



Guide n. 1

Video n.1



Walking Together

“Let us make this journey as families, let us keep walking together. What we have been promised is greater than we can imagine. May we never lose heart because of our limitations, or ever stop seeking that fullness of love and communion which God holds out before us.” AL 325

“Walking Together”

Through a series of 10 videos, beginning with the chapters of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, the Holy Father, with the help of several families, invites us *to journey together* to rediscover the family as a gift, despite every problem, obstacle and challenge that families have to face today.

Each video is accompanied by a guide that can be used flexibly either by families or by various ecclesial groups (diocesan, parochial, community). Each guide is then subdivided into 4 parts. Each of these can be used for further reflection in the family or in a community, in different moments as well. This tool is intended to be helpful for pastoral ministry to families, and contains proposals and suggestions that can be adapted to the local situation.

The objective is to nurture reflection, dialogue and pastoral practice and, at the same time, to provide encouragement, stimulus and help to families in their spiritual and concrete daily lives (AL 4).

The Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, with its simple and concrete language, is meant to reach the entire Church, particularly Christian families. Pope Francis’s advice is that it should never be read hastily, but “patiently deepened”, or finding more information on topics that interest you the most.



“It is my hope that, in reading this text, all will feel called to love and cherish family life, for ‘families are not a problem; they are first and foremost an opportunity’” (AL 7)

1

A missionary conversion to build an alliance among families

Holy Father:

“In the Church and in pastoral ministry to families, a **‘missionary conversion’** needs to be started, to journey along with families and help them face challenges confidently and serenely – challenges they often face alone.”

“This effort calls for missionary conversion by everyone in the Church, that is, one that is not content to proclaim a merely theoretical message without connection to people’s real problems”.²²⁹ Pastoral care for families “needs to make it clear that 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. This consists not merely in presenting a set of rules, but in proposing values that are clearly needed today, even in the most secularized of countries.” AL 201

Michael and Hun Ching

“The earlier years of our marriage were especially challenging because of disagreements over parenting, [...]. We learned to communicate in a respectful way, **to cherish the gift of family** and to make daily decisions to love each other and our children. And by anchoring ourselves in a **community of like-minded families**, we are constantly reminded to be a sign of God’s love to one another.”

“The main contribution to the pastoral care of families is offered by the parish, which is the family of families, where small communities, ecclesial movements and associations live in harmony”. AL 202





Invitation to reflect:

Are we aware of the sacred and inviolable character of us as a couple and of our family?

As a community, do we know how to value our families and their pastoral role?



Family dynamic:

Each family member communicates in their own way – through a gesture, a thought or a word – to other members of the family how important they consider their own family to be.



Community or group dynamic:

The couples/families present are invited to get to know each other in small groups. A concrete symbol, a flower for example, can be given to each family the following Sunday at Mass.

Prayer

Holy Family of Nazareth, awaken in our society the awareness of the sacred and inviolable character of the family, what a priceless and irreplaceable good it is.

May every family provide a welcoming home of goodness and peace for children and for the elderly, for those who are ill and alone, for those who are poor and in need.

Amen.

Pope Francis



2

To recognize the gifts of marriage and the family.

Holy Father:

“The Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* is an invitation for young people and Christian families, so that they might **esteem the gifts of marriage and the family**, and cultivate a strong love among themselves, rooted deeply in Christ and filled with such values as generosity, dedication, fidelity and patience.”

“This Exhortation [...] represents an invitation to Christian families to value the gifts of marriage and the family, and to persevere in a love strengthened by the virtues of generosity, commitment, fidelity and patience. Second, because it seeks to encourage everyone to be a sign of mercy and closeness wherever family life remains imperfect or lacks peace and joy.” AL 5

Michael and Hun Ching

“We believe that young people still have a longing for families because we are all made in the image of God. And because of that, there is a **desire for loving relationships**, and we feel that the family is still the best place for them to find that. However, this may be difficult because of the **complexities of the world** that we live in today.”



“Nowadays we are grateful too for the witness of marriages that have not only proved lasting, but also fruitful and loving.” AL 38

“The strength of the family ‘lies in its capacity to love and to teach how to love. For all a family’s problems, it can always grow, beginning with love.” AL 53

We need to find the right language, arguments and forms of witness that can help us reach the hearts of young people, appealing to their capacity for generosity, commitment, love and even heroism, and in this way inviting them to take up the challenge of marriage with enthusiasm and courage. AL 40



Invitation to reflect:

What does “to love” a person mean?



Family dynamic:

Organize a family evening on the theme of love, in which each family member writes or draws on what it means to love a person. Time can be allotted so each person can explain what he or she has written/drawn.



Community or group dynamic:

In small groups, each family/couple shares an experience in which they felt God’s love.

Prayer:

Grant us, Lord, the gift of growing day by day in the capacity of looking at each other sincerely, of listening to each other attentively, of talking to each other truthfully, of offering each other welcoming, attentive, loving gestures, so Your light might shine in the darkness of the world through our family.

Amen.



3

The family: a sign of mercy

Holy Father:

“With *“Amoris Laetitia”* I want to encourage every one of you to be a **sign of mercy and nearness** wherever family life is not lived perfectly or where it does not foster peace and joy.”

“Many people feel that the Church’s message on marriage and the family does not clearly reflect the preaching and attitudes of Jesus, who set forth a demanding ideal yet never failed to show compassion and closeness to the frailty of individuals like the Samaritan woman or the woman caught in adultery.” AL 38

Michael and Hun Ching

“Couples need help to grow in a relationship and to be good role models to their children. And this is where **the church has a big role to play.**”

“ ‘Couples are often uncertain, hesitant and struggling to find ways to grow. Many tend to remain in the early stages of their affective and sexual life. A crisis in a couple’s relationship destabilizes the family and may lead, through separation and divorce, to serious consequences for adults, children and society as a whole, weakening its individual and social bonds.’ Marital problems are ‘often confronted in haste and without the courage to have patience and reflect, to make sacrifices and to forgive one another.’ ” AL 41





Invitation to reflect:

How do we live “mercy” within our family?



Family dynamic:

Each family member commits him/herself to do something expressing forgiveness and acceptance toward another family member.



Community or group dynamic:

Organize a “celebration of forgiveness,” with a moment in which the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated, followed by a festive communitarian moment.

Prayer:

Thank you Lord, for your loving gaze which allows us to look at our mistakes and gives us the desire and the strength to overcome them. Thank you for the safety we feel remaining under your gaze. Grant that we might know how to give the same gift of a loving, welcoming, understanding gaze to our spouses, our children and to every brother and sister we meet in our day.

Amen.



4

To care for every family.***Holy Father:***

“Today we will begin a 10-month journey undertaken together to talk about **the beauty of being a family**.

Everyone is called to lovingly care for the life of the **family**, because families are never a problem, **they are always a gift** and in terms of the future, they are an opportunity.”

“The covenant of love and fidelity lived by the Holy Family of Nazareth illuminates the principle which gives shape to every family, and enables it better to face the vicissitudes of life and history. On this basis, every family, despite its weaknesses, can become a light in the darkness of the world. ‘Nazareth teaches us the meaning of family life, its loving communion, its simple and austere beauty, its sacred and inviolable character. May it teach how sweet and irreplaceable is its training, how fundamental and incomparable its role in the social order’ (Paul VI, Address in Nazareth, 5 January 1964)” AL 66

***Invitation to reflect:***

What is beautiful about our family, beyond our limitations, hardships and our difficulties?

***Family dynamic:***

Each family member can indicate to the others a positive and beautiful aspect about each and every member of their own family.

***Community or group dynamic:***

Each person says something beautiful and highlights positive aspects about their own community, insofar as it is a large family.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we entrust our family and every family in the world to you. Teach us to look at each other with always renewed wonder, never imagining that we know someone else completely, but always able to see the infinite beauty you have placed in each person. Help us to discover that love has its needs and grant us the strength to respect them always.

Amen



Invitation to read Amoris Laetitia.

Amoris Laetitia nn. 1-7

The experiences and challenges of families

Amoris Laetitia, nn. 31-57

AMORIS LAETITIA:



Family Love: Vocation and Path to Holiness

Heavenly Father,

We come before You to praise
You and to thank You for the great gift of the family.

We pray to You for all families consecrated by the Sacrament of Matrimony.
May they rediscover each day the graces they have received,
and as small domestic churches,
may they know how to witness to Your presence
and to the love with which Christ loves the Church.

We pray to You for all families faced with difficulty and suffering
caused by illness or circumstances of which only You know.
Sustain them and make them aware
of the path to holiness upon which You call them,
so that they might experience Your infinite mercy
and find new ways to grow in love.

We pray to You for children and young people.
May they encounter You and respond joyfully to the vocation You have in mind for
them.
We pray for their parents and grandparents.
May they be aware that they are signs of the fatherhood and motherhood of God
in caring for the children who, in body and spirit,
You entrust to them, as well as in the experience of fraternity
that the family can give to the world.

Lord, grant that each family
might live their specific vocation to holiness in the Church
as a call to become missionary disciples,
in the service of life and peace,
in communion with our priests, religious, and all vocations in the Church.

Bless the World Meeting of Families in Rome.

Amen.

(Prayer for the X World Meeting of Families
ROME, 22-26 June 2022)

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Amoris Laetitia Family
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