



FAMILYWORKS

Newsletter of the Family Working Group

Number 2/2005

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WMF 2006 Valencia Website: www.wmf2006.org

The Fifth World Meeting of Families (WMF) will be held in Valencia, Spain, on July 4-9 2006. Pope Benedict XVI will attend. The website contains information about WMFs and the historic host city with details of the event itself yet to come. One can register an email address to receive updates.

The First World Meeting of Families (WMF) was convened in Rome in 1994 by Pope John Paul II. Further WMFs were in Rio de Janeiro (1997), Rome (2000) and Manila (2003). The Family Working Group has its origins in the experiences of delegates to WMFs who have felt enthused to continue the vision and hopes of John Paul II for families. An Australian pilgrimage is planned to the Valencia gathering. Now is a good time to start talking to bishops, diocesan contacts and family movements and organizations to encourage a strong Australian participation in the next WMF.

Pastoral Document on Disability “I have a story” - Latest

It is pleasing to report that following the initial distribution of 3,000 copies of “I have a story” to every parish in Australia, over 3,300 more booklets, including some audio, Braille and large print versions, have been sold to dioceses, parishes, schools and Church agencies throughout Australia. There is a growing focus on how we ensure that people with disability and their families can participate fully in parish life.

We are told that one person in three over the age of 65 is either wearing hearing aids or in need of them; that the incidence of acquired deafness in our ageing population is increasing. “I have a story” identified a call for our parishes to consider the installation of audio loops in our churches and other meeting places, so that people with a hearing impairment can participate fully. Information on audio loop systems is readily available from suppliers in all states.

Let the following Prayer for People with Disability guide us:

Loving God, author of all gifts

We praise and thank you for all the gifts you have entrusted to us.

Pour out your Spirit upon us so that, true to our baptismal promises, we may form faith communities that recognise and promote the gifts in all people so that we may all share in the mission of Jesus.

Inspire us to build a Church that is welcoming and accepting, and which sees everyone as an expression of Christ.

May our faith communities nurture and commission all members to live our particular gifts as a reflection and imitation of Jesus’ life.

Give us the courage to be the light of welcome in the darkness of exclusion, a voice of gentleness in the wilderness of the unheard and an outstretched hand of love to those longing for community.

Amen.

Copies of “I have a story” and the prayer card can be downloaded and/or ordered from

<http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bc/famlife/2004090711.htm>

Remembering the Wisdom and Gifts of Pope John Paul II

Of all the wonderful things that Pope John Paul said and did we hold very dear his outstanding commitment to marriage and family, his extensive teaching output including the Theology of the Body, his encyclicals, audiences and other writings. To mark the passing of this great champion of the family, we include some brief quotes:

Family, become what you are (FC 17)

The future of humanity passes by way of the family (FC 86)

The family is not simply the object of the Church's pastoral care; it is also one of the Church's most effective agents of evangelization (EA 46)

Pastors, therefore, ought to acknowledge and foster the ministries, the offices and roles of the lay faithful that find their *foundation in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation*, indeed, for a good many of them, *in the Sacrament of Matrimony*. (CL 23)

I earnestly call upon pastors and the whole community of the faithful to help the divorced, and with solicitous care to make sure that they do not consider themselves as separated from the Church, for as baptized persons they can, and indeed must, share in her life. (FC 84)

I say to you both, mothers and fathers: you have been called to the exalted mission of cooperating with the Creator in the transmission of life; do not be afraid of life! Together proclaim the value of the family and of life. Without these values, there is no future worthy of man! (WMF, Rome 2000)

Be certain of this, Christian spouses: the sacrament of Matrimony assures you of the necessary grace to persevere in the mutual love that your children need as much as bread. (WMF, Rome 2000).

Diocesan Family Councils

The first General Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Family (PCF) in 1984 recommended that all dioceses establish Councils for the Family with a focus on evangelisation through the family. Since then, a number of Australian dioceses have established Family Councils and Offices with an emphasis on developing the evangelising potential of the family. These have included Melbourne, Perth, Sydney, Townsville and Brisbane.

A proposal that this approach be adopted by all dioceses was presented by the Bishops Committee for the Family and for Life to the May meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

Family Working Group Web Site

This newsletter, parish kits and other products of the Family Working Group are now available at the new website. We hope to soon have a sign-up page for this newsletter, which you can share with others. Please visit us at <http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/org/fwg/index.asp>

COMING EVENTS

5th Gathering of Catholic Lay Movements & Associations

Where: Camberwell Civic Centre, 340 Camberwell Rd, Camberwell, VIC

When: 18 June 2005, 9:00 to 4:15 Cost: Free (donations appreciated)

These days were originally inaugurated by Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Focolare Movement to promote unity in the diversity of charisms in the Church. In recent years, a committee formed from a number of the participants has taken over the role of joint sponsorship, with the event now attracting close to forty different lay movements. Once again, full support has been given by Archbishop Denis Hart, who will celebrate Mass at 11.30 am as high point of the day's celebrations.

Familyfest 2005 Just family – Love builds peace

Where: Genazzano Girls School, 301 Cotham Road, Kew, VIC

When: 16th July 2005, 10.30 to 3.30 Cost: Free (donations appreciated)

The Familyfest is an international, inter-religious celebration of the family, sponsored by the Focolare Movement. A network of some 200 meetings in 77 nations across the 5 continents of the world, embracing over 150,000 people, has been giving witness to the power of love in transforming the lives of individuals and families. As the basic building blocks of society, families can be a witness of hope and peace in working towards a united world.

International Familyfest: <http://www.focolare.org/en/sif/2005/en20050511a.html>

Video clips & MP3 music files: <http://www.familyfest2005.org>

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