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Questa mattina alle ore 9, con il canto dell'Ora Terza, si è aperta nell'Aula del Sinodo in Vaticano la nona Congregazione generale del Sinodo straordinario sulla famiglia.

Di seguito riportiamo l'omelia che S.E. Mons. Arnold Orowae, Vescovo di Wabag (Papua Nuova Guinea), ha tenuto durante la preghiera dell'Ora Terza:

Omelia di S.E. Mons. Arnold Orowae

St. Paul in his letter to the Romans says that God speaks through the Good News. It shows and leads us to faith and one can find life through faith. Faith in God helps to build a relationship in love which is manifested in the practical signs of love shown to the people by reaching out to them in charity for their good in body and spirit.

"The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts of all who encounter Jesus" (*Evangelii Gaudium* n. 1). With these simple words the Holy Father Pope Francis has ignited a flame that is spreading throughout the world. On the lips of many people the words "joy of the Gospel" is spoken with delight and with enthusiasm as if though there is a new message of the gospel to be proclaimed and shared. It is our prayer that Catholic individuals and families throughout the whole world might be filled with the joy of the gospel and an ardent desire to share that joy with other Christians and non-Christians alike. In this way more and more people will become alive in Christ, disciples of Jesus eager to participate in a new evangelization which will bring the Good News that leads to faith to

everyone.

We encourage our families to search for the joy that comes from meeting Christ in the Gospel. It is there they will find this happiness. The Holy Father also express a sad reality when he says, "There are Christians (and families) whose lives seem like Lent without Easter" (*Evangelii gaudium* n. 6). The families should be encouraged to rediscover the Gospel, read the Good News with the children in the homes, and in the Basic Christian Communities, and pray about it, and make it a part of their daily family life. This will help increase their faith, hope, love, joy and peace in the families. The house where the family lives deserves to be called a "home" only when happiness is the air that all in the family breaths and where everyone experiences the joy of living together in harmony.

Today, many of the families are struggling with the many challenges and distractions that are there. These have to be faced and overcome to build healthy families. The families are at their best when it comes to discussing and tackling problems and conflicting issues. The Church is grateful for the many Catholic families who believe in the gospel values, follow them in family life, teach the faith to the children, and set examples that other families can see and imitate.

In the families where parents take seriously their God given responsibilities to nurture and support, teach and guide, protect and defend their children and other family members, their duty as Catholic lay people to evangelise in and through the family can be clearly understood and is carried out. It is our hope and prayer that the Christian families that make up the larger part of the body of Christ play this important role in becoming evangelizers and living witness to Christ through the Christian joy in the families.

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