



Catechesis in preparation for the **10th World Meeting of Families**

Rome June 22-26, 2022



“Called to holiness”

Catechesis No.2



Called to holiness

Chosen by God to become holy

What is our family calling? St. Paul - called by the Lord to make a radical turning point in his life - (cf. Acts 9:1-28) - could answer as follows:

*«Blessed be the God [...] [who] **chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love...**» (Eph 1:3-4).*

A family is born from the decision of a man and a woman to begin an experience of life in common together, supported by the Grace of Christ. When this occurs, married life, full of novelties and new challenges to face, becomes for the spouses, as the rite of Marriage says, the *new path towards their sanctification* and, consequently, a privileged path *towards holiness*.

In the same way, family life, entwined with relationships, sometimes complicated, and with relationships that are not always easy, becomes a particularly suitable and favorable context for contemplating the action of the Spirit of God, who can convert human hearts, change their attitudes and make the members of the family capable of *loving as Christ loves*.

Holiness: a calling for all

«For I, the LORD, am your God; and you shall make and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy» (Lv 11:44).

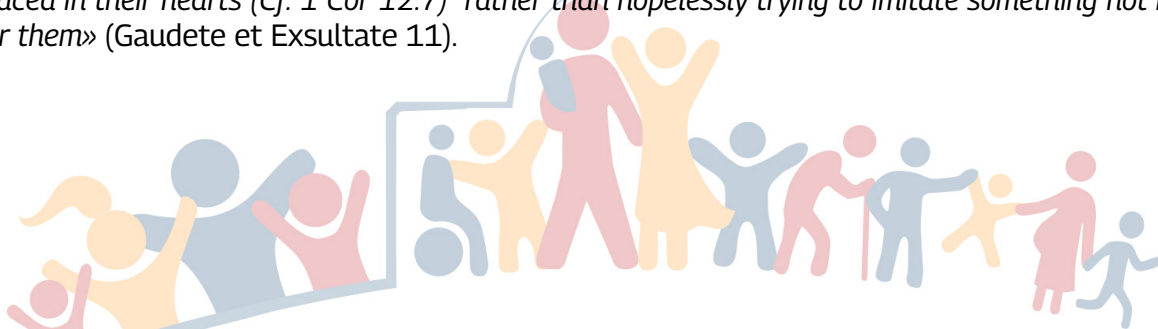
Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, the third of his pontificate, encourages each person to respond to his or her own call to holiness. **God** does not call everyone anonymously and generically, rather he **extends a personal call to each person**.

Let us consider some reflections in which the Holy Father expresses a clear invitation to not be afraid to accept the personal call to holiness.

*«I like to contemplate the holiness present in [...] God's people [...]: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick [...]. Very often it is a **holiness** found in our "next-door neighbours", **those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence**. We might call them "the middle class of holiness» (Gaudete et Exsultate 7).*

*«**all the faithful**, whatever their condition or state, **are called by the Lord** - each in his or her own way - to that perfect **holiness** by which the Father himself is perfect» (Gaudete et Exsultate 10).*

*«**"Each in his or her own way"** [...]. The important thing is that **each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves**, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (Cf. 1 Cor 12:7) rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them» (Gaudete et Exsultate 11).*





«To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious. We are frequently tempted to think that holiness is only for those who can withdraw from ordinary affairs to spend much time in prayer. That is not the case. **We are all called to be holy** by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, **wherever we find ourselves**. [...] Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church. Do you work for a living? Be holy by labouring with integrity and skill in the service of your brothers and sisters. Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus» (Gaudete et Exsultate 14).

«**This holiness** to which the Lord calls you **will grow through small gestures**» (Gaudete et Exsultate 16).

«May **you come to realize** what that word is, the message of Jesus that **God wants to speak to the world by your life**. [...] **The Lord will bring it to fulfilment despite your mistakes** and missteps, provided that you [...] remain ever open to his supernatural grace, which purifies and enlightens» (Gaudete et Exsultate 24).

In the distant past, as well as in more recent times, it is possible to find children, adolescents, young people, widowers and married couples who can show us a path to holiness for every age and state of life: think, for example, of little Laura Vicuña, who became a saint at the age of twelve, the young Pier Giorgio Frassati, or Therese of Lisieux's holy parents. This idea of the neighborhood saint fits us, it is very close to us, we can relate to it. Perhaps even we can possibly encounter some of them?





It is advisable that each person have the time to reread the catechesis, and to reflect on what resonates in his or her heart in a particular manner.

Points of discussion for couples/for families

- *To become holy "each in his own way": this is God's call to become the best version of ourselves. What are the special gifts God has given me?*
- *God "guides us to become holy": when have I felt guided on this journey to holiness?*
- *Have there been any events, encounters, or opportunities that have improved me or that have improved our family?*

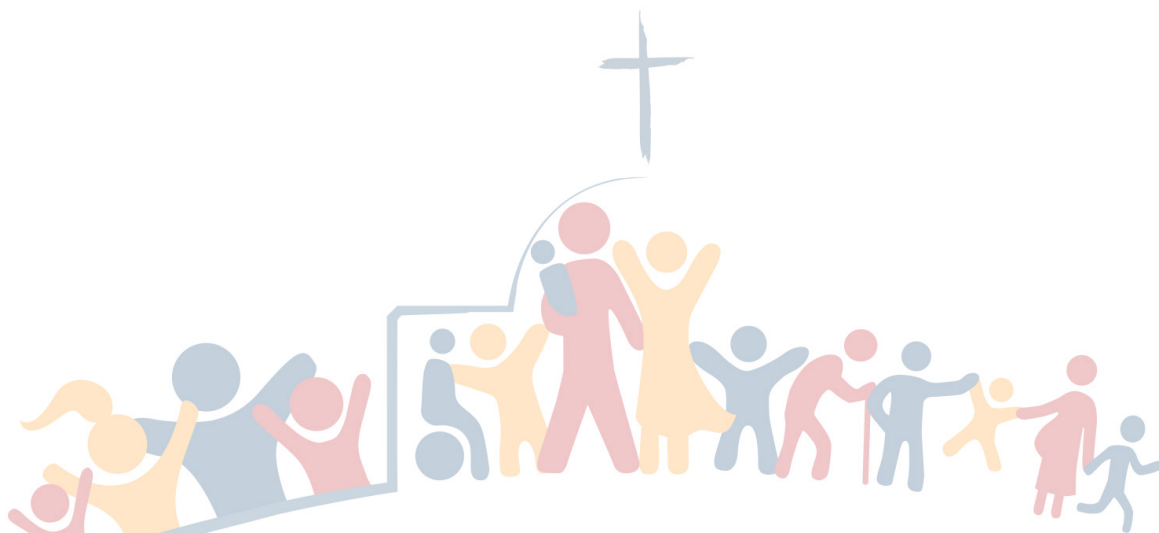
Points of discussion within the community

- Every person can, through his or her life, communicate to the world a particular message that the Lord entrusts to him or her.
- Every person should think about someone they spend time with: what message is God giving me through that person?
- Let us think about these last few days: let us share with simplicity which "messengers" of the Lord we have met.

For more details:

Pope Francis and holiness, a call for all, not for "superheroes"

<https://www.vaticannews.va/it/papa/news/2018-04/il-papa-e-la-santita--una-chiamata-per-tutti-non-per-supereroi.html> [In Italian]





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 grace 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 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;
and for 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.
Amen.

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

