenge for the pastoral

34. A reflection that can reproduce the big questions about the meaning of being human, finds fertile ground in the deepest longings of humanity. The great values of marriage and the Christian family are looking through that human existence in a time marked by individualism and hedonism. Must welcome people with understanding and sensitivity in their concrete existence, and learn to support the search for meaning. Faith encourages the desire for God and the desire to feel fully part of the Church also in those who have experienced failure or is in the most difficult situations. The Christian message has always within it the reality and dynamics of mercy and truth, which converge in Christ: "The first truth of the Church is Christ's love. Of this love, which leads to the forgiveness and the gift of self, the Church is servant and mediator with men. Therefore, where the Church is, there must be evidence of the mercy of the Father "(*MV* , 12). In training to married and family life, pastoral care will take into account the diversity of concrete situations. On one hand, we must promote pathways to ensure the training of young people for marriage, on the other, must accompany those who live alone or without presenting a new family, prejudice frequently linked to the family of origin. Even couples who can not have children should be given special pastoral attention by the Church, which helps them to discover the plan of God on their situation, at the service of the whole community. Everyone needs a look of understanding, taking into account that situations away from church life are not always desired, often induced and sometimes suffered. In the perspective of faith there are excluded: all are loved by God and are important to pastoral activity of the Church.

PART II THE FAMILY IN GOD'S PLAN

35. The discernment of the vocation of the family in the variety of situations that we encountered in the first part, needs a sure direction for the journey and the accompaniment. This compass is the Word of God in history, culminating in Jesus Christ "Way, Truth and Life" for every man and woman who constitute a family. So we ask ourselves in listening to what the Church teaches about the family in the light of Sacred Scripture and Tradition. We believe that this Word to the expectations of the deepest human love, truth and mercy, and awakenings potential gift and hospitality also in the hearts broken and humiliated. In this light, we believe that the Gospel of the family begins with the creation of man in the image of God who is love and called to love the man and woman according to his likeness (cf. *Gn* 1,26-27) . The vocation of marriage and family communion of love and life continues in all stages of the design of God despite the limitations and sins of men. This vocation is founded from the beginning in Christ the Redeemer (cf. *Eph* 1.3 to 7). He restores and perfects the origins of the marriage covenant (cf. *Mk*10.6), heals the human heart

(cf. *Jn* 4:10), gives him the ability to love as He loves the Church and offered for it (cf. *Eph* 5:32).

36. This vocation receives its form ecclesial and missionary from the sacramental bond that consecrates the indissoluble conjugal relationship between husband and wife. The exchange of consent, that the establishing means for the couple's commitment to mutual giving and receiving, total and definitive, in "one flesh" (*Gn* 2:24). The grace of the Holy Spirit is the union of the couple a living sign of the bond between Christ and the Church. Their union becomes, throughout the course of life, a source of many thanks: fertility and witness, healing and forgiveness. The wedding takes place in the community of life and love, and the family becomes the evangelizer. The bride and groom, about his disciples, are accompanied by Jesus in the way to Emmaus, recognize him in the breaking of bread, they return to Jerusalem in the light of his resurrection (cf. *Lk* 24.13 to 43). The Church announces to his family link with Jesus, by virtue of the Incarnation by which He is part of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Faith recognizes the indissoluble bond of spouses a reflection of the divine Trinity, which reveals itself in the unity of truth and mercy proclaimed by Jesus. The Synod makes interpreter of the witness of the Church, which addresses the people of God a clear word the truth of the family according to the Gospel. No distance prevents the family to be reached by this mercy and supported by this truth.

Chapter I

The family in the history of salvation

Divine pedagogy

37. Since the order of creation is determined by the orientation to Christ, we must distinguish without separating the different degrees by which God communicates to humanity the grace of the covenant. Because of divine pedagogy, that the design of creation is accomplished in that of redemption through successive stages, we need to understand the novelty of the sacrament of marriage in continuity with the natural marriage of the origins, based on the order of creation. In this perspective it should understand the way of God's saving even in the Christian life. Because everything was done through Christ and in view of Him (cf. *Col* 1:16), Christians are "delighted to discover and ready to respect those seeds of the Word that you are hidden; let them look to the profound transformation that occurs among the nations" (*AG*, 11). The incorporation of the believer into the Church by baptism is done entirely with the other sacraments of Christian initiation. In the domestic Church which is his family, he takes the "dynamic process, which advances gradually with the progressive integration of the gifts of God" (*FC*, 9), by ongoing conversion to the love that saves us from sin and gives fullness of life. In the challenges of the contemporary society and culture, faith in Jesus Christ turns his gaze in contemplation and adoration of his face. He looked to the women and men who met with love and tenderness, accompanying their steps with truth, patience and mercy, in announcing the requirements of the Kingdom of God. "Every time we go back to the source of the Christian open new paths and possibilities unthinkable" (Francis, Address at the Prayer Vigil in preparation for the Synod on the family, on Oct. 4, 2014).

The icon of the Trinity in the family

38. Scripture and Tradition are opening access to a knowledge of the Trinity is revealed with family traits. The family is the image of God "in his innermost mystery, is not solitude, but a family, since it has in himself fatherhood, sonship and the essence of the family that is love" (John Paul II, Homily at S . Mass at Palafox Seminary of Puebla de Los Angeles, January 28, 1979). God is a communion of persons. In baptism, the voice of the Father designated Jesus as his beloved Son, and in this love we are given to recognize the Holy Spirit (cf. *Mk* 1,10-11). Jesus, who has reconciled all things in himself and has redeemed us from sin, not only reported the marriage and the family to their original form, but has also raised marriage to the sacramental sign of his love for the Church (cf. *Mt* from 19.1 to 12; *Mk* 10,1-12; *Eph* 5.21 to 32). In the human family, gathered by Christ, it has returned the "image and likeness" of the Holy Trinity (cf. *Gen* 1:26), a mystery from which flows all true love. Christ, through the Church, marriage and the family they receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, to bear witness to the Gospel of God's love to the fulfillment of the Alliance in the last day at the wedding feast of the Lamb (cf. *Rev* 19 9; John Paul II, Catechesis on Human Love). The covenant of love and fidelity, of which lives the Holy Family of Nazareth, illuminates the principle which gives form to every household, and enables it to better deal with the vicissitudes of life and history. On this basis, every family, despite its weakness, can become a light in the darkness of the world. "Here we understand the way of life in the family. Nazareth reminds us that what the family is, what the communion of love, its austere and simple beauty, its sacred and inviolable character; help us to see how sweet and irreplaceable education in the family, teach us its natural function in the social order "(Paul VI, Discourse at Nazareth, January 5, 1964).

The family in the Holy Scriptures

39. The man and woman, with their love fruitful and generative, continue the creative work and collaborate with the Creator in the salvation through the succession of genealogies (cf. *Gen* 1.28; 2.4; 9,1.7 ; 10; 17,2.16; 25,11; 28,3; 35,9.11; 47.27; 48.3 to 4). The reality of marriage in its exemplary form is broken in the book of Genesis, in which also refers to Jesus in his vision of married love. Man feels incomplete because it lacks an help meet for him "match", which "is in front of" (cf. *Gen* 2,18.20) in an equal dialogue. She participates, therefore, the same reality of man, represented symbolically by the rib, ie the same flesh, as is proclaimed in the song of love of man: "This at last is truly flesh of my flesh and bone of my bones "(*Gen* 2:23). They thus become "one flesh" (cf. *Gen* 2:24). This foundational reality of the experience is enhanced in the double formula of mutual belonging, in this profession of love pronounced by the woman of the Song of Songs. The formula is similar to that of the covenant between God and his people (cf. *Lv* 26:12): "My beloved is mine and I am his ... I am my beloved and my beloved is mine" (*Ct* 2,16 ; 6.3). It is significant, then, in the Song, the constant intertwining of sexuality, eros and love, as well as the meeting of corporeality with tenderness, feeling, passion, spirituality and total self-giving. In the knowledge that there may be the night of your absence and interrupted dialogue between him and her (ch. 3:05), it remains, nevertheless, the certainty of the power of love against all odds: "stern as death is love "(*Ct* 8,6). Bible prophecy, to celebrate the covenant of love between God and his people, will use not only to the nuptial symbolism (cf. *Is* 54; *Jer* 2.2; *Ez* 16), but the entire family experience, as attested in particularly intense way the prophet Hosea. His ordeal marriage and family (cf. *Hos* 1-3) becomes a sign of the relationship between the Lord and Israel. The infidelity of the people do not cancel the invincible love of God that portrays the prophet as a father who guides and cuddling "with bands of love" his son (cf. *Hos* 11.1 to 4).

40. In the words of eternal life that Jesus gave to his disciples, with his teaching on marriage and the family, we can recognize three basic stages in God's plan. At first, there is the family of origin, when God the Creator primordial instituted marriage between Adam and Eve, as the solid foundation of the family. God not only created the human being male and female (cf. *Gen*1:27), but he also blessed because they were fruitful and multiply (cf. *Gen* 1:28). For this, "a man will leave his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh" (*Gn* 2:24). This union, then, wounded by sin, in the historical form of marriage within the tradition of Israel has experienced several fluctuations: between monogamy and polygamy, between stability and divorce, between reciprocity and subordination of women to ' man. The granting of Moses about the possibility of divorce (cf. *Dt* 24,1ss), which persisted to the time of Jesus, it is understood within this framework. Finally, the reconciliation of the world fell, with the coming of the Savior, not only restores the original divine plan, but leads the history of God's people to a new fulfillment. The indissolubility of marriage (cf. *Mk* 10.2 to 9), is not primarily intended as a yoke imposed on the people but as a gift to the people united in marriage.

Jesus and the family

41. The example of Jesus is a paradigm for the Church. The Son of God came into the world in a family. In his thirty years of hidden life in Nazareth - Uptown social, religious and cultural Empire (cf. *Jn* 1:46) - Jesus he saw in Mary and Joseph lived in love loyalty. He inaugurated his public life with the sign at Cana, which to a wedding feast (cf. *Jn* 2,1-11). Announced the gospel of marriage as the fullness of revelation that recovers the original plan of God (cf. *Mt* 19.4 to 6). Shared everyday moments of friendship with the family of Lazarus and his sisters (cf. *Lk* 10:38) and with the family of Peter (cf. *Mt* 8:14). He listened to the cries of parents for their children, returning them to life (cf. *Mk* 5:41; *Lk* 7.14 to 15) and thus showing the true meaning of mercy, which implies the restoration of the Covenant (cf. John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia* , 4). This appears clearly in the meetings with the Samaritan woman (cf. *Jn* 4.1 to 30) and with the adulteress (cf. *Jn* 8.1 to 11), in which the perception of sin is awakened to the love of Jesus free . Conversion "is a continuing obligation for the whole Church which" embracing in its bosom sinners "and that," holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal. " This endeavor of conversion is not just a human work. It is the movement of a "contrite heart," drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first "(*CCC* , 1428). God provides free forgiveness to those who are open to the action of his grace. This happens through repentance, combined with regard to direct life according to God's will, effect of his mercy by which He reconciles us with him. God put in our hearts the ability to follow the way of imitating Christ. The speech and the attitude of Jesus clearly show that the Kingdom of God is the horizon within which every relationship is defined (cf. *Mt* 6:33). Family ties, while fundamental, "however, are not absolute" (*CCC* , 2232). So upsetting to his listeners, Jesus relativized family relations in the light of the Kingdom of God (cf. *Mk* 3.33 to 35; *Lk* 14:26; *Mt* 10.34 to 37; 19.29; 23.9) . This revolution of suffering that Jesus introduced into the human family is a radical call to universal brotherhood.No one is excluded from the new community gathered in Jesus' name, because all are called to be part of God's family. Jesus shows how the divine condescension accompanied the human journey with his grace, transform the hardened heart with his mercy (cf. *Ez* 36:26), and guide its fulfillment through the Paschal Mystery.

Chapter II

The Family in the Magisterium of the Church

The teachings of Vatican II

42. On the basis of what he has received from Christ, the Church has developed over the centuries a rich teaching on marriage and family. One of the highest expressions of this Magisterium was proposed by the Second Vatican Council, in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, which devotes an entire chapter to the dignity of marriage and the family (cf. *GS*, 47-52). It thus defines marriage and family: "The intimate partnership of life and conjugal love established by the Creator and qualified by His laws, is established by the alliance of the spouses, that is irrevocable personal consent. And so, by that human act whereby spouses mutually give and receive, that is born, even before society, the institution of marriage, which by the divine law" (*GS*, 48). The "true love between husband and wife" (*GS*, 49) involves a mutual gift of self, it will include and integrate the gender dimension and affection, corresponding to the divine plan (cf. *GS*, 48-49). This makes it clear that marriage and married love that soul, "are by their nature ordained toward the procreation and education of offspring" (*GS*, 50). In addition, it is emphasized the rootedness in Christ of the spouses: Christ the Lord "is to Christian couples in the sacrament of marriage" (*GS*, 48) and their remains (*sacramentum permanens*). He assumes human love, purifies it, brings it to fulfillment, and gives spouses, with his Spirit, the ability to live it, pervading all their life of faith, hope and charity. In this way the couple are as consecrated and, through his grace, build up the Body of Christ and are a domestic Church (cf. *LG*, 11), so that the Church, to fully understand its mystery, look to the Christian family, it manifests itself in a genuine way.

Paul VI

43. Blessed Paul VI, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, has deepened the doctrine on marriage and the family. In particular, with the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, he has highlighted the intrinsic link between conjugal love and generation of life: "conjugal love requires in husband and wife that they know of their mission of responsible parenthood, which today is rightly much he insisted upon, and which also must be exactly understood. [...] The responsible exercise of parenthood implies, therefore, that husband and wife recognize their own duties towards God, towards themselves, towards the family and towards society, in a just hierarchy of values" (*HV*, 10). In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI highlighted the relationship between the family and the Church "in the evangelizing apostolate of the laity is impossible not to stress the evangelizing action of the family. It has well deserved, at different moments in the history of the Church, the beautiful definition of "domestic church" sanctioned by Vatican II. This means that, in every Christian family should be formed the different aspects of the whole Church. Furthermore, the family, like the Church, ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted and from which the Gospel radiates" (*EN*, 71).

John Paul II

44. St. John Paul II has devoted special attention to the family through his catechesis on human love and the theology of the body. In them, he has given the Church a wealth of reflections on the nuptial meaning of the human body and the plan of God for marriage and the family from the beginning of creation. In particular, by treating the conjugal charity, he

described the way in which the spouses, in their mutual love, receive the gift of the Spirit of Christ and live their call to holiness. In the Letter to Families *Gratissimam Sane* and especially with the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope John Paul II pointed out the family as the "way of the Church", offered an overview of the vocation to love of man and woman, has It proposed the basic guidelines for the pastoral care of the family and the presence of the family in society. "In marriage and in the family a complex of interpersonal relationships - marriage, fatherhood and motherhood, filiation and fraternity - through which each human person is introduced into the" human family "and into the" family of God ", which is the Church "(FC , 15).

Benedict XVI

45. Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, returned to the theme of the truth of the love between man and woman, who lights up fully only in the light of the love of the crucified Christ (cf. *DCE*, 2). He stresses that "the marriage based on exclusive and definitive love becomes the icon of the relationship between God and his people and vice versa: the way of love of God becomes the measure of human love" (*DCE*, 11). Moreover, in the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, it highlights the importance of family love as a principle of life in society, a place where we learn the experience of the common good. "It becomes a social necessity, and even economic, yet propose to future generations the beauty of family and marriage, that these institutions correspond to the deepest needs of the heart and of human dignity. In this perspective, States are called to enact policies promoting the centrality and the integrity of the family founded on marriage between a man and a woman, the primary vital cell of society, and to assume responsibility for its economic and fiscal needs, while respecting its essentially relational "(*CiV*, 44).

Francis

46. Papa Francesco, in the encyclical *Lumen Fidei* tackles the link between the family and the faith: "The first area in which faith enlightens the whole of human society is the family. I think first stable union of man and woman in marriage [...] To promise a love that is forever is possible when you discover a bigger picture of their projects "(*LF*, 52). In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Pope recalls the centrality of the family among the cultural challenges of today: "The family goes through a profound cultural crisis, as all communities and social ties. In the case of the family, the fragility of the ties becomes particularly serious because it is the basic unit of society, the place where you learn to live with difference and to belong to others and where parents hand down the faith to children. Marriage tends to be seen as a mere form of emotional gratification that can be constituted in any way and change according to the sensitivity of each. But the indispensable contribution of marriage to society exceeds the level of emotion and the existing conditions of the couple "(*EG*, 66). Pope Francis has also devoted to issues relating to the family an organic cycle of catechesis that deepen the subjects, experiences and stages of life.

Chapter III

The family in the Christian doctrine

Marriage in the order of creation and sacramental fullness

47. The order of redemption illuminates and celebrates the creation. Natural marriage, therefore, is fully understood in the light of its fulfillment sacramental only looking upon Christ knows fully the truth about human relationships. "In reality it is only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man. [...] Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear" (*GS* , 22). It is especially appropriate to include in a Christocentric key natural properties of marriage, which are the good of the spouses (*good of the spouses*), which includes unity, openness to life, fidelity and indissolubility. In the light of the New Testament that all things were created through Christ and for him (cf. *Col* 1:16; *Jn* 1,1ss), the Second Vatican Council wanted to express appreciation for the natural marriage and for items positive present in other religions (cf. *LG* , 16; *NA* , 2) and in different cultures, despite its limitations and shortcomings (cf. *RM* , 55). Discernment of the presence of "seeds of the Word" in other cultures (cf. *AG* , 11) can also be applied to the reality of marriage and family. In addition to the true natural marriage there are positive elements present in the double forms of other religious traditions. These forms - still based on the true and stable relationship of a man and a woman - , they are ordered to the sacrament. With an eye to the human wisdom of the people, the Church also recognizes this family as the basic need of human coexistence and fruitful.

Indissolubility and fecundity of the spousal

48. The irrevocable covenant faithfulness of God is the foundation of the indissolubility of marriage. The complete love and deep between spouses is not only based on human abilities: God supports this alliance with the power of his Spirit. The choice that God has done in us is reflected in some way in the choice of a spouse as God keeps his promise even when we fail, so love and marital fidelity are worth "in good times and bad." Marriage is a gift and promise of God, who hears the prayers of those who ask for his help. The hardness of the human heart, its limits and its fragility in the face of temptation is a great challenge for the common life. The testimony of couples who live faithfully the wedding highlights the value of this indissoluble union and awakens the desire to constantly renew their commitment to fidelity. The indissolubility corresponds to the profound desire of mutual love and lasting that the Creator has placed in the human heart, and is a gift that he himself makes each pair: "what God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (*Mt* 19 , 6; cf. *Mk* 10.9). The man and woman accept this gift and care for them so that their love will be forever. Faced with the sensibility of our time and the actual difficulty maintaining commitments for ever, the Church is called to propose the requirements and the project of life of the Gospel of the family and Christian marriage. "Saint Paul, speaking of the new life in Christ , he says Christians - all - are called to love one another as Christ loved them, that is "subject to one another" (*Eph* 5:21), which means at the service of one another. Here introduces the analogy between the husband-wife and the Christ-Church. It is clear that this is an imperfect analogy, but we have to grasp the spiritual meaning that is very high and revolutionary, and at the same time simple, affordable for every man and woman who rely on the grace of God "(Francis, General Audience, 6 May 2015). Once again it is an advertisement that gives hope!

The property of the family

49. Marriage is the "community of all life, by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children" (*CIC* , can. 1055 - §1). In mutual acceptance, the engaged promise total gift, loyalty and openness to life. In faith and with the grace of

Christ, they recognize the gifts that God offers them and are committed in his name in front of the Church. God consecrates the love of spouses and confirms its indissolubility, offering them the grace to live fidelity, mutual integration and openness to life. Let us thank God for the wedding because, through the community of life and love, Christian spouses know the happiness and experience that God loves them personally, with passion and tenderness. The man and the woman, individually and as a couple - said Pope Francis - "are the image of God." Their difference is "not for the opposition, or subordination, but for fellowship and generation, always in the image and likeness of God" (General Audience, 15 April 2015). The unitive end of marriage is a constant reminder of the growing and deepening of this love. In their union of love the couple experience the beauty of fatherhood and motherhood; share projects and efforts, desires and concerns; learn mutual care and mutual pardon. In this love they celebrate their happy moments and support in difficult passages of their life story.

50. The fertility of the couple, in the full sense, is spiritual: they are living sacramental signs, sources of life for the Christian community and the world. The act of procreation, which shows the "inseparable connection" between value unitive and procreative - highlighted by Blessed Paul VI (cf. *HV*, 12) - must be understood in view of the responsibility of parents in the commitment to care and the Christian education of children. These are the most precious fruit of conjugal love. Since the child is a person, he transcends those that have generated. "Being a son and daughter, in fact, according to God's plan, it is to bring in it the memory and the hope of a love that has made himself just by turning the life of another human being, original and new. And for the parents each child is himself, is different, is different" (Francis, General Audience, 11 February 2015). The beauty of the mutual gift and free, the joy for the origin of life and the loving care of all members, from toddlers to seniors, are some of the fruits that make it unique and irreplaceable response to the vocation of the family. Family relations contribute decisively to building solidarity and fraternal human society, reduced to the coexistence of the inhabitants of a territory or nationals of any State.

Truth and beauty of the family

51. With deep joy and profound consolation, the Church looks to the families who are faithful to the teachings of the Gospel, encouraging them and thanking them for the witness they bear. With these, it made credible the beauty of marriage indissoluble and faithful forever. In family couple's first experience of ecclesial communion between people, which reflects, for grace, the mystery of love of the Holy Trinity. "This is where one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous forgiveness, constantly renewed, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one's life" (*CCC*, 1657). The Gospel of the family eats well those seeds that are still waiting to mature, and must treat those trees that have withered and need not be neglected (cf. *Lk* 13.6 to 9). The Church as teacher safe and caring mother While acknowledging that among the baptized there is no other that the sacramental marriage bond, and that any break of it is against the will of God, is also aware of the fragility of many of his children who struggle in the path of faith. "Therefore, without diminishing the value of the evangelical, we must accompany with mercy and patience possible stages of growth of the people who are building day by day.[...] A small step, in the midst of great human limitations, may be more pleasing to the God of life outwardly correct who spends his days without facing major difficulties. All must reach the consolation and encouragement of the saving love of God, who works mysteriously in each person, beyond his faults and his falls" (*EG*, 44). This truth and beauty is preserved. Faced with difficult situations and wounded families, it is always

necessary to remember a general principle: "Pastors must know that, for the sake of truth, are obliged to discern situations" (*FC*, 84). The degree of responsibility is not equal in all cases, and there may be factors that limit the ability of decision. Therefore, while the doctrine is clearly expressed, they are to avoid judgments that do not take into account the complexity of different situations, and you need to be attentive to the way in which people live and suffer because of their condition.

Chapter IV Towards the fullness of ecclesial family

The intimate link between Church and family

52. The blessing and the responsibility of a new family, sealed in the Sacrament Church, implies a willingness to be advocates and promoters, within the Christian community, fundamental alliance between man and woman. This willingness, in the context of the social bond, the begetting of children, the protection of the weak, of the common life, a responsibility that has a right to be supported, recognized and appreciated. By virtue of the sacrament of matrimony every family becomes in effect a good for the Church. In this perspective will certainly be a precious gift for the Church today, consider the interplay between the family and the Church: the Church is good for the family, the family is good for the Church. The housing of the sacramental gift of the Lord involves not only the individual family, but the Christian community itself, in the way it deserves. To the signs of the difficulties, even severe, to keep the marriage union, the discernment of their obligations and their failures should be enhanced by the couple with the help of the pastors and the community.

The grace of conversion and of the fulfillment

53. The Church is close to spouses whose relationship has become so weakened that looks at risk of separation. In cases where consumption is a painful end of the report, the Church feels the duty to accompany this time of suffering, so that at least do not light ruinous conflicts between spouses. Particular attention should be primarily aimed at children, who are the first affected by the separation, they may have to suffer as little as possible, "when Mom and Dad do evil, the soul of children suffer much" (Francis, General Audience, 24 June 2015). The look of Christ, whose light illumines every man (cf. *Jn* 1,9; *GS*, 22) inspires the Church's pastoral care for the faithful who simply live together or who got married only civil or are divorced and remarried. In the perspective of the divine pedagogy, the Church turns with love to those who participate in its life imperfectly: they invoke with the grace of conversion, he encourages them to do good, to take care of each other with love and to serve the community in which they live and work. It is desirable that in the Dioceses will promote paths of discernment and involvement of these people, help and encouragement to the maturation of a conscious and coherent. Couples need to be informed about the possibility of recourse to the process of declaration of nullity of marriage.

54. When the union reaches a remarkable stability through a public bond - and is characterized by deep affection, as responsibilities towards children, by ability to pass the tests - can be seen as an opportunity to accompany the sacrament of marriage, where this is possible. Different however is the case in which the life is not determined in view of a possible future marriage, but in the absence of the intention to establish an institutional relationship. The reality of civil

marriages between men and women, traditional marriage, and made the necessary modifications, even of cohabitation, is an emerging phenomenon in many countries. Moreover, the situation of the faithful who have established a new union requires special pastoral attention: "In recent decades [...] is very growing awareness that we need a fraternal and cordial reception, love and truth, to which the baptized They have established a new relationship following the failure of the marriage sacrament; in fact, these people are not excommunicated "(Francis, General Audience, 5 August 2015).

Mercy in the heart of revelation

55. The Church starts from the concrete situations of today's families, all in need of mercy, beginning with those who suffer most. With the merciful heart of Jesus, the Church must accompany its most fragile, marked by love wounded and lost, restoring confidence and hope, as the beacon light of a port or a torch carried in the crowd to illuminate those who they have lost or are broken in the storm. Mercy is "the center of the revelation of Jesus Christ" (*MV*, 25). In it shines the sovereignty of God, by which He is always faithful back to his being, which is love (cf. *1 Jn* 4: 8), and in his covenant. "That's in His mercy that God manifests His omnipotence" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 30, art. 4; cf. Roman Missal, Opening Prayer of the Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time). Proclaim the truth in love is itself an act of mercy. In the Bull *Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis said: "Mercy is not contrary to justice but is the behavior of God toward the sinner". He continues: "God does not reject justice. He embraces and surpasses in a top event where one experiences the love that is the foundation of true justice "(*MV*, 21). Jesus is the face of the mercy of God the Father: "God so loved the world [...] so that the world might be saved through Him (the Son)" (*Jn* 3,16-17)

PART III THE MISSION OF THE FAMILY

56. From the beginning of history, God has been generous with love towards his children (cf. *LG*, 2), so that they could have the fullness of life in Jesus Christ (cf. *Jn* 10:10). Through the sacraments of Christian, God invites families to break into this life, to proclaim it and to communicate it to others (cf. *LG*, 41). As Pope Francis forcefully reminds us, the mission of the family always extends outside in service to our brothers and sisters. It is the mission of the Church to which each family is asked to participate in a unique and privileged. "In virtue of the Baptism received, every member of the People of God has become a missionary disciple" (*EG*, 120). All over the world, in the reality of families, we can see so much happiness and joy, but also much suffering and anguish. We want to look at this reality with the eyes with which Christ also watched as he walked among men of his time. Our attitude to want to be humble understanding. Our desire is to accompany each and every family that they may discover the best way to overcome the difficulties in their path. The Gospel is always also a sign of contradiction. The Church never forgets that the paschal mystery is central to the Good News that we announce. She wishes to help families recognize and welcome the cross when it occurs in front of them, so that they can take with Christ on the path to the joy of the resurrection. This job requires a "pastoral conversion and missionary, who can not leave things as they are" (*EG*, 25). The conversion then profoundly affects the style and language. You must adopt a language that is meaningful. The announcement has to experience that the Gospel of the family's response to the deepest longings of the human person: his dignity and the complete fulfillment in reciprocity, in communion and fertility. This is not only to present

legislation, but to announce the grace that gives the ability to live the family property. The transmission of the faith makes today more than ever need a language that can reach everyone, especially young people, to communicate the beauty of family love and understanding of the meaning of terms such as donations, conjugal love, fidelity, fecundity, procreation. The need for a new and more appropriate language comes first in time to introduce children and adolescents to the topic of sexuality. Many parents and many people who are involved in pastoral work have difficulty finding an appropriate language and at the same time respectful, bringing together the nature of sexuality with biological complementarity which is enriched each other, with friendship, with love and with the donation of man and woman.

Chapter I

The family formation

Preparation for marriage

57. Christian marriage can not be reduced to a cultural tradition or to a simple legal agreement is a real call from God that demands careful discernment, prayer and constant maturation adequate. This requires training to accompany the person and the couple so that the communication of the faith to unite the experience of life offered by the entire ecclesial community. The effectiveness of this aid also requires improved catechesis premarital - sometimes poor in content - that is an integral part of ordinary pastoral care. Even the ministry of the engaged couple must engage in the commitment of the Christian community in general present in a proper and convincing the Gospel message about the dignity of the person, his freedom, and respect for his rights. They should be kept in mind the three stages indicated by *Familiaris Consortio* (cf. 66): The remote preparation, passing through the transmission of the faith and of Christian values within the family; proximate preparation, which coincides with the itineraries of catechesis and formative experiences lived within the ecclesial community; the immediate preparation for marriage, part of a broader way qualified by the vocational dimension.

58. In the cultural change taking place often are presented models in contrast to the Christian vision of the family. Sexuality is often released from a project of authentic love. Some countries are even imposed by the public training projects that may be viewed in contrast to the human and Christian vision: compared to them are firmly established the freedom of the Church to teach its doctrine and the right to conscientious objection on the part educators. Moreover, the family, while remaining space pedagogical primary (cf. *'s heavier*, 3), can not be the only place of sex education. It should, therefore, structuring real paths pastoral support, targeting both individuals and couples, with a particular attention to the age of puberty and adolescence, in which help you discover the beauty of sexuality in love. Christianity proclaims that God created man as male and female, and blessed them to form one flesh and trasmettessero life (cf. *Jan.* 1, 27-28; 2, 24). Their difference, in the equal personal dignity, is the seal of God's good creation. According to the Christian principle, soul and body, as well as biological sex (*sex*) and social-cultural role of sex (*gender*), you can be distinguished, but not separate.

It appears, therefore, the need for an expansion of the topics in the training routes before marriage, so that they become the paths of education to faith and love, in the integrated process of Christian initiation. In this light, it is necessary to remember the importance of

virtues, such as chastity, provided invaluable to the genuine growth of love between people. The formation program should assume the role of a process-oriented vocational discernment staff and torque, ensuring better synergy between the various pastoral areas. The paths of marriage preparation are also offered to married couples can accompany the engaged before the wedding and during the first years of married life, thus enhancing the ministry married. The pastoral use of personal relationships will encourage the gradual opening of the minds and hearts to the fullness of God's plan.

The wedding celebration

59. The marriage liturgy is a unique event, which lives in the family and social context of a party. The first signs of Jesus came to the wedding feast of Cana: the good wine of the miracle of the Lord, who gives joy to the birth of a new family, is the new wine of the covenant of Christ with the men and women of all times. The preparation of the wedding occupies for a long time the attention of the engaged couple. It is a precious time for them, for their families and their friends, which should enrich its spiritual and ecclesial dimension properly. The wedding celebration is a favorable opportunity to invite many people to the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. The Christian community, through participation friendly and joyful welcome in her womb so that the new family as domestic Church, to feel part of the larger family of the Church. The wedding liturgy should be prepared through a mystagogy which do perceive the couple celebrating their alliance takes place "in the Lord." Frequently, the celebrant has the opportunity to address an assembly made up of people who participate little in ecclesial life or belong to other Christian denominations or religious community. It is a valuable opportunity to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, which can foster in families present, the rediscovery of faith and love that come from God.

The early years of family life

60. The first years of marriage are a vital and delicate period during which couples grow in awareness of their vocation and mission. Hence the need for a pastoral accompaniment that continues after the celebration of the sacrament. The parish is the place where experienced couples may be made available to the younger ones, with the possible contribution of associations, ecclesial movements and new communities. It should encourage the couple to a fundamental attitude of welcoming the great gift of children. Please note the importance of family spirituality, prayer and participation in Sunday Mass, urging couples to meet regularly to promote the growth of the spiritual life and solidarity in the concrete needs of life. The personal encounter with Christ through the reading of the Word of God, in the community and in homes, especially in the form of "lectio divina", is a source of inspiration for the daily activities. Liturgies, devotional practices and Eucharistic celebrations for families, especially on the anniversary of marriage, nourish the spiritual life and the missionary witness of the family. Not infrequently, in the first years of married life, there is a certain introversion of the pair, with the consequent isolation from the community context. The consolidation of the network of relationships between couples and creating meaningful connections are necessary for the maturation of the Christian life of the family. The movements and church groups often provide such moments of growth and training. The local Church, by integrating these contributions, take the initiative to coordinate the pastoral care of young families. In the initial phase of married life particularly demeaning attorney frustration of desire to have children. Not infrequently, this will announce the reasons of crisis that lead quickly in the separation. Also for

these reasons it is especially important the proximity of the community to the newlyweds, through the loving support of families reliable and discreet.

The formation of priests and other pastoral workers

61. You need a renewal of pastoral care in the light of the Gospel of the family and the teaching of the Magisterium. Therefore, the need is for a more adequate formation of priests, deacons, men and women religious, catechists and other pastoral workers, which should foster the integration of the families in the parish community, especially on the occasion of the ways of training Christian life in view of the sacraments. Such as seminars, in their itineraries of human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral, they must prepare future priests to become apostles of the family. In training for the ordained ministry we can not overlook the emotional and psychological development, also participating directly in suitable routes. Tours and training courses designed specifically for pastoral workers will make them eligible to enter the same path of marriage preparation in the broader dynamic of ecclesial life. During the training, the candidates to the priesthood live periods congruent with their families and are guided in making experiences of family ministry to acquire adequate knowledge of the current situation of the families. The presence of lay people and families, especially the presence of women in priestly formation, promotes the appreciation of the diversity and complementarity of the different vocations in the Church. The dedication of this precious ministry can receive vitality and concreteness of a renewed alliance between the two main forms of vocation to love: that of marriage, which blossoms in the Christian family, based on love of election, and that of the consecrated life, image the communion of the Kingdom, which starts unconditionally The acceptance of the other as a gift from God. In the communion of vocations is accomplished a fruitful exchange of gifts, that enlivens and enriches the ecclesial community (cf. *Acts* 18,2). Spiritual direction of the family can be considered one of the parish ministries. It is suggested that the diocesan office for family and other pastoral offices will intensify their cooperation in this field. In the permanent formation of priests and pastoral workers, it is desirable that we continue to treat with appropriate tools maturation of psychological and emotional dimension, which they will need for the pastoral care of families, especially in view of the particular situations of emergency arising from cases of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

Chapter II

Family, generativity, education

The transmission of life

62. The presence of large families in the Church is a blessing for the Christian community and for society, because openness to life is an intrinsic requirement of conjugal love. In this light, the Church expresses its deep gratitude to the families who welcome, educate, surround affection and transmit the faith to their children, especially the most fragile and marked by disabilities. These children, born with special needs, attract the love of Christ and ask the Church to keep them as a blessing. It is unfortunately a widespread mentality which reduces the generation of life only to reward individual or couple. The factors of an economic, cultural and educational exercise a sometimes decisive weight contributing to the sharp decline in the birth rate that weakens the social fabric, compromises the relationship between generations and makes it look more uncertain about the future. Here too, we must start by listening to

people and give reason of the beauty and truth of an unconditional openness to life as what human love needs to be lived to the full. Here we find the need to disclose more documents of the Magisterium of the Church that promotes the culture of life. Family ministry should involve more specialists in the biomedical Catholics in the paths of marriage preparation and accompanying spouse.

Responsibility generative

63. According to the order of creation, conjugal love between a man and a woman and the transmission of life are ordered one to the other (cf. *in January* from 1.27 to 28). In this way the Creator made man and woman share in the work of its creation and at the same time made them instruments of his love, entrusting to them the responsibility for the future of humankind through the transmission of human life. Spouses will open to life forming "a right judgment: taking into account of their personal property and that of their children, especially those born and those that are expected to be born; considering the material and spiritual conditions of their time and of their state of life; and, finally, taking into account the good of the family, of temporal society and the Church itself" (*GS*, 50; cf. *VS*, 54-64). In accordance with the personal and humanly full of conjugal love, the right way for family planning is that of a consensual dialogue between the spouses, the respect of time and consideration of the dignity of the partners. In this sense, the Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (cf. 10-14) and the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (cf. 14; 28-35) must be rediscovered in order to awaken the willingness to procreate in contrast to a mentality that is often hostile to life. We must repeatedly urge young couples to donate life. Doing so can increase the openness to life in the family, in the Church and in society. Through its many children's institutions, the Church can help to create a company, but also a community of faith, which are more suitable for children. The courage of transmitting life is greatly enhanced when you create a suitable atmosphere to small, in which it is offered help and support in bringing up the offspring (cooperation between parishes, parents and families).

The choice of responsible parenthood presupposes the formation of consciousness, which is "the most secret core and his sanctuary, where he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths" (*GS*, 16). The more the couple try to listen to their conscience in God and his commandments (cf. *Rom* 2:15), and were accompanied spiritually, the more their decision will be intimately free from a subjective arbitrariness and the adjustment to the ways of behaving of their environment. For the sake of this dignity of conscience the Church rejects with all his might the enforcement actions of the state in favor of contraception, sterilization and even abortion. The use of methods based on "natural cycles of fertility" (*HV*, 11) will be encouraged. It will highlight that "these methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them, and favor the education of an authentic freedom" (*CCC*, 2370). It should be highlighted more and that children are a wonderful gift from God, a joy for parents and for the Church. Through them the Lord renews the world.

The value of life in all its phases

64. Life is a gift of God and mystery that transcends us. For this, it should not in any way discard the beginning and the end stage. On the contrary, it is necessary to ensure these stages special attention. Today, too easily "it considers the human being in himself as a commodity, which you can use and then throw. We started the culture of the "gap" that, indeed, is

promoted "(*EG*, 53). In this regard, it is for the family, supported by the whole society, to accept the unborn life and take care of its last stage. With regard to the tragedy of abortion, the Church first of all states the sacred and inviolable character of human life and is committed concretely in favor of it (cf. *EV*, 58). Thanks to its institutions, advises pregnant women, supports the single mothers, assists abandoned children, is close to those who have suffered abortion. To those who work in healthcare facilities, it recalls the moral obligation of conscientious objection. Similarly, the Church not only feels the urgency to assert the right to die naturally without aggressive treatment and euthanasia, but also takes care of the elderly, protects people with disabilities, assisting the terminally ill, comforting the dying, firmly rejects the death penalty (cf. *CCC*, 2258).

Adoption and foster care

65. The adoption of children orphaned and abandoned, accepted as their children, in the spirit of faith takes the form of an authentic family apostolate (cf. *AA*, 11), repeatedly invoked and encouraged by the Magisterium (cf. *FC*, 41 ; *EV*, 93). The choice of foster care and adoption expresses a particular marital fertility experience, beyond the cases where it is painfully marked by infertility. This decision is an eloquent sign of hospitality generative, witness of faith and fulfillment of love. It returns to a bond mutual dignity interrupted: the spouses without children and children who have no parents. They must therefore be supported all initiatives aimed at facilitating the adoption procedures. The trafficking of children between countries and continents is prevented by appropriate legislative and State control. The continuity of the relationship and educational generative has the necessary foundation sexual difference of man and woman, as well as procreation. In the face of those situations in which the child is claimed at any cost, as the law of its completion, adoption and foster care rightly understood show an important aspect of parenting and offspring, as they help to recognize that children, whether natural or adoptive or entrusted, they shall be other than itself and must accept them, love them, take care and not just put them in the world. The best interests of the child should always inform decisions on adoption and foster care. As noted by Pope Francis, "children have the right to grow up in a family, with a father and a mother" (Address to Participants in the International Colloquium on the complementarity between men and women, organized by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, November 17 2014). Nevertheless, the Church must proclaim that, where possible, children are entitled to grow in their natal family with as much support as possible.

Bringing up children

66. One of the key challenges, including those that are posed to families today, is certainly that of education, it made more challenging and complex by the current cultural reality and the great influence of the media. They must be taken into due account the needs and expectations of families to be in everyday life, places of growth, of concrete and essential transmission of faith, spirituality and virtues which shape existence. The family of origin is often the womb of the vocation to the priesthood and consecrated life: therefore urge parents to ask the Lord for the priceless gift of vocation for one of their children. In education both protected the right of parents to choose freely the type of education to be given to children according to their beliefs and conditions of access and quality. It should help you live the emotions, even in the marital relationship, as a process of maturation, in ever deeper acceptance of others and in a donation ever fuller. It should be stressed in this context the need to offer training paths that feed the

married life and the importance of a laity that provides accompaniment made of live testimony. It is of great help the example of faithful love and made deep tenderness, respect, able to grow over time and in its concrete open to the generation of life is the experience of a mystery that transcends us.

67. In the different cultures, the adults of the family retain an irreplaceable role in education. However, in many contexts, we are witnessing a progressive weakening of the educational role of parents, because of un'invasiva media presence within the family sphere, as well as the tendency to delegate to third parties or to reserve this task. On the other hand, the media (especially social media) unite the members of the family even at a distance. The use of email and other social media can hold together the family members over time. Besides all the media can be an opportunity for the evangelization of young people. It requires that the Church encourages and supports families in their efforts to participate vigilant and responsible to the school curriculum and education affecting their children. There is unanimous consent in reiterating that the first school of education is the family and the Christian community waits in support and integration of this irreplaceable formative role. It is considered necessary to identify areas and opportunities to meet to encourage the training of parents and the sharing of experiences among families. It is important that parents are actively involved in the ways of preparation for the sacraments of Christian initiation, as the first teachers and witnesses of faith for their children.

68. The Catholic schools play a vital role in assisting parents in their duty to educate their children. Catholic education promotes the role of the family ensures good preparation, educates in the virtues and values, instructs in the teachings of the Church. Catholic schools should be encouraged in their mission to help the pupils to grow as mature adults who can see the world through the eyes of love of Jesus and who understand life as a call to serve God. The Catholic schools are as relevant to the Church's evangelizing mission. In many parts of the Catholic schools are the only ones to ensure genuine opportunities for children from poor families, especially for young people, offering them an alternative to poverty and a way to make a real contribution to the life of society. Catholic schools should be encouraged to pursue their action in the poorest communities, serving the less fortunate and most vulnerable members of our society.

Chapter III

Family and pastoral accompaniment

Complex situations

69. The sacrament of marriage as a union faithful and indissoluble union between a man and a woman are called to accept one another and to welcome life, it is a great grace for the human family. The Church has the duty and the joy to announce this grace in every person and in every context. It feels today, even more urgent, the responsibility of the baptized to rediscover how the grace of God works in their lives - even in the most difficult - to lead them to the fullness of the sacrament. The Synod, and appreciates and encourages families who honor the beauty of Christian marriage, it is to promote the pastoral discernment of situations in which the reception of this gift fatigue to be appreciated, or is variously compromised. Continuing dialogue with these faithful ministry, to enable the achievement of a consistent openness to the Gospel of marriage and the family in its fullness, is a serious responsibility. Pastors should

identify elements that can promote evangelization and human and spiritual growth of those entrusted to their care by the Lord.

70. The pastoral propose clearly the Gospel message and captures the positive elements present in those situations that do not yet or no longer correspond to it. In many countries, a growing number of couples live together without marriage or canonical or civil. In some countries there is a traditional wedding, concerted between families and often celebrated in different stages. In other countries instead it is increasing the number of those who, after living together for a long time, ask for the celebration of marriage in church. Simple cohabitation is often chosen because of the general mentality contrary to the institutions and firm commitments, but also the expectation of existential security (job and fixed salary). In other countries, finally, de facto unions are becoming more numerous, not only for the rejection of the values of family and marriage, but also to the fact that marriage is perceived as a luxury, and social conditions, so that the misery material pushes to live facto unions. All these situations must be addressed in a constructive manner, trying to turn them into opportunities journey of conversion towards the fullness of marriage and the family in the light of the Gospel.

71. The choice of civil marriage or, in several cases, the simple living together, often not motivated by prejudice or resistance against the sacramental union, but from situations or cultural contingents. In many circumstances, the decision to live together is a sign of a relationship that actually want to navigate to a stability perspective. This will, which translates into a lasting bond, reliable and open to life can be considered a commitment on which to base a way to the sacrament of marriage, found out how God's plan for their lives. The path of growth, which can lead to sacramental marriage, will be encouraged by the recognition of the distinguishing characteristics of the generous and lasting: the desire to seek the good of others before their own; the experience of forgiveness requested and donated; the aspiration to found a family is not closed on itself and open to the good of the ecclesial community and the entire society. Along this route could be given those signs of love that properly correspond to the reflection of God in an authentic conjugal project.

72. The issues related to mixed marriages require specific attention. Marriages between Catholics and other baptized "have, despite their particular physiognomy, many elements that it is good use of and develop both for their intrinsic value and for the contribution they can make to the ecumenical movement." For this purpose "is to be found [...] cordial cooperation between the Catholic and non-Catholic minister, from the time of preparation for marriage and wedding" (*FC*, 78). About eucharistic sharing remembers that "the decision to allow or not the non-Catholic marriage to Eucharistic communion must be taken in accordance with the rules existing in this area, both for Eastern Christians and for other Christians, and considering this special situation, that is, receive the sacrament of Christian marriage two Christians baptized. Although the spouses of a mixed marriage have in common the sacraments of baptism and marriage, Eucharistic sharing can only be exceptional and, in any case, consideration to the provisions set out in [...]" (Pontifical Council for Promoting 'Christian Unity, Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism, March 25, 1993, 159-160).

73. The marriages with disparity of cult represent a privileged place for inter-religious dialogue in everyday life, and can be a sign of hope for religious communities, especially where there are situations of tension. The members of the couple share their spiritual experiences, or a process of seeking religious if one is not a believer (cf. *1 Cor* 7, 14). Marriages with disparity of cult

involving some special difficulty is about the Christian identity of the family, both the religious education of children. The spouses are called to turn more and more the initial feeling of attraction in the sincere desire of the good of the other. This opening also transforms various religious affiliations into an opportunity for enrichment of the spiritual quality of the relationship. The number of households consisting of married couples with disparity of cult, an increase in mission territories and even in countries of long Christian tradition calls for the urgent need to provide pastoral care vary according to the different social and cultural contexts. In some countries where freedom of religion does not exist, the Christian spouse is obliged to move to another religion in order to marry, and can not celebrate the marriage canon disparity of cult or baptize children. We must therefore reiterate the need for religious freedom be respected with regard to all.

74. Mixed marriages and marriages with disparity of cult present aspects of potential fruitful and critical manifold not easy to solve, more pastorally and normative, which the religious education of children, the participation in the liturgical life of the spouse, sharing spiritual experience. To deal constructively with diversity in order to faith, you must pay particular attention to people who join in such marriages, not only in the run-up to the wedding. Unique challenges facing couples and families in which one partner is Catholic and the other a non-believer. In such cases it is necessary to witness the ability of the Gospel to immerse themselves in these situations so as to make possible the education of their children in the Christian faith.

75. Particular difficulties are situations that affect access to the baptism of people who are in a double complex. These are people who have contracted a stable marriage in a time when at least one of them still did not know the Christian faith. The Bishops are called to exercise, in these cases, a pastoral discernment commensurate with their spiritual good.

76. The Church has modeled her attitude to the Lord Jesus that in the boundless love he offered to every person without exception (*MV*, 12). To the families who live the experience to have within them the homosexual person, the Church reaffirms that every person, regardless of their sexual orientation, must be respected in their dignity and welcomed with respect, with care to avoid "any brand of unjust discrimination "(Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons, 4). To reserve a specific attention to the accompaniment of the families in which they live homosexual person. Regarding Proposals to equivalent to marriage to unions between homosexual persons, "there is no foundation whatsoever to assimilate or establish even remotely analogous between homosexual unions and God's plan for marriage and the family" (*ibid*). The Synod believes in any case completely unacceptable that the local churches suffer pressure in this matter and that international bodies to condition financial aid to poor countries to the introduction of laws that establish the "marriage" between people of the same sex.

Accompaniment in different situations

77. The Church makes her own, in an affectionate sharing the joys and hopes, the sorrows and anxieties of every family. Stay close to the family as a companion on the journey means, for the Church, assume an attitude wisely differentiated: Sometimes, you need to stay close and listen in silence; other times, it must precede to indicate the way ahead; other times, it is appropriate to follow, support and encourage. "The Church will begin its members - priests, religious and

laity - in this" art of accompaniment ", because all may learn more and to take off his sandals before the sacred land of the other (cf. *Ex* 3,5). We have to give our walk the healthy pace of proximity, with a look full of compassion and respectful but at the same time healthy, free and encourage them to mature in the Christian life "(*EG* , 169). The main contribution to the pastoral care of families is offered by the parish, which is a family of families, in which harmonize the contributions of small communities, ecclesial movements and associations. The accompaniment requires priests specifically prepared. The establishment of specialized centers where priests, religious and lay people to learn to take care of each family, with particular attention to those in difficulty.

78. A ministry dedicated to those whose marriage relationship has broken seems particularly urgent. The drama of the separation often leads to the end of long years of conflict, which impose on the children suffering more. The loneliness of the abandoned spouse, or who has been forced to abort a cohabitation characterized by continuous and severe ill-treatment, calls for particular care on the part of the Christian community. Prevention and treatment in cases of domestic violence require close cooperation with the justice to act against the perpetrators and protect the victims adequately. In addition, it is important to promote the protection of children from sexual abuse. In the Church is maintained zero tolerance in these cases, with the accompaniment of families. Then it would seem appropriate to consider the families in which some members carry out activities involving special needs, like those soldiers, who are in a state of separation material and prolonged physical distance from the family, with all the consequences that entails. Back environments of war, not rarely they are suffering from a post-traumatic syndrome and are troubled in conscience that turns them serious moral questions. A peculiar pastoral attention is needed here.

79. The experience of double failure is always painful for everyone. The same failure, on the other hand, can become an opportunity for reflection, conversion and trust in God: becoming conscious of their responsibilities, everyone can find confidence and hope in Him. "From the heart of the Trinity, from within the depths of the mystery of God, flows and flows on and on the great river of mercy. This source will never run out, how many are those who draw near. Whenever everyone needs it, you will have access to it, because God's mercy is without end "(*MV* , 25). Forgiveness for the injustice is not easy, but it is a journey that the grace makes possible. Hence the need for a pastoral conversion and reconciliation also through counseling centers and specialized mediation to establish dioceses. It should however be promoted justice for all parties involved in the failed marriage (spouses and children). The Christian community and its pastors have the duty to ask the spouses separated and divorced to be with respect and mercy, especially for the good of the children, who do not have to provide further suffering. Children can not be an object to contend and go look for the best ways for them to overcome the trauma of the split family and grow in a serene as possible. In any case, the Church must always emphasize the injustice that comes often from the divorce situation.

80. Single-parent families have different origins: biological mothers or fathers who have never wanted to integrate into family life, violence situations where a parent is forced to flee with their children, death of a parent, abandonment of the family by a parents, and other situations. Whatever the cause, the parent who lives with the child must find support and comfort from other families that make up the Christian community, as well as at bodies parish pastoral. These families are often further affected by the severity of the economic problems, the

uncertainty of precarious work, the difficulty for child support, the lack of a home. The same pastoral care must be expressed with regard to individuals widows, single mothers and their children.

81. When the couple experiencing problems in their relations, need to rely on the help and guidance of the Church. Experience shows that with proper help and with the action of reconciliation of the grace of the Holy Spirit a large percentage of marriage crises are overcome satisfactorily. Knowing how to forgive and feel forgiveness is a fundamental experience in family life. Forgiveness between spouses allows you to rediscover the truth of a love that is forever and never goes (cf. *1 Cor* 13.8). In the context of family relations the need of reconciliation is almost daily. Misunderstandings due to relations with their families of origin, the conflict between different religious and cultural customs, the divergence about the education of children, the anxiety for the economic difficulties, the tension that arises as a result of addictions and job loss. Are some of the common reasons of tension and conflict. The laborious art of reconciliation, which requires the support of grace, needs the generous cooperation of relatives and friends, and sometimes even outside help and professional. In the most painful, such as marital infidelity, you need a true work of repair which become available. A pact can be healed wounded: this hope must educate themselves since the marriage preparation. It is crucial to the action of the Holy Spirit in the care of people injured and the families, the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the need for spiritual paths ministers accompanied by experts.

82. For many of the faithful who have experienced double unhappy, verification of the invalidity of the marriage is a way forward. The recent Motu Proprio *Mitis iudex Dominus Iesus* and *Mitis et Misericors Iesus* led to a simplification of the procedures for the possible declaration of nullity of marriage. With these texts, the Holy Father also wanted to "make clear that the Bishop himself in his Church, which is made up of a pastor and leader, is by that very judge among the faithful entrusted to him" (*MI*, preamble, III). The implementation of these documents is therefore a great responsibility for the diocesan Ordinaries, called to judge themselves some cases and, in any case, to ensure easier access of the faithful to justice. This involves the preparation of a sufficient staff, composed of clerical and lay, which devote a priority in this ecclesial service. It will therefore be necessary to provide separate people or couples in crisis, an information service, counseling and mediation, tied to the family apostolate, which can also accommodate people in view of the preliminary process to double (cf. *MI*, Art. 2-3).

83. The testimony of those who even in difficult conditions do not undertake a new union, while remaining faithful to the sacramental bond, deserves the appreciation and support of the Church. It wants to show them the face of a God faithful to his love and always able to give back strength and hope. People separated or divorced but have not remarried who are often witnesses of marital fidelity, must be encouraged to find in the Eucharist the food that sustains them in their state.

Discernment and integration

84. The faithful who are divorced and civilly remarried need to be more integrated in the Christian communities in different ways as possible, avoiding any chance of scandal. The logic of integration is the key to their pastoral care, because they only know that they belong to the Body of Christ which is the Church, but it can have a joyful and fruitful experience. Are

baptized, are brothers and sisters, the Holy Spirit pours into their gifts and talents for the good of all. Their participation can be expressed in different ecclesial services: it is therefore necessary to discern which of the various forms of exclusion currently practiced in the liturgy, pastoral, educational and institutional framework can be overcome. They not only do not have to feel excommunicated, but can live and grow as living members of the Church, feeling like a mother who welcomes them always, he takes care of them with affection and encourages them in the path of life and of the Gospel. This integration is also needed for the care and Christian education of their children, who must be considered the most important. For the Christian community, take care of these people is not a weakening of their faith and testimony about the indissolubility of marriage: rather, the Church expresses in this very carefully his charity.

85. St. John Paul II offered a comprehensive policy, which remains the basis for the evaluation of these situations: "Pastors must know that, for the sake of truth, are obliged to discern situations. There is indeed a difference between those who have sincerely tried to save their first marriage and have been unjustly abandoned, and those who through their own grave fault have destroyed a canonically valid marriage. Finally, there are those who have contracted a second marriage for the sake of the children, and are sometimes subjectively certain in conscience that their previous marriage, irreparably broken, had never been valid" (*FC*, 84). It is therefore the duty of priests to accompany the people concerned on the way of understanding according to the teaching of the Church and the guidelines of the Bishop. This process will be useful to make an examination of conscience, by moments of reflection and repentance. The divorced and remarried should ask themselves how they have behaved towards their children when the conjugal union has entered into crisis; though there have been attempts at reconciliation; as is the situation of the partners abandoned; what effect has the new report on the rest of the family and the community of the faithful; as such it offers to young people who are preparing for marriage. A sincere reflection can strengthen trust in the mercy of God that is not denied to anyone.

Moreover, one can not deny that in some circumstances "imputability and responsibility for an action can be diminished or nullified" (*CCC*, 1735) due to several constraints. Accordingly, the judgment of an objective situation should not lead to a judgment on the 'subjective culpability' (Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, Declaration of June 24, 2000, 2a). Under certain circumstances people find it very difficult to act differently. Therefore, while supporting a general rule, it must recognize that the responsibility with respect to certain actions or decisions is not the same in all cases. The pastoral discernment, while taking account of a properly formed conscience of the people, must take responsibility for these situations. The consequences of acts are not necessarily the same in all cases.

86. The process of discernment and directs these faithful to an awareness of their situation before God. The interview with the priest, in the internal forum, contributes to the formation of a correct judgment on what hinders the possibility of a fuller participation in the life of the Church and the steps that can foster it and make it grow. Given that the same law no gradation (cf. *FC*, 34), this discernment will never consider the needs of truth and charity of the Gospel proposed by the Church. For this to happen, are guaranteed the necessary conditions of humility, confidence, love for the Church and its teaching, in the sincere search for God's will and the desire to achieve a more perfect answer to it.

Chapter IV

Family and evangelization

The family spirituality

87. The family, in its vocation and mission, it is truly a treasure of the Church. However, as St Paul says in relation to the Gospel, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (*2 Cor 4,7*). On the front door of the family's life, says Pope Francis, "are written three words [...]" allowed? "; " Thank you "; " sorry ". In fact, these words open the way to live well in a family, to live in peace. These words are simple, but not so easy to put into practice! They contain a great strength: the strength to guard the house, even through many difficulties and trials; rather lack thereof, gradually opens cracks that may make it even collapse "(Francis, General Audience, May 13, 2015). The teaching of the Popes invites you to deepen the spiritual dimension of family life from the rediscovery of family prayer and listening to the Word of God in common, which leads to the commitment of charity. Staple food of the spiritual life of the family is the Eucharist, especially on the day of the Lord, as a sign of his deep rooted in the ecclesial community (cf. John Paul II, *Dies Domini* , 52; 66). The domestic prayer, participation in the liturgy and practice of popular devotions and Marian are effective means of encounter with Jesus Christ and evangelization of the family. This will highlight the special vocation of the spouses to realize, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, the holiness in their married life, also participating in the mystery of the cross of Christ, which transforms the difficulties and sufferings into an offering of love.

88. Family Tenderness is the bond between parents and each other with these children. Tenderness means to give with joy and stir in the other the joy of feeling loved. It is expressed in particular in turn with exquisite attention to the limits of the other, especially when they emerge in a clear manner. Dealing with delicacy and respect means treating wounds and give back hope, to revive confidence in the other. Tenderness in family relationships is the virtue that helps to overcome the daily inner conflicts and relational. In this regard, Pope Francis invites us to reflect: "We have the courage to accept with tenderness difficult situations and problems of those around us, or we prefer solutions impersonal, perhaps effective but without the warmth of the Gospel? How much need for tenderness today the world! Patience of God, God's closeness, tenderness of God "(Homily for the Midnight Mass on the Solemnity of Christmas, December 24th, 2014).

The subject of family pastoral

89. If the Christian family wants to be faithful to its mission, it will well understand where it comes: can not evangelize without being evangelized. The mission of the family embraces the fruitful union of the spouses, their children's education, the testimony of the sacrament, preparing couples for marriage and other friendly accompaniment of those couples or families facing difficulties. Hence the importance of a work of evangelization and catechesis addressed within the family. In this respect, care should be taken to enhance couples, mothers and fathers, as active agents of catechesis, especially towards children, in collaboration with priests, deacons, consecrated persons and catechists. This effort starts from the first series acquaintances of the couple. It is of great help family catechesis, as effective method to train young people and parents to make them aware of their mission as evangelizers of their own family. Also, it is very important to stress the link between Christian initiation and family

experience. The whole Christian community must become a place where families come, meet and confront together, walking in faith and sharing growth paths and mutual exchange.

90. The Church must instill in families a sense of ecclesial belonging, a sense of "we" in which no member is forgotten. All are encouraged to develop their skills and realize the project of his life to serving the Kingdom of God. Every family, inserted in the context of the Church, to rediscover the joy of communion with other families to serve the common good of society, promoting a policy, economy and culture in the service of the family, including through the use of social networks and media. It calls for the ability to create small communities of families as living witnesses of Gospel values. There is a need to prepare, train and empower families that can accompany other to live as Christians. They are well remembered and encouraged families who are willing to live the mission " *ad gentes* ". Finally, we note the importance of connecting with the youth ministry family ministry.

The relationship with the cultures and institutions

91. The Church "which has undergone over the centuries different conditions of existence, has used the different cultures to spread and explain in his preaching the message of Christ to all nations, to study it and develop it, to express it better in life liturgy and life of the multiform community of the faithful "(*GS* 58). It is important, therefore, to take account of these cultures and adhere to each of them in its particularity. It should also recall what we wrote the Blessed Pope Paul VI: "The split between the Gospel and culture is undoubtedly the drama of our time, as it was of other times. We must therefore make every effort to ensure a full evangelization of culture, or more correctly of cultures "(*EN* , 20). The pastoral care of marriage and family needs to estimate those positive elements that come together in different cultural and religious experiences, which are a " *praeparatio evangelical* ". In the encounter with cultures, however, evangelization focused on the needs of the human promotion of the family can not escape the frank denunciation of cultural conditioning, social, political and economic. The growing hegemony of the logic of the market, which deadens the spaces and times of a real family life, also contributes to aggravate discrimination, poverty, exclusion, violence. Among the different families living in conditions of economic poverty, due to unemployment or job insecurity or lack of social and health care, not infrequently it happens that some, unable to get credit, they are to be victims of usury and see sometimes forced to flee their homes and even their children. In this regard, it is suggested to create economic structures of appropriate support to help these families or able to promote family solidarity and social.

92. The family is "the primary vital cell of society" (*AA* , 11). It must rediscover its vocation in support of social life in all its aspects. It is essential that families, through their tag along, find ways to interact with the political, economic and cultural, in order to build a more just society. For this to be developed dialogue and cooperation with social structures, and should be encouraged and supported the laity who are committed, as Christians, in the cultural and socio-political. The policy must respect in particular the principle of subsidiarity and does not limit the rights of families. It is important in this regard to consider the "Charter of Rights of the Family" (cf. Pontifical Council for the Family, October 22, 1983) and the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (December 10, 1948). For Christians who work in the political commitment to life and the family must take priority, since a society that neglects the family has lost its openness to the future. Family associations, committed to working together with groups of other Christian traditions, have among their main aims, among others, the promotion and

defense of life and family, freedom of education and religious freedom, harmonization between the time for work and time for the family, the protection of women at work, the protection of conscientious objection.

The opening to the mission

93. The family of the baptized is missionary by nature and increases its faith in the act of giving it to others, first of all to their children. The fact of living the family communion is its first form of announcement. In fact, evangelization begins in the family, in which not only transmits the physical life, but also the spiritual life. The role of grandparents in the transmission of the faith and religious practices should not be forgotten, are the witnesses of the link between generations, guardians of wisdom traditions, prayer and good example. The family is constituted as subject of pastoral action through the explicit proclamation of the Gospel and the legacy of multiple forms of evidence: the solidarity with the poor, the opening to the diversity of people, the protection of creation, the moral solidarity and material to other families especially to the most needy, the commitment to the promotion of the common good also by the transformation of unjust social structures, from the territory in which it lives, practicing the corporal works of mercy and spiritual.

CONCLUSION

94. In the course of this House we Synod Fathers, gathered around Pope Francis, we experienced the tenderness and the prayer of the whole Church, we walked like the disciples of Emmaus and recognized the presence of Christ in the breaking of bread at the Eucharistic table , fellowship, sharing of pastoral experiences. We hope that the result of this work, now delivered into the hands of the Successor of Peter, to give hope and joy to many families in the world, guidance to pastors and pastoral agents and stimulus to the work of evangelization. Concluding this report, we humbly ask the Holy Father to consider the possibility of issuing a document on the family, because in it, the domestic Church, shine ever more Christ, light of the world.

Prayer to the Holy Family

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
in you contemplate
the splendor of true love,
we turn to you with confidence.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
make our families
places of communion and prayer circles,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
no more families will have experience
of violence, closure and division:

anyone was injured or scandalized
know soon consolation and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
awakened in all awareness
of the sacred and inviolable character of the family,
its beauty in God's plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
listen, answered our prayer.

Amen.

[01825-IT.01] [Original text: Italian]

The votes of the individual numbers of the Final Report of the Synod of Bishops to the Holy Father Francis

Fathers present: 265

[Two-thirds: 177]

Not indicated abstentions

Number	Yes	No
1	260	0
2	257	0
3	255	1
4	256	2
5	256	3
6	249	9
7	248	9
8	245	9
9	254	4
10	253	7
11	256	1
12	253	5
13	255	5
14	256	5
15	255	5
16	254	8
17	259	1
18	258	1
19	255	5
20	257	3
21	256	4
22	252	4
23	253	4
24	255	5

25	242	15
26	256	2
27	251	9
28	257	4
29	249	8
30	250	7
31	253	7
32	249	6
33	246	12
34	245	11
35	259	2
36	256	3
37	252	6
38	251	5
39	255	3
40	255	6
41	253	7
42	257	2
43	254	6
44	247	11
45	249	6
46	254	5
47	246	11
48	253	6
49	253	5
50	252	6
51	250	11
52	252	5
53	244	15
54	236	21
55	243	14
56	248	10
57	257	2
58	247	14
59	258	3
60	259	1
61	254	7
62	259	0
63	237	21
64	247	11
65	252	7
66	258	0
67	259	0
68	253	3
69	236	21
70	213	47
71	218	42
72	229	29
73	236	24
74	223	36
75	205	52

76	221	37
77	247	11
78	250	8
79	246	14
80	253	6
81	253	7
82	244	16
83	248	12
84	187	72
85	178	80
86	190	64
87	255	3
88	252	4
89	257	2
90	255	5
91	248	12
92	256	4
93	255	2
94	253	5

[01828-IT.01]

[B0816-XX.02]