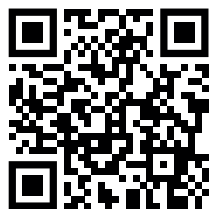


Guide n.6

Video n.6



Fruitful Love

Fruitful Love

1

Love brightens the world's darkness

HOLY FATHER

“Love always gives life. Spousal love is not exhausted within the couple, but generates a family”.

*“Each new life ‘allows us to appreciate the **utterly gratuitous dimension of love**, which never ceases to amaze us. It is the beauty of being loved first: children are loved even before they arrive’. Here we see a reflection of the primacy of the love of God, who always takes the initiative”. AL 166*

*“By their witness as well as their words, families speak to others of Jesus. They pass on the faith, they arouse a desire for God and they reflect the beauty of the Gospel and its way of life. Christian marriages thus **enliven society by their witness of fraternity**, their social concern, their outspokenness on behalf of the underprivileged, their luminous faith and their active hope. Their fruitfulness expands and in countless ways makes God’s love present in society”. AL 184*

Enrico and Francesca

Enrico: “We are Enrico and Francesca. We’ve been married for 28 years and have 7 children. We are originally from Venice but are now missionaries in Bridgeport (USA). Love for life was instilled in us as children, since we both come from large families.”

Francesca: “When we were first married, after two miscarriages and two gynecological surgeries, the doctors told us I was sterile. Thanks to those 7 years in which we really suffered and felt sustained by the Church through our Neocatechumenal community and our catechists, we felt God was calling us to be fruitful, to open ourselves to life, to His plan for us. And so, we adopted our first son, Emanuele, in Russia”.

*“Some couples are unable to have children. We know that this can be a cause of real suffering for them. At the same time, we know that ‘marriage was not instituted solely for the procreation of children... Even in cases where, despite the intense desire of the spouses, there are no children, marriage still retains its character of being a whole manner and communion of life, and preserves its value and indissolubility’. So too, ‘**motherhood is not a solely biological reality, but is expressed in diverse ways**’”. AL 178*

*“We also do well to remember that procreation and adoption are not the only ways of experiencing the fruitfulness of love. Even large families are called to make their mark on society, finding **other expressions of fruitfulness** that in some way prolong the love that sustains them”. AL 181*



Invitation to reflect

We reflect on the primacy of God's love who always takes the initiative and expects nothing from us. Rather, he joyfully welcomes all of our acts of love, even the smallest. Let us think about how this is reflected in everyday life.



Family dynamic

Everyone thinks of simple acts of fraternity, writing them on different-colored construction paper. In the morning, each family member randomly chooses one to accomplish that day, tearing off a piece of the colored paper and carrying it as a reminder.



Community or group dynamic

Each person who would like to is invited to share an act of solidarity they received and explain it through a color they connect with that action (e.g., A colleague at work did something kind for me. I chose yellow because that kind gesture illuminated my day)

Prayer

Thank You, Lord,
that every baby that is born is a gift;
I thank You, that I, too, am a gift.

Thank You, for love
can paint the world with marvelous colors,
and for everyone is capable of acts of love.

Thank You, for calling us
to appreciate the various shades of the same color
that everyone can give,
thus adding color to the world.

Make us, Your instruments,
O Lord, so that Your Love,
in all of its shades,
might reach every one of Your sons and daughters on earth.

Amen.



2

Every child is a gift.

HOLY FATHER

“Life is generated and welcomed in the family. Every child that arrives is God’s gift! Every baby, in every case and in whatever situation, is to be welcomed because he or she is a child. Parents’ love is the means by which God shows His love. He awaits the birth of every baby. He accepts and welcomes each child as they are. I want to say to every expectant woman: you are God’s instrument to bring new life into the world”.

*“‘Children are a gift. Each one is unique and irreplaceable... We love our children because they are children, not because they are beautiful, or look or think like we do, or embody our dreams. We love them because they are children. A child is a child’. **The love of parents is the means by which God our Father shows his own love. He awaits the birth of each child, accepts that child unconditionally, and welcomes him or her freely**”.* AL 170

Francesca: “Welcoming this child healed us, restored us. We felt loved and forgiven by God. What happened after is pure grace. A few months after the adoption, I became pregnant and Giosué was born, then Miriam, Benedetta, Israel, Simon Pietro, and Natanaele, along with another 5 I miscarried. They are angels waiting for us in Heaven. Filled with gratitude and joy, we volunteered ourselves and were sent on mission as a family by Pope Benedict XVI in 2005.”

*Parents are entrusted with a precious gift: “For **God allows parents to choose the name by which he himself will call their child for all eternity**”.* AL 166

“This love is shown to them through the gift of their personal name, the sharing of language, looks of love and the brightness of a smile. In this way, [children] learn that the beauty of human relationships touches our soul, seeks our freedom, accepts others’ differences, recognizes and respects them as a partner in dialogue... Such is love, and it contains a spark of God’s love!” AL 172





Invitation to reflect

Reread the passages from *Amoris Laetitia*, underlining what impresses you the most. Those who wish can share.



Family dynamic

Parents can tell their children how they chose their names – that name God already uses for them and will use for all eternity.



Community or group dynamic

Create a small altar with a Bible, a lit candle and flowers and hang a poster in front of it. Everyone is invited to write their name in large letters on a sheet of paper. As each person goes and places their name on the poster, they can remember that God already calls them by that name and will do so forever. This activity can be done during a moment of prayer, accompanied by music or hymns.

Prayer

Psalms 139

Lord, you have probed me, you know me:
 you know when I sit and stand
 you understand my thoughts from afar,
 You sift through my travels and my rest;
 with all my ways you are familiar.
 Even before a word is on my tongue, Lord, you
 know it all.
 Behind and before you encircle me
 and rest your hand upon me.
 You formed my inmost being;
 you knit me in my mother's womb.
 I praise you,
 because I am awesomely made, wonderfully;
 wonderful are your works!
 I know this very well.



2

“I will never forget you”.

HOLY FATHER

“Adoption is a Christian choice. To adopt and give a family to someone who does not have one is an act of love by which a man and a woman become mediators of God’s love. Through them, God says: ‘Even if your mother forgets you, I, instead, will never forget you’”.

*“The choice of adoption and foster care expresses a particular kind of fruitfulness in the marriage experience, and not only in cases of infertility. (...) Correctly understood, [this choice] makes people aware that **children**, whether natural, adoptive or in foster care, are persons in their own right who need to be accepted, loved and cared for, and not just brought into this world. The best interests of the child should always underlie any decision in adoption and foster care”. AL 180*

Enrico:

“On mission with our children, we live like a normal family, bearing witness to God’s love to the people we meet on our way, proclaiming through our lives that Christ is risen and has conquered death”.

“No family can be fruitful if it sees itself as overly different or ‘set apart’.” “Jesus’ own family, so full of grace and wisdom, did not appear unusual or different from others. They were an ordinary family, close to others, a normal part of the community.” Cf AL 182

*“In addition to the small circle of the couple and their children, there is the **larger family**, which cannot be overlooked”. “This larger family should provide love and support to teenage mothers, children without parents, single mothers left to raise children, persons with disabilities needing particular affection and closeness, young people struggling with addiction, the unmarried, separated or widowed who are alone, and the elderly and infirm who lack the support of their children”. AL 196-197*





Invitation to reflect

Think of a person among your acquaintances who needs to be “adopted” at this moment, that is, someone in need of receiving God’s paternal or maternal love through you.



Family dynamic

Parents can explain to their children the value of adoption and how every family is called to “adopt”, that is, to be open to welcome and to love all of God’s children who surround us.



Community or group dynamic

As a community, organize a meeting on the fruitfulness of family love and the value of adoption, of taking foster children in, of being a family open to welcoming and loving all of God’s children.

Prayer

Psalms 8

O Lord, our Lord,
how awesome is your name
through all the earth!

I will sing of your majesty above the heavens
with the mouths of babies and infants.
You have established a bulwark against your
foes, to silence enemy and avenger.

When I see your heavens, the work of your
fingers,
the moon and the stars that you set in place—
What is man that you are mindful of him,

and a son of man that you care for him?
Yet you have made him little less than a god,
crowned him with glory and honor,
You have given him rule over the works of
your hands,
put all things at his feet:
All sheep and oxen,
even the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, the fish of the sea,
and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord,
how awesome is your name through all the
earth!

Invitation to read Amoris Laetitia

“Love made fruitful”

Amoris Laetitia, 165-198

Link to the Apostolic Exhortation *AMORIS LAETITIA*



Da Ponte Family, Venice (Italy) - Bridgeport (USA)



Familial love: vocation and path to holiness

Holy Father,

we are here before You
to praise You and thank You for the great gift of the family.
We pray to You for families, consecrated in the Sacrament of Matrimony,
that each day they might rediscover the grace they have received,
and, as small domestic Churches,
they might know how to witness to Your Presence.
and the love with which Christ loves the Church.
We pray to You for families going through difficulty and suffering,
from illness, or from problems only You know:
sustain them and make them aware
of the way of holiness to 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,
so they can encounter You
and respond joyfully to the vocation You have in mind for them;
and for their parents and grandparents,
so they may be aware
that they are signs of the paternity and maternity of God:
in caring for their 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 be active in evangelization,
in the service of life and peace,
in communion with the priests and with every state in life.

Bless the World Meeting of Families in Rome.
Amen.

Official Prayer for the *X World Meeting of Families*
22-26 June 2022

www.amorislaetitia.va



Amoris Laetitia Family
Year 2021 - 2022