



Reflection 3

FOLLOWING CLELIA'S FOOTSTEPS
TOWARD THE HEART OF JESUS

Year of the Family 2021/2022

The Family of Nazareth (Luke 2: 1-7)

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

On **March 19, 2021**, the Church will celebrate five years since the publication of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* on the beauty and joy of love in the family. On the same day, Pope Francis will launch the Year “*Amoris Laetitia* Family”, which will conclude on June 26, 2022, on the occasion of the X World Meeting of Families in Rome with the Holy Father.

The pandemic has placed in a new light the central role of the family as the domestic Church and the importance of bonding among families, which makes the Church a “family of families” (AL 87). This merits a year of celebration so that every ecclesial and pastoral reality might place it at the center of its efforts and care.

Objectives

1. To spread the content of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, “to have people experience that the Gospel of the family is a joy that fills the heart and our whole life” (AL 200). A family that discovers and experiences the joy of having a gift and of being a gift to the Church and the society, “can become a light in the darkness of the world” (AL 66). And today the world is in need of that light!
2. To proclaim that the Sacrament of Marriage is a gift and that it has in itself a transforming power of human love. To this end, it is necessary that Pastors and families walk together in pastoral co-responsibility and complementarity between the different vocations in the Church (cf. AL 203).
3. To make families protagonists in the Family Pastoral. To this end, “an effort of evangelization and of catechesis directed to the heart of the family” (AL 200) is necessary because a disciple family also becomes a missionary family.
4. To sensitize young people to the importance of being formed in the truth of love and in the gift of oneself with initiatives dedicated to them.
5. To broaden the gaze and action of the family pastoral so that it becomes transversal to the family, to include the spouses, the children, the young people, the elderly and situations of family fragility.”

Pope Francis

It is good to reflect on the fact that the Son of God wanted to be in need of the warmth of a family, like all children. Precisely for this reason, because it is Jesus’ family, the family of Nazareth is the model family, in which all families of the world can find their sure point of reference and sure inspiration. . . . In imitation of the Holy Family, we are called to rediscover the educational value of the family unit: it requires being founded on the love that always regenerates relationships, opening up horizons of hope. Within the family one can experience sincere communion when it is a house of prayer, when affections are serious, profound, pure, when forgiveness prevails over discord, when the daily harshness of life is softened by mutual

tenderness and serene adherence to God's will. In this way, the family opens itself up to the joy that God gives to all those who know how to give joyfully. At the same time, it finds the spiritual energy to be open to the outside world, to others, to serving brothers and sisters, to cooperation in building an ever new and better world; capable, therefore, of becoming a bearer of positive stimuli; the family evangelizes by the example of life. It is true that there are problems, and at times arguments in every family. . . . But we are human, we are weak, and we all quarrel within the family at times. I will tell you something: if you quarrel within the family, do not end the day without making peace. "Yes, I quarrelled", but before the end of the day, make peace. . . . And then, in the family there are three words, three phrases that must always be held dear: "Excuse me", "Thank you", and "Sorry". forget the three phrases: "excuse me", "thank you", and "I am sorry". . . .If there are these three phrases in a family, in a family environment, then the family is fine. (*Angelus, December 27, 2020*)

Amoris Letitia

A family's living space could turn into a domestic church, a setting for the Eucharist, the presence of Christ seated at its table. We can never forget the image found in the Book of Revelation, where the Lord says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20). Here we see a home filled with the presence of God, common prayer and every blessing. This is the meaning of the conclusion of Psalm 128, which we cited above: "Thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. The Lord bless you from Zion!" (Ps 128:4-5). (AL 15)

GFASC – The Great Family of the Sacred Heart is a mission to families. Its principal objective is to consecrate families to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and encourage them to live the Christian life with greater commitment. This experience of the spirituality and charism of Mother Clelia is given to all those who wish to know, love, and proclaim the Heart of Jesus. It has brought enlightenment and hope of newness of life to many families and individuals.

To belong to the Great Family of the Sacred Heart means to engage in a program of life that involves one's whole existence, to be formed as

one who witnesses to the love of the Sacred Heart in any sector of society.

Mother Clelia

“Never let your heart be disturbed nor get involved in things that upset it; but always work to keep it calm because in this way the Lord will build in your soul a city of peace, and your heart will be a place of delights. Every time you get upset, Jesus simply wants you to come back to silence and calm yourself again in all your works and thoughts.” (SA, pp. 35 -36)

Prayer

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendour of true love, to you we turn with trust. Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth, may families never again experience violence, rejection and division: may all who have been hurt or scandalized find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth, make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family, and its beauty in God’s plan.

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
graciously hear our prayer.*

(Pope Francis)

PLEDGE: Discover the value and beauty of your family.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart

