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Press Conference to present the Tenth World Meeting of Families

At 13.00 today a press conference was livestreamed from the Holy See Press Office, to present the Tenth World Day of Families, to take place in Rome from 22 to 26 June 2022. During the press conference, a video was screened, with a greeting from *// Volo*, a musical group formed by Piero Barone, Ignazio Boschetto and Gianluca Ginoble.

The speakers were Professor Gabriella Gambino, under-secretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, Dr. Leonardo Nepi, official of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, Msgr. Walter Inero, director of the Social Communications Office of the diocese of Rome, Amadeus Sebastiani (via remote link-up) who, along with his wife Giovanna Civitillo, will present the Festival of Families, and Gigi De Palo and Anna Chiara Gambini, spouses and representatives of the family pastoral care service of the diocese of Rome.

The following are their interventions:

Intervention of Professor Gabriella Gambino

Towards the World Meeting of Families

We have finally reached the culmination of the *Amoris laetitia Family Year* proclaimed by the Holy Father Francis on 19 March 2021. So many pastoral initiatives have been developed over the course of the year, which have also involved the Pope personally: the ten *Amoris laetitia* videos, the letter he wrote to married couples, the numerous messages and speeches to families delivered in support of the many pastoral initiatives developed in every corner of the world.

To prepare this new multi-centred and widespread edition of the World Meeting we had to face many events, starting with the pandemic, which delayed and complicated organization, but we managed it. Around the world, many dioceses are organizing to gather families around their bishop or parish priest: they are using the same format as the Meeting to be held in Rome, and in many cases even the same themes of the pastoral congress,

which we published a few months ago in the pastoral kit for dioceses. I am thinking of the Guatemalan Episcopal Conference, which at the national, regional and even parish level has issued a programme with specific proposals to accompany and experience the World Meeting with the bishops, with opening moments, a triduum of pastoral meetings and virtual links with Rome.

I would also like to take advantage of this moment to urge pastors and those responsible for local family pastoral work to announce the Meeting of Families in their communities and to involve them in organizing a time dedicated to them at the end of June. Families are awaiting a sign; they wish to be called to celebrate together!

In Rome, the Holy Father will welcome the delegates from the episcopal conferences, international movements and family associations. As previously announced, the meeting will be inaugurated on Wednesday 22 June with the Festival of Families in the presence of Pope Francis in the Paul VI Hall. From Thursday 23 to Saturday 25 June there will be the pastoral Congress, again in the Paul VI Hall. On Saturday afternoon, there will be Mass in Saint Peter's Square with the Holy Father and on Sunday, the Angelus. The novelty today is the publication of the definitive programme of the pastoral Congress.

The Congress, unlike those of previous editions (I am thinking of Philadelphia, Milan or Dublin) will not have academically structured conferences with theological-doctrinal content, but rather it will be a moment of encounter, listening and exchange between family and marriage pastoral workers.

The aim is to develop the theme chosen by the Pope: Family love: vocation and the way to holiness, taking into account some strong indications that emerge from *Amoris laetitia*, a text that presents itself with very clear programmatic lines for the possible developments of family pastoral care in the coming years.

For this reason, we focused on some themes that emerged from our continuous meetings with bishops from all over the world, especially in the *ad Limina* visits, and that constantly resurfaced: in particular, the co-responsibility of spouses and priests in the pastoral care of the particular Churches; some concrete difficulties faced by families in today's societies; the preparation of couples for married life; some situations of "existential peripheries" within families; and the formation of formators in a family pastoral care full of challenges and difficult questions. Topical and complex issues, which we wanted to address with Pope Francis' constant invitation to renewal and pastoral conversion as our compass: the first step we all still have to take is to make families aware that theirs is a vocation, that in their daily lives they can discover incredible ways of holiness, that they can transform their ecclesial and social environment.

The Congress is built around five main conferences on some fundamental themes. The theme of each conference is then structured according to three or four sub-themes, in panels, or rather round tables, which will explore further priority pastoral issues for the particular Churches.

In all, there will be 30 speakers, a total of 62, plus 13 session moderators: the latter will all be Roman, a sign and symbol of a city that hosts and presents speakers from other countries.

The speakers will almost all be married couples, with only 3 priests; they come from 17 different countries, chosen for their competence and pastoral experience in the various topics presented: families involved in family pastoral work with dioceses, episcopal conferences or some international movements.

Two special elements within the Congress will be the evening in the Roman parishes on Friday 2 June, dedicated to the theme "Family communion, as a style of communion in the Church", which with the diocese of Rome we have decided to set in the parishes, so the delegates will travel to various parts of the city for an evening with the Roman families; a second special moment, on Saturday morning, with an hour of Eucharistic adoration and guided meditation for the spouses and families of the delegates before the Blessed Sacrament. On the other mornings, Thursday and Friday, the day will begin with Holy Mass, celebrated by Cardinals Farrell and de Donatis, inside Saint Peter's Basilica.

Intervention of Dr. Leonardo Nepi

Approximately two thousand delegates, chosen by the episcopal conferences, the Synods of the Eastern Churches and the international ecclesial realities that work in a significant way in the field of family apostolate, are invited to this year's World Meeting of Families. The number of delegates was allocated in proportion to the size of each episcopal conference or ecclesial reality.

The Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, through a solidarity fund, undertook to financially support the episcopal conferences that asked for financial help to send a delegation to Rome, as there are many countries where it is difficult to meet the expenses of an international trip at this time. In addition to the Dicastery, various episcopal conferences have contributed to the solidarity fund according to their availability, as well as the diocese of Rome, to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks for this commitment, which has been made with generosity and a spirit of ecclesial communion. Thanks to this contribution, the Churches of many areas of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Central Europe, including Ukraine (both with delegates from the Synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and with delegates from the Latin Rite Episcopal Conference), which otherwise would not have had the opportunity to participate, will be adequately represented.

There are more than 170 delegations from 120 countries, and they are made up in large part of families, representing three quarters of the delegates, along with priests and bishops responsible for family pastoral care in the episcopal conferences, as well as spiritual accompaniers of the international ecclesial bodies. The role of men and women religious as delegates to the Congress has also been valued in various delegations.

The families who will participate in the Congress in many cases have very responsible roles within their local Churches and ecclesial bodies. This means that an approach of shared responsibility is being consolidated among laypeople, priests and religious in the animation of family pastoral care. Once the meeting in Rome has come to an end, we hope that the two thousand delegates may return enriched to their own situations and communities to put their pastoral mission to good use with renewed impetus.

Even the families that will not come to Rome are nevertheless invited to celebrate this "multi-centred and widespread" World Meeting in their dioceses and parishes. For this reason, we have made available to the particular Churches a pastoral kit with guidelines and suggestions for organizing meetings at the local level. In it you will find the topics that will be dealt with during the Congress, as well as suggestions for liturgical celebrations and in-depth studies on the contents of the Meeting. The pastoral kit is available to all and can be found on the World Meeting website, in the section "WMOF in the Dioceses".

Intervention of Msgr. Walter Inero

THE FESTIVAL OF FAMILIES

The Festival of Families will be held in Rome on Wednesday 22 June 2022. This will be the first public event of the World Meeting of Families. Unlike the previous editions, in which the Festival of Families was held on Saturday evening, as a moment of celebration at the end of the Congress, this tenth edition of the World Meeting of Families will open with the Festival on Wednesday, presenting to the general public the themes that will then be explored in the conference. The event, which will be entitled "The beauty of the family", will take place in the Paul VI Hall from 18.15 to 19.50.

The theme of the Meeting is "Family love: vocation and path to holiness", therefore the Festival will be developed along the lines of family love as a call to live daily family life in Christ, to realize one's vocation, making visible how the family is a fundamental subject for the Church and society. Holiness is a path to which each person is

called, as father, mother, brother, sister, children or grandparents. In the family a path is revealed, to which we are all called by virtue of our Baptism and the fact that we are loved and wanted by God the Father.

Rather than giving speeches and theories on families, we will give voice to witness. The choice of presenters, artists and those who will speak is designed to promote their experience as Christian families. For this reason, the presentation is entrusted to Amadeus and his wife Giovanna Civitillo. As for the artistic presences, the young artists of "Il Volo" (Gianluca Ginoble, Piero Barone and Ignazio Boschetto), together with some of their relatives, will participate by recounting their own family experience and proposing some musical pieces.

Before the arrival of the Holy Father, after an initial musical interlude and some connections with families gathered in other parts of the world, we will listen to some testimonies on the spiritual legacy and topicality of the testimony of Blessed Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi, beatified in 2001 by Saint John Paul II, patrons of the World Meeting.

Five families will offer their testimonies in the presence of the Holy Father. The themes will be:

1. Called to marriage

Testimony of a couple whose decision to marry in Church is developing following a following a journey of preparation thanks to a family group.

2. Called to holiness

The experience of a family who passed on the faith to their children, a context in which one of their daughters was raised, died very young in the odor of holiness and is now a servant of God.

3. Called to forgiveness

The testimony of a family, which after experiencing a major crisis, experiences forgiveness and profound reconciliation.

4. Called to welcome

The testimony of a Roman family who welcomed a Ukrainian family fleeing the war.

5. Called to brotherhood

The testimony of a multi-religious family, an example of daily interreligious dialogue, very socially committed to poor populations.

This will be followed by the Holy Father's address to families. The entire event will conclude with the singing of the official hymn of the Meeting, composed by Msgr. Marco Frisina, entitled "We Believe in Love", by the Choir of the Diocese of Rome.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMMUNICATION

The Tenth World Meeting of Families will be a "multicentric and widespread" event; it will also be experienced in

the dioceses of the world on the same days as the Roman event. Rome, however, will remain the heart of this Meeting, because delegates from the different episcopal conferences will arrive here to live this experience with the Holy Father, together with the families of Rome.

Yet all communities and families who wish, from all parts of the planet, will be able to feel involved and participate in this important spiritual event thanks to the media coverage arranged. The main objective of communication is to encourage the participation and involvement of all those who unfortunately, because of the pandemic and its consequences, we could not invite to Rome for this world meeting.

We wanted to create a “family-friendly” communication, designed to help families and communities prepare spiritually for the Meeting and to be able to participate even at a distance in the ecclesial event that will take place in our city. With this proposal, we intend to put families at the centre of the media scene, recognizing them as protagonists of communication with their stories and testimonies, helping them to tell their stories.

For this reason, everything will be streamed live, with social media coverage of all the events that will be broadcast - through the official website of the event, romefamily2022.com -, on the YouTube page of the diocese of Rome and thanks to the collaboration with the Dicastery for Communication, also on VaticanNews.

In this perspective, on the website dedicated to the event, romefamily2022.com, through which it is also possible to reach the Facebook and Instagram pages, all the preparatory materials are available, in five different languages, which accompanied the families during the months that have just passed, and will continue to be useful in this last phase as we approach the World Meeting: the prayer, the hymn and the official image, the seven catecheses with a downloadable written text accompanied by short films with testimonies of Roman families, and useful points for reflection and debate.

Journalists, photographers and media operators will be able to take part in all meetings, including all sessions of the Pastoral Theological Congress, which will take place inside the Paul VI Hall, and will be able to interview speakers and participants at stand-up stations placed in designated spaces provided.

Not only the Internet, but also television will help reach families around the world. Thanks to Vatican Media we are implementing a system with which we will be able to provide the signal to TVs that request it, freely and free of charge, with a stream of images available in five languages (English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, plus sign language in Italian and English). Filming of the three events involving the Holy Father’s presence: the June 22 Festival of Families, the 17:15 Mass on Saturday 25 June, and the Angelus at the close of the Meeting with the Mandate to Families at midday on Sunday 26 June will be handled by Vatican Media and broadcast worldwide. These three appointments with Pope Francis will be broadcast live on RaiUno. The Festival of Families titled “The beauty of Family” will be the result of a valuable collaboration between the Vatican's Dicastery for Communication with Vatican Media, Rai with the TG1 headline and the Diocese of Rome with the Social Communications Office.

We have started a special collaboration with some important international Catholic broadcasters, to transmit in full the different appointments of the Tenth World Meeting on their channels, so as to enable them to be viewed in different languages by users who are less inclined to frequent the web.

It will also be possible to download the official webapp of the Tenth World Meeting of Families from the site. Digital participants will receive a certificate of participation after completing the entire path proposed by the webapp, which is also available in different languages. All references to *Amoris Laetitia*, catechesis, information on diocesan appointments and virtual tours of the four Major Basilicas and the Lateran Palace are part of this particular “path”.

The desire is to acknowledge, through communication capable of attentive listening, the centrality of families, not only at the ecclesial level, but in society.

Intervention of Gigi De Palo and Anna Chiara Gambini

For some time, Rome and Romans have been preparing to welcome this Tenth World Meeting of Families. The pandemic complicated plans somewhat, but families are used to seeing that things never go according to plan... Very often, in fact, they go quite differently, and it is not necessarily a bad thing.

A team of twenty couples, who freely made themselves available, toured a great number of parishes of Rome. We did not manage to visit all of them because the calendar was modified due to the fourth wave between January and March.

In all the parishes, the families we met were enthusiastic, since the memory of World Youth Day 2000 is still echoing, and if you think about it, the invitation to this World Day of Families is in a certain sense addressed also all those young people of Tor Vergata who have grown up, started families, got married, and have children...

We found really beautiful testimonies. Stories of ordinary extraordinariness. Many of these can be seen in the short films produced by the Social Communications Office of the diocese of Rome, directed by Antonio Antonelli to accompany the seven catecheses, available on the official site of the Meeting.

Families are truly the inexhaustible resource of our city and our country, because they silently solve problems, create bonds, act as social shock absorbers, generate wealth and future.

The Holy Father has said many times: yes, *Amoris Laetitia* is an apostolic exhortation, but it is all the families of the world with their imperfections, their fragrance, their chaotic beauty.

Therefore, it is an honour to life the World Day of Families in Italy and in the city of Rome, a World Day that will take place from June 22 to 26.

Roman families will be able to participate in the following events: Wednesday 22 June, the opening of the Meeting, the Festival of Families at 18.00 in the Paul VI Hall; Thursday 23 June, the concert at the Lateran Palace, the bishopric of Rome; Friday 24 June, the meetings organized in the parishes, for a time of sharing and celebration among the delegated families and Roman families; Saturday 25 June, the Great Mass in Saint Peter's Square, presided over by the Holy Father at 17.00; Sunday 26 June, the Angelus in Saint Peter's Square, with the Mandate to Families. To request tickets for these meetings you can write to info@romefamily2022.com and they will be distributed through the parishes.

It is very nice that two spouses very closely linked to our city have been elected patrons of the 10th World Meeting of Families: Blesseds Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi.

Two spouses who are innovators in their own way.

Not only because they are the first married couple to be beatified by the Catholic Church, on 21 October 21, by Saint John Paul II.

But also because their commitment did not end simply in welcoming and educating their children. They were dedicated to service and to the common good from the very beginning of their marriage. In fact, they began family ministry in Rome, offering meetings and accompaniment for engaged and married couples.

Their example is a call to that normal holiness.

To the middle class of holiness, Pope Francis might say.

That of families. That of those who try to be good fathers and mothers by accompanying their children to school or basketball practice. That of those who try to make the best dinner in the world with what they have in the refrigerator. In the knowledge that for a Christian example does not mean replication of a perfect model, but the opportunity to marvel at an ongoing gift.
