

Where It All Begins: The Importance of the Family for Persons & Society

and in the Social Doctrine of the Church



The Family

1. The Family: The
First Natural
Society

2. Foundation of
the Family:
Marriage

3. The Family in
Society

4. Rights and
Duties of the
Family

5. The Family as an
Active Participant
in Social Life



GAYBY BABY – School Action Toolkit



Watch Later



Share

"Students were able to deconstruct ideas about family. It was perfect."

- Anthea, Principal

MORE VIDEOS



0:57 / 2:19



YouTube



What is a Family?

- The first natural society
born of the intimate communion of life & love
founded on the marriage between one man &
one woman.
- The principal place of interpersonal relationships
- The first and vital cell of society
- A divine institution that stands at the foundation
of life of the human person as the prototype of
every social order.

(*CSDC*, 211)



Some Key Documents

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* (1891)

Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae* (1968)

Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio* on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World (1981)

Holy See, *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (1983)

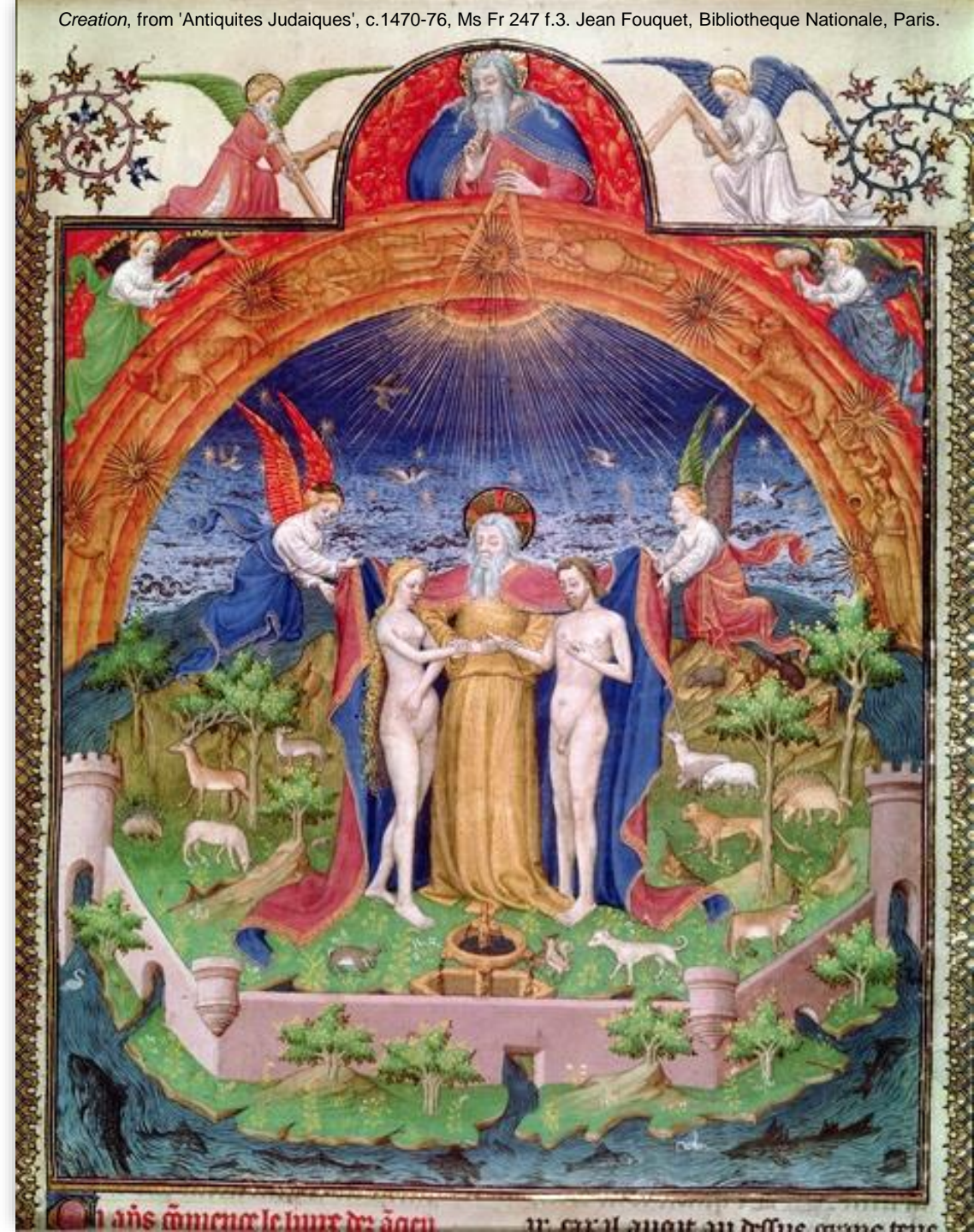
Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Families* (1994)

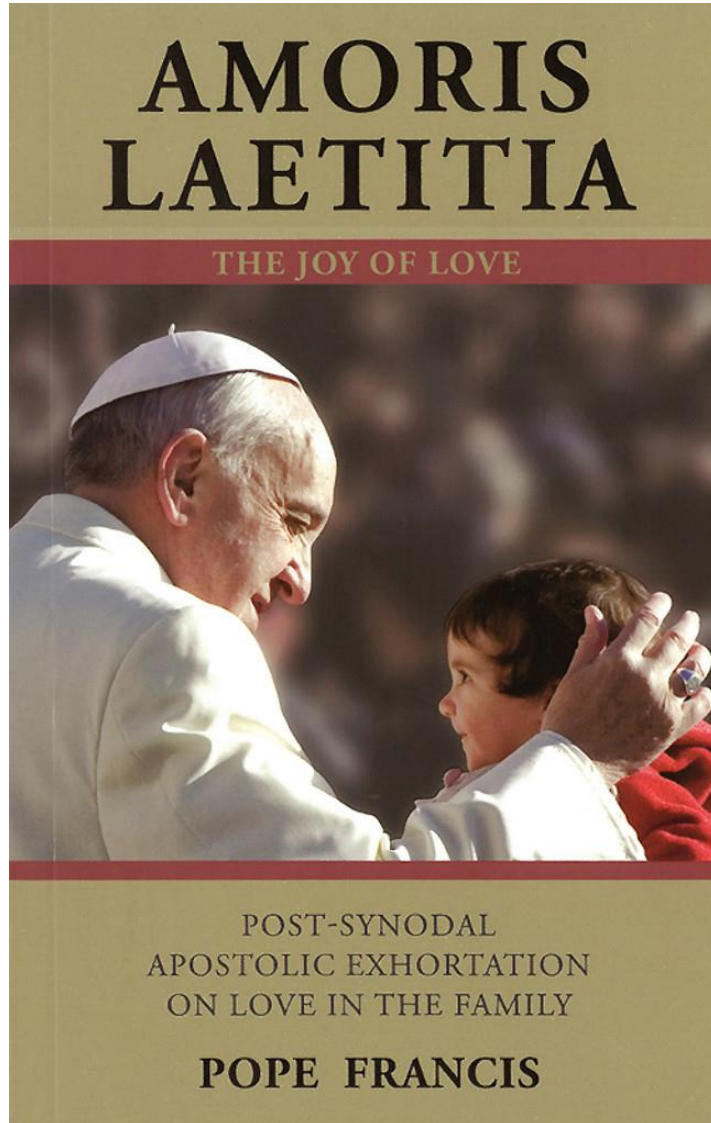
Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, on Love in the Family (2016)

Family: The First Natural Society

Origin of the Family

- 1st natural society: springs from our nature
- God's blessings to Adam & Eve
 - 'It is not good that the man should be alone' (Gen 2:18)
 - Become 'one flesh' (Gen 2:24, Mt 19: 5-6): 1st communion of persons
 - 'Be fruitful and multiply' (Gen 1:28): participation in God's creative power
- Cradle of life & love in God's plan
- 1st place experience interpersonal relationships





- The Gospel of the family responds to the deepest expectations of the human person: a response to each one's dignity and fulfilment in reciprocity, communion and fruitfulness.
- The Church's teachings on the family are not a mere set of rules.
- They 'propose values that are clearly needed today, even in the most secularized of countries'.

(Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 2011).

I've chosen not to have kids. Why should I have to pay taxes to support other people's choice?

Don't I deserve a tax credit for *not* having kids?



'D.I.N.K.': Double Income, No Kids

The Importance of the Family

a) Importance of the Family for the Human Person?

b) Importance of the Family for Society?

5 Reasons





1. The Family: The First Natural Society



Sonia Bonadio & Family, <https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/vic/services-and-supports/family-support/>

Importance of the Family for the Person

- Best environment for growth, flourishing & development of persons
- Interdependence: love & connection
 - Begins with mutual self-giving of spouses
 - Learn to be human
 - Discover our dignity: where we are loved for who we are
- First school of the virtues that every society needs

In the family,

the various generations come together to help one another & grow wiser & harmonize personal rights with the other requirements for social life. (G&S, 52)

Importance of the Family for Society

Far from being closed in on itself, the family is by nature & vocation open to other families & to society, & undertakes its social role.

Familiaris Consortio, 42.



Importance of the Family for Society

- The family is an initiation into life in society.
- Values & virtues learned in the family are valuable for social life
- Health of families, the good of persons & the good of society are interconnected.

Strong, stable families support people & support societies

- Moral, cultural & spiritual values taught in the family shape society.
- Responsibility, solidarity & commitment to the common good are learned in the family
- Family precedes society & the State
- Respecting the family is essential for the common good
- Subsidiarity & the family



The future of humanity passes by way of the family.
(John Paul II, FC, 86)



The family is a society: love & forming a community of persons

- Teach what it means to be human & where happiness lies
- Families living in love, respect & self-giving

expose the failings & contradictions of a society that is for the most part, even if not exclusively, based on efficiency & functionality. ... The family is instead the ... example & stimulus for the broader community relationships marked by respect, justice, dialogue & love.

- Teach us there is a place for everyone.

A black and white photograph showing three hands of different sizes (adult, child, and adult) stacked together in a cupped shape, symbolizing care and support. The text '2. Foundation of the Family: Marriage' is overlaid in white.

2. Foundation of the Family: Marriage



Marriage: Foundation of the Family

- Not a 'construct'
- Rooted in natural law & divine law: characteristics cannot be modified
 - Free choice of the spouses
 - Totality: total mutual self-giving
 - Unity: one flesh
 - Indissolubility: fidelity
 - Fruitfulness: Open to life
- The Sacrament of Marriage
 - Natural institution *elevated* to the dignity of a sacrament
 - Purpose



3. The Family is a Society

Mission of the Family:

'Family, Become What You Are'

- The family discovers its identity & mission in God's plan. Mission/role comes from what it *is*.
- God's plan established the family as an 'intimate community of life & love,'.
- Family's Mission: to become more & more what it is, ie, a community of life & love, in an effort that will find fulfillment in the Kingdom of God.
- The family has the mission to guard, reveal & communicate love.
- This is a living reflection of & a real sharing in God's love for humanity & the love of Christ for the Church His bride.
- Tasks of the family come from its identity & mission. With love as the starting point, the family has 4 general tasks:
 - 1) forming a community of persons
 - 2) serving life
 - 3) participating in the development of society
 - 4) sharing in the life and mission of the Church





What is the Family's 'First & Fundamental' Contribution to Society?

'The very experience of communion & sharing that should characterize the family's daily life represents its first & fundamental contribution to society.' (FC, 43)

Family Life as an Experience of Communion & Sharing

‘The very experience of communion & sharing that should characterize the family's daily life represents its first & fundamental contribution to society.’ (FC, 43)

- Family relationships: inspired & guided by the law of "free giving."
 - By respecting & fostering personal dignity in each & every one as the only basis for value, this free giving takes the form of heartfelt acceptance, encounter & dialogue, disinterested availability, generous service & deep solidarity.
- Fostering authentic & mature communion between persons within the family is the first & irreplaceable school of social life, & example & stimulus for the broader community relationships marked by respect, justice, dialogue & love.
- Family: the place of origin & the most effective means for humanizing & personalizing society:
 - builds up the world by making possible a life that is properly speaking human, in particular by guarding & transmitting virtues & "values." In the family "the various generations come together & help one another to grow wiser & to harmonize personal rights with the other requirements of social living.
- Faced with a society that risks becoming increasingly depersonalized & standardized & therefore inhuman & dehumanizing, with the negative results of many forms of escapism-such as alcoholism, drugs & even terrorism-the family possesses & continues still ‘to release formidable energies capable of taking man out of his anonymity, keeping him conscious of his personal dignity, enriching him with deep humanity & actively placing him, in his uniqueness & unrepeatability, within the fabric of society.




The family is a society: love & forming a community of persons



The presence of elderly people in families benefits the whole society

It is not just a question of doing something for older people, but also of accepting them in a realistic way as partners in shared projects — at the level of thought, dialogue & action... The elderly constitute an important school of life, capable of transmitting values & traditions, & of fostering the growth of younger generations, who thus learn to seek not only their own good but also that of others. If the elderly are in situations where they experience suffering & dependence, not only do they need health care services & appropriate assistance, but — & above all — they need to be treated with love.

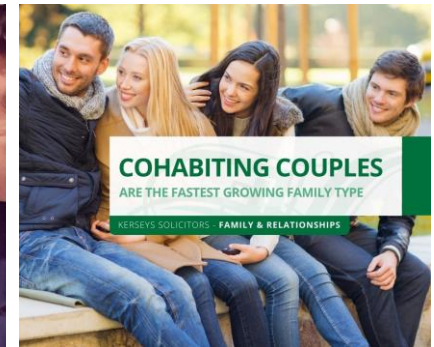


What are three of the biggest challenges for marriage and the family in Australia today?

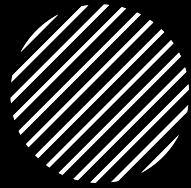
Other Arrangements



Fertility
Options for
Going Solo



Other arrangements
may provide some
love & stability, but
cannot replace the
family in society



*Only the exclusive & indissoluble union
between a man & a woman has a
plenary role to play in society as a stable
commitment that bears fruit in new life.
We need to acknowledge the great
variety of family situations that can offer
a certain stability, but de facto or same-
sex unions, for example, may not simply
be equated with marriage. No union that
is temporary or closed to the
transmission of life can ensure the future
of society. (Amoris Laetitia, 52)*

Bishop Barron *Amoris Laetitia* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5ruTwxiLqs>

<https://vimeo.com/684697272> Gay friend wants to have a Baby

Gender Ideology (AL, 56)

- Denies difference & reciprocity in nature of a man & a woman.
- Seeks a society without sexual differences, eliminating the anthropological basis of the family.
- Radically separates personal identity & emotional intimacy from the biological difference between male & female.
- Calls for laws & educational programmes to reflect & promote this
- Human identity becomes an individual choice & can change over time
- Some ideologies 'seek to respond to what are at times understandable aspirations', but assert themselves as absolute & unquestionable, even dictating how children should be raised.
- It needs to be emphasized that "biological sex & the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated".
- Technology: "has introduced the ability to manipulate the reproductive act, making it independent of the sexual relationship between a man & a woman. In this way, human life & parenthood have become modular & separable realities, subject mainly to the wishes of individuals or couples."





It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness & the complexities of life, & another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality. Let us not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator. We are creatures, & not omnipotent. Creation is prior to us & must be received as a gift. At the same time, we are called to protect our humanity, & this means, in the first place, accepting it & respecting it as it was created. (AL, 56)

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, *Created and Loved: A Guide for Catholic Schools on Identity and Gender*, 2022.

<https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/bishops-support-catholic-schools-with-guide-on-gender-identity/>



Created & Loved

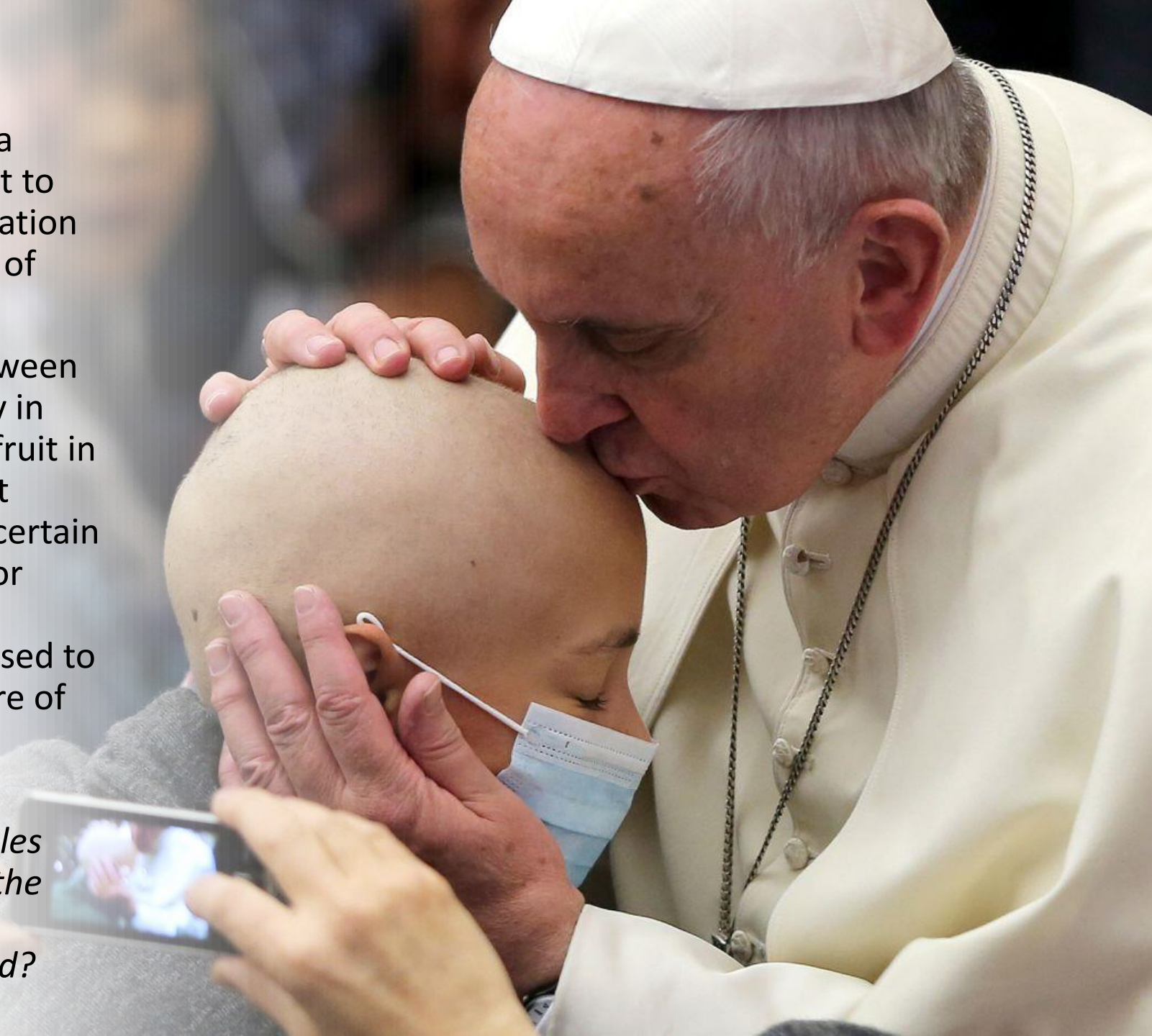
A guide for Catholic schools
on identity and gender



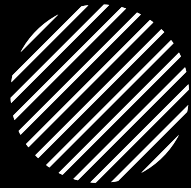
No one can think that the weakening of the family as that natural society founded on marriage will prove beneficial to society as a whole. The contrary is true: it poses a threat to the mature growth of individuals, the cultivation of community values, & the moral progress of cities and countries. ...

Only the exclusive & indissoluble union between a man & a woman has a plenary role to play in society as a stable commitment that bears fruit in new life. We need to acknowledge the great variety of family situations that can offer a certain stability, but de facto or same-sex unions, for example, may not simply be equated with marriage. No union that is temporary or closed to the transmission of life can ensure the future of society.

But nowadays who is making an effort to strengthen marriages, to help married couples overcome their problems, to assist them in the work of raising children and, in general, to encourage the stability of the marriage bond? (AL, 52).



The Experiences & Challenges of Families



What are some challenges for families today?

Choose one of the following:

1. Forming families
2. Surviving & flourishing as families
3. Becoming what they are (& maturing): communities of life & love

What response helps?

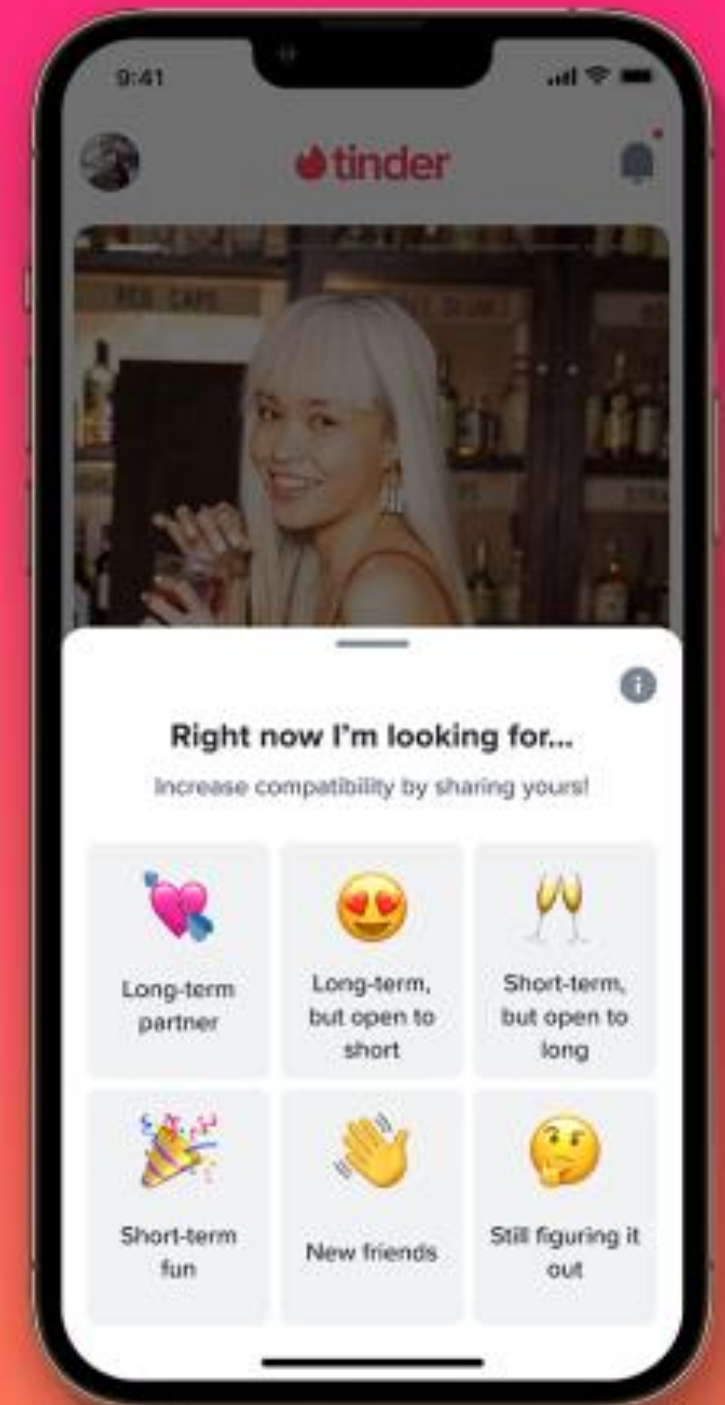


Current Realities of Families (AL, 39)

“Culture of the ephemeral”: The speed with which people move from one affective relationship to another. They believe, along the lines of social networks, that love can be connected or disconnected at the whim of the consumer & the relationship quickly “blocked”


Narcissism: makes people incapable of looking beyond themselves, beyond their own desires & needs. Yet sooner or later, those who use others end up being used themselves, manipulated & discarded by that same mind-set

Breakups: often occur among older adults who seek a kind of “independence” & reject the ideal of growing old together, looking after & supporting one another.




Amoris Laetitia: Specific Challenges

Rampant individualism:
'makes it difficult today for a person to give oneself generously' to another



Fear of Commitment:
'The fear of loneliness & the desire for stability & fidelity exist side by side with a growing fear of entrapment in a relationship that could hamper the achievement of one's personal goals.'



"We have been called to form consciences, not to replace them."
Jesus proposed a demanding ideal but "never failed to show compassion & closeness to the frailty of individuals like the Samaritan woman or the woman caught in adultery."

"We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures; we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of his Son."

Saint John Paul II



Gradualness

Saint John Paul II proposed the so-called "law of gradualness" in the knowledge that the human being "knows, loves & accomplishes moral good by different stages of growth (FC, 34). This is not a "gradualness of law" but rather a gradualness in the prudential exercise of free acts on the part of subjects who are not in a position to understand, appreciate, or fully carry out the objective demands of the law.

For the law is itself a gift of God which points out the way, a gift for everyone without exception; it can be followed with the help of grace, even though each human being "advances gradually with the progressive integration of the gifts of God & the demands of God's definitive & absolute love in his or her entire personal & social life" (FC, 34). AL, 295.



“Although she constantly holds up the call to perfection & asks for a fuller response to God, “the Church must accompany with attention & care the weakest of her children, who show signs of a wounded & troubled love, by restoring in them hope & confidence, like the beacon of a lighthouse in a port or a torch carried among the people to enlighten those who have lost their way or who are in the midst of a storm” ... the Church’s task is often like that of a field hospital.”

(Amoris Laetitia, 291).

Identifying situations in society & culture that destabilise or devalue the family.
Promoting the natural institution of the family

Not only about bioethical issues but also economic & other arrangements that impact on families.

Some challenges to/pressures on the natural institution of the family in our culture & society today?

What are some ways of supporting people in their marriage and family life today? What do we need?



<https://latterdaysaintmag.com/a-society-that-wants-the-benefits-of-marriage-and-family-without-the-responsibility/>



Housing

The lack of dignified or affordable housing often leads to the postponement of formal relationships. ... “The family has the right to decent housing, fitting for family life & commensurate to the number of the members, in a physical environment that provides the basic services for the life of the family & the community”. (*CRF*, a.11).

Families & homes go together. This makes us see how important it is to insist on the rights of the family & not only those of individuals. The family is a good which society cannot do without, & it ought to be protected. (*AL*, 44).

Migrant Families



<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/australias-new-parent-visa-absolutely-unfair-say-migrant-communities/zhg9kk6pp>

The families of migrants have the right to the same protection as that accorded other families.

- a) The families of immigrants have the right to respect for their own culture & to receive support & assistance towards their integration into the community to which they contribute.
- b) Emigrant workers have the right to see their family united as soon as possible.
- c) Refugees have the right to the assistance of public authorities & International Organizations in facilitating the reunion of their families.

Charter of Rights of the Family, 1983, a. 12.



4. Rights and Duties of the Family



Rights & Duties of the Family

The nature of marriage & family & its mission in society & Church imply rights & responsibilities:

- Duties in relation to procreation & education of children
- Right to be able to fulfil them
- Right to support from society to do so (subsidiarity)

Tasks of the family come from its identity & mission. With love as the starting point, the family has 4 general tasks:

- 1) forming a community of persons
- 2) serving life
- 3) participating in the development of society
- 4) sharing in the life and mission of the Church (FC, 17).

Rights & Duties of the Family:

- **The Sanctuary of Life**
 - *Humanae Vitae*
 - Responsible Parenthood
 - The 'right' to a child
- **Education of Children**
 - Right & duty of parents: 'primary & principal educators'
 - Begins in the home
 - Integral formation
 - School
 - The Church
 - Civil Society & the State
 - Subsidiarity & Choice in Schooling
 - Educating in Human Love
- **Dignity & Rights of Children**





Family as the Sanctuary of Life

- In transmitting life & educating children, parents 'should realise that they are thereby cooperators with the love of God the creator & are, so to speak, the interpreters of that love' (GS, 50)
- Where the gift of life is welcomed, protected & nurtured, from conception to natural death
- The unitive & procreative ends of marriage go together & cannot be separated without harm
- Responsible parenthood
 - not 'a justification for being selfishly closed'
 - a responsibility that must 'guide the decisions of the spouses in a generous acceptance of life' (CSDC, 232)
 - 'after prudent reflection & common decision courageously undertake the proper upbringing of a large number of children' (*Gaudium et Spes*, 50)
 - Parenthood is not only physical but spiritual

Some Key Documents on Education

Vatican Council II, Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimus Educationis* (1965).

John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio* (1981), nn. 36-40.

SCCE, *Educational Guidance in Human Love: Outlines for Sex Education* (1984).

CCE, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (1990).

Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education Within the Family* (1996).

CCE, "Male and female he created them": towards a path of dialogue on the question of gender theory in education (2019).



Education is not just
about information and
professional training

True education aims at the formation of the
human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end
& of the good of the societies of which, as man,
he is a member, & in whose obligations, as an
adult, he will share. (*GE*, 1)

Education Begins in the Home

The family ... is uniquely suited to teach & transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual & religious values, essential for the development & well-being of its own members & of society.

By exercising its mission to educate, the family contributes to the common good & constitutes the first school of social virtue, which all societies need. In the family, persons are helped to grow in freedom & responsibility, indispensable prerequisites for any function in society. With education, certain fundamental values are communicated & assimilated. (*CSDC*)

- Mother and father



The Right & Duty to Educate

The fecundity of conjugal love cannot be reduced solely to the procreation of children, but must extend to their moral education & their spiritual formation. "The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute." The right & the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial & inalienable.

(CCC, 2221)



Parents are the Primary Educators of their Children

The right & duty of parents to give education is essential, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is original & primary with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents & children; & it is irreplaceable & inalienable, & therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others. (*FC*, 36).



CCC, 2223

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, & disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, & self-mastery - the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the material & instinctual dimensions to interior & spiritual ones.

Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them. (CCC, 2223)





Parents are the 1st, but not the only educators

'Parents have the right to choose the formative tools that respond to their convictions & to seek those means that will help them best to fulfil their duty as educators, in the spiritual & religious sphere also.'
(CSDC)

- Schools: support, but cannot replace the educational responsibilities of parents
- Cooperation between the family & schools

Civil Society & the State

Public authorities have the duty to guarantee this right & to ensure the concrete conditions necessary for it to be exercised.

'It is the task of the state to see to it that all citizens are able to come to a suitable share in culture & are properly prepared to exercise their civic duties & rights. Therefore the state must protect the right of children to an adequate school education, check on the ability of teachers & the excellence of their training, look after the health of the pupils & in general, promote the whole school project.' (*GE*, 6)





Subsidiarity & Choice in Schooling

The State

'must always keep in mind the principle of *subsidiarity* so that there is no kind of school monopoly, for this is opposed to the native rights of the human person, to the development & spread of culture, to the peaceful association of citizens & to the pluralism that exists today in ever so many societies. (*GE*, 6)

'The public power, which has the obligation to protect & defend the rights of citizens, must see to it, in its concern for distributive justice, that public subsidies are paid out in such a way that parents are truly free to choose according to their conscience the schools they want for their children.' (*GE*, 6)

Parents have the right to found & support educational institutions.

- Public authorities must see to it that “public subsidies are so allocated that parents are truly free to exercise this right without incurring unjust burdens.
- Parents should not have to sustain, directly or indirectly, extra charges which would deny or unjustly limit the exercise of this freedom”.
- The refusal to provide public economic support to non-public schools that need assistance & that render a service to civil society is to be considered an injustice.
- “Whenever the State lays claim to an educational monopoly, it oversteps its rights & offends justice ... The State cannot without injustice merely tolerate so-called private schools. Such schools render a public service & therefore have a right to financial assistance”.

CSDC, 241.



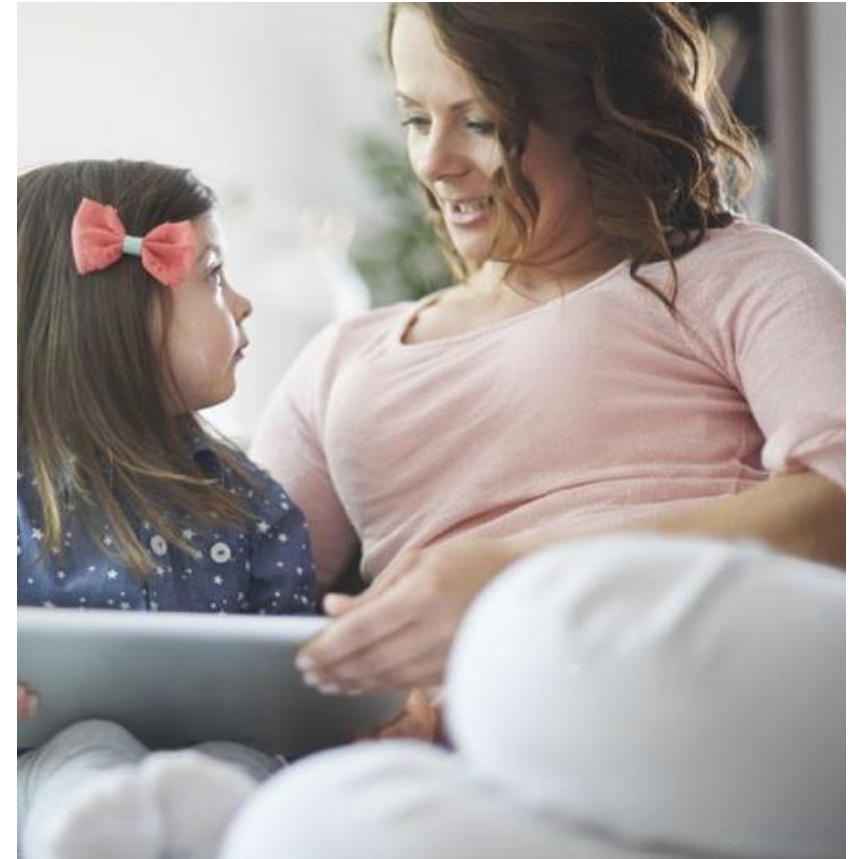
The Church



- The Church's right and duty to educate
- Right: 'to freely to establish & to conduct schools of every type & level.' 'The exercise of a right of this kind contributes in the highest degree to the protection of freedom of conscience, the rights of parents, as well as to the betterment of culture itself.' (GE)
- Historical contribution to education
- Moral & Religious Formation in Schools, including non-Catholic schools

Educating in Human Love

- Parents have ... a particular responsibility in the area of sexual education.
- It is of fundamental importance for the balanced growth of children that they are taught in an orderly and progressive manner the meaning of sexuality and that they learn to appreciate the human and moral values connected with it.
- In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality.
- Parents have the obligation to inquire about the methods used for sexual education in educational institutions in order to verify that such an important and delicate topic is dealt with properly. *CSDC*, 243.



Educating in Human Love, *FC*, 37.

- Education in love as self-giving: a clear & delicate sex education. Faced with a culture that largely reduces human sexuality to the level of something common place, since it interprets & lives it in a reductive & impoverished way by linking it solely with the body & with selfish pleasure ... parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex that is truly & fully personal: for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person-body, emotions & soul-& it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love.
- *Sex education, which is a basic right & duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centers chosen & controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents.*
- In this context education for chastity is absolutely essential, for it is a virtue that develops a person's authentic maturity & makes him or her capable of respecting & fostering the "nuptial meaning" of the body. Indeed Christian parents, discerning the signs of God's call, will devote special attention & care to education in virginity or celibacy as the supreme form of that self-giving that constitutes the very meaning of human sexuality.
- In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person & his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of & respect for the moral norms as the necessary & highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality.
- For this reason the Church is firmly opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles. That would merely be an introduction to the experience of pleasure & a stimulus leading to the loss of serenity-while still in the years of innocence-by opening the way to vice.



Amoris Laetitia, 280-286.

'Sex Ed.'



Sexuality ... cannot be reduced merely to pleasure or entertainment, nor can sex education be reduced to technical instruction aimed solely at protecting the interested parties from possible disease or the "risk" of procreation. This would be to impoverish & disregard the deeper meaning of sexuality, a meaning which needs to be acknowledged & responsibly appropriated not only by individuals but also by the community.

It is irresponsible to view sexuality merely as a source of pleasure, & likewise to regulate it through strategies of mandatory birth control. In either case materialistic ideas & policies are at work, & individuals are ultimately subjected to various forms of violence.

Against such policies, there is a need to defend the primary competence of the family in the area of sexuality, as opposed to the State & its restrictive policies, & to ensure that parents are suitably prepared to undertake their responsibilities. (CV, 44.)

A sexual education that fosters a healthy sense of modesty has immense value, however much some people nowadays consider modesty a relic of a bygone era. Modesty is a natural means whereby we defend our personal privacy and prevent ourselves from being turned into objects to be used. Without a sense of modesty, affection and sexuality can be reduced to an obsession with genitality and unhealthy behaviours that distort our capacity for love, and with forms of sexual violence that lead to inhuman treatment or cause hurt to others. *Amoris Laetitia*, 282.



<https://parentguides.com.au/sex-education-home-and-school/>

Passing on the Faith



- Through the grace of the sacrament of marriage, parents receive the responsibility & privilege of evangelizing their children. Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the "first heralds" for their children. They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church. A wholesome family life can foster interior dispositions that are a genuine preparation for a living faith & remain a support for it throughout one's life. (CCC, 2225)
- Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, & enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray & to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community & the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children & parents. (CCC, 2226)
- Children in turn contribute to the growth in holiness of their parents. Each & everyone should be generous & tireless in forgiving one another for offenses, quarrels, injustices, & neglect. Mutual affection suggests this. The charity of Christ demands it. (CCC, 2227)

Rights & Duties of Children

“In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, & a great respect & generous concern for their rights. This is true for every child, but it becomes all the more urgent the smaller the child is & the more it is in need of everything, when it is sick, suffering or handicapped”. (FC, 26)

- The first right of the child is to “be born in a real family” (CSDC, 245)
- As adults, they have the right to choose their profession & state in life (CCC, 2230)
- Situations that impede the integral development of the majority of the world’s children:
 - Inadequate health care, food, shelter
 - Little or no opportunity for a minimum of academic formation
 - Other serious problems: ‘trafficking in children, child labour, the phenomenon of “street children”, the use of children in armed conflicts, child marriage, the use of children for commerce in pornographic material, also in the use of the most modern & sophisticated instruments of social communication.’

It is essential to engage in a battle, at the national and international levels, against the violations of the dignity of boys & girls caused by sexual exploitation, by those caught up in paedophilia, & by every kind of violence directed against these most defenceless of human creatures. These are criminal acts that must be effectively fought with adequate preventive & penal measures by the determined action of the different authorities involved. (CSDC, 245)

Duties of Parents: CCC, 2221-2231.

Duties of Children: CCC, 2214-2220.



<https://parentline.com.au/issues/rights-children>



5. The Family as an Active Participant in Social Life

Society at the Service of the Family



“The importance of the family for the life & well-being of society entails a particular responsibility for society to support & strengthen marriage & the family. Civil authority should consider it a grave duty to acknowledge the true nature of marriage & the family, to protect & foster them, to safeguard public morality, & promote domestic prosperity.” (CCC, 2210)



Social & Political Life

- Laws and institutions of the State not only do not offend but support and positively defend the rights and duties of the family
- Right to form associations
- The importance of the family for the life and well-being of society entails a particular responsibility for society to support and strengthen marriage and the family (CCC 2210)
- Civil authorities have 'a grave duty to acknowledge the true nature of marriage and the family, to protect and foster them, to safeguard public morality, and promote domestic prosperity (*Gaudium et Spes*, 52)
- Pope John Paul II, *Charter on the Rights of the Family*, 1983



Call to Family Community and Participation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=giQgWakrgQs>

Respecting & Fostering the Family

- “Society, & in particular State institutions, respecting the priority & antecedence of the family, is called to guarantee & foster the genuine identity of family life & to avoid & fight all that alters or wounds it. This requires political & legislative action to safeguard family values, from the promotion of intimacy & harmony within families to the respect for unborn life & to the effective freedom of choice in educating children.
- Therefore, neither society nor the State may absorb, substitute or reduce the social dimension of the family; rather, they must honour it, recognize it, respect it & promote it according to the principle of subsidiarity. (CSDC, 252)



Protecting the Family

Authentic and effective family policies must be brought about ... to meet the needs arising from the rights of the family as such... There is a necessary prerequisite: ... the recognition - which entails protecting, appreciating & promoting - the identity of the family, the natural society founded on marriage.

This recognition represents a clear line of demarcation between the family, understood correctly, & all other forms of cohabitation which, by their very nature, deserve neither the name nor the status of family. (*CSDC*, 253)

The recognition on the part of civil society & the State of the priority of the family over every other community, & even over the reality of the State, means overcoming merely individualistic conceptions & accepting the family dimension as the indispensable cultural & political perspective in the consideration of persons.

This is not offered as an alternative, but rather as a support & defence of the very rights that people have as individuals ... because people must not be considered only as individuals but also in relation to the family nucleus to which they belong, the specific values & needs of which must be taken into due account. (*CSDC*, 254)



Charter on the Rights of the Family, 1983.



Charter of the Rights of the Family, 1983.

- The right to exist and progress as a family: right of every human being, even if poor, to found a family & have adequate means to support it;
- The right to exercise its responsibility regarding the transmission of life & educate children
- The right to the intimacy of conjugal and family life;
- The right to the stability of the bond and of the institution of marriage;
- The right to believe in and profess one's faith and to propagate it;
- The right to bring up children in accordance with the family's own traditions and religious and cultural values, with the necessary instruments, means and institutions;
- The right, especially of the poor and the sick, to obtain physical, social, political and economic security;
- The right to housing suitable for living family life in a proper way;
- The right to expression and to representation, either directly or through associations, before the economic, social and cultural public authorities and lower authorities;
- The right to form associations with other families and institutions, in order to fulfill the family's role suitably and expeditiously
- The right to protect minors by adequate institutions and legislation from harmful drugs, pornography, alcoholism, etc.;
- The right to wholesome recreation of a kind that also fosters family values;
- The right of the elderly to a worthy life and a worthy death;
- The right to emigrate as a family in search of a better life.