

IX WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES
DUBLIN 21-26 AUGUST 2018
THE GOSPEL OF THE FAMILY: JOY FOR THE WORLD

PRESENTATION

In preparation for the *IX World Meeting of Families* to be held in Dublin from 21 to 26 August 2018, we are offering a catechetical path in light of Pope Francis' gift to the world in his Apostolic Post-Synodal Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. This path, composed of seven catecheses, is accompanied by the icon from the Gospel of Luke (2:41–52) that tells how the 12-year-old Jesus was lost and then found again in the temple. Interweaving the text of *Amoris Laetitia* and the unique story of the Holy Family of Nazareth, we want to show the timeliness of the proclamation of the Gospel of the Family and its prophetic character. Starting with a look at the life of today's families (*1st catechesis*), we highlight the extraordinary concreteness and relevancy of God's Word, which can always illuminate all the daily aspects of a family's life at home (*2nd catechesis*), so that it may correspond to God's great dream for every family (*3rd catechesis*), even where human frailties and weaknesses seem to break it (*4th catechesis*). All this makes the family the true generator of a new culture in the world, of a culture which is naturally that of life (*5th catechesis*), hope (*6th catechesis*), and joy (*7th catechesis*). Each of the catecheses is introduced by a prayer, taken from the papal magisterium or from the patristic tradition, and concludes with a few questions for sharing in the family—the domestic church—that then opens up to the Christian community. The proposed questions are not limited to moments of reflection, but they are above all intended to stimulate both the family and the church community to move and make real pastoral choices in the light of Pope Francis' guidelines. Regarding this, we heartily thank the Irish organization for having sent us the questions that the Dioceses in Ireland have proposed for some time now in the catechetical program *Let's Talk Family*. We also include a selection of pictures and hymns consistent with the text of the Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* that make its words even more beautiful. We place these catecheses in the hands of families, parishes, local churches, bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated faithful, the laity, family associations and movements, so that "*the Gospel of the Family may be joy for the world*," as the theme of this World Meeting of Families is intended to announce to all of us. We entrust this path of preparation to the care of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

Kevin Cardinal Farrell
 Prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

Vatican City, 4 December 2017

From the Gospel according to St. Luke (2:41–52)

⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; ⁴³ and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; ⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him. ⁴⁶ After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; ⁴⁷ and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ And when they saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." ⁴⁹ And he said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them. ⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men.

FIRST CATECHESIS

Son, why did you do this to us? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously
Today's Families

SECOND CATECHESIS

His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover
Families in the Light of the Word of God

THIRD CATECHESIS

Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?
God's Great Dream

FOURTH CATECHESIS

And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers
The Great Dream for Everyone

FIFTH CATECHESIS

And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men
The Culture of Life

SIXTH CATECHESIS

His mother kept all these things in her heart
The Culture of Hope

SEVENTH CATECHESIS

When they saw him, they were astonished
The Culture of Joy