

Catechesis in preparation for the
10th World Meeting of Families

Rome June 22-26, 2022



“Nazareth: Rendering love normal”

Catechesis No. 3

Nazareth: Rendering love normal

The humbleness of Nazareth

In observing Jesus' family, Joseph and Mary, every family can rediscover its own call, and can begin to understand itself a little better, to orient itself on life's journey and feel drawn to the joy of the Gospel.

It is important not to forget that the Son of God, who became man, lived for many years within a normal and humble human family. It is precisely in the humble and normal realities that the Lord longs to become part and establish himself.

Today, our humble and normal existence, following the model of little Nazareth, made up of «one shop, four homes or so, a tiny village»¹, can become the place chosen by God for His Son Jesus to dwell. No one should feel excluded from this great and amazing gift!

Jesus was born in a family. «Jesus' path was in that family. [...] Each Christian family can first of all – as Mary and Joseph did – welcome Jesus, listen to Him, speak with Him, guard Him, protect Him, grow with Him; and in this way improve the world. [...] Each time there is a family that keeps this mystery, even if it were on the periphery of the world, the mystery of the Son of God, the mystery of Jesus who comes to save us, the mystery is at work»².

*«When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, **they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.** The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.*

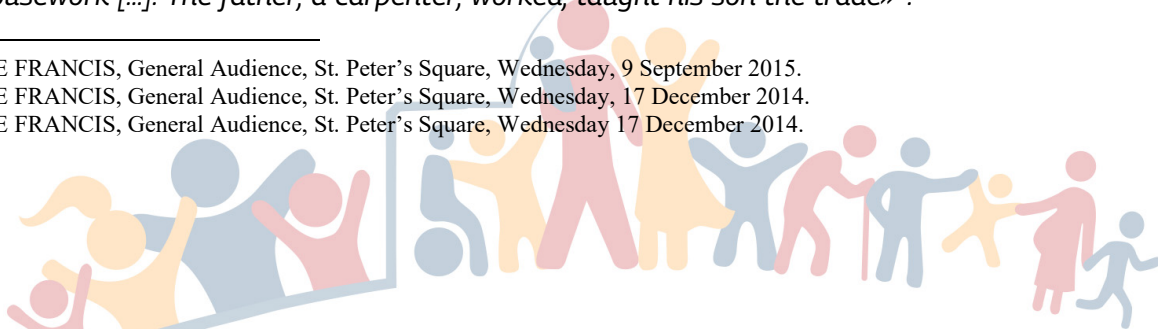
*Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, «Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety». And he said to them, «Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house»? But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and **came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them;** and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced (in) wisdom and age and favor before God and man» (Lk 2:39-52).*

In Nazareth «It does not recount miracles or healing, or preaching – He did none in that period – or of crowds flocking; in Nazareth everything seemed to happen “normally”, according to the customs of a pious and hardworking Israelite family: [...] the mother cooked, she did all the housework [...]. The father, a carpenter, worked, taught his son the trade»³.

¹ POPE FRANCIS, General Audience, St. Peter's Square, Wednesday, 9 September 2015.

² POPE FRANCIS, General Audience, St. Peter's Square, Wednesday, 17 December 2014.

³ POPE FRANCIS, General Audience, St. Peter's Square, Wednesday 17 December 2014.





Rendering love normal

The time when Jesus lived in Nazareth, within the Holy Family, **illuminates the life of each of our families** in a new way: the daily routine of everyday life, apparently insignificant and meaningless, can become a new way of fulfilling the specific call of the family: **to render love normal**.

Do we ever think about it?

Everything we experience every day at home, at work, at school, even if it doesn't seem directly related to the task of passing on the faith, is actually our way of «*seeking to make love and not hate normal, making mutual help commonplace, not indifference or enmity*»⁴. Just as occurred during those thirty years in Nazareth, so too can it occur within our own families and living environments.

Making room for Jesus

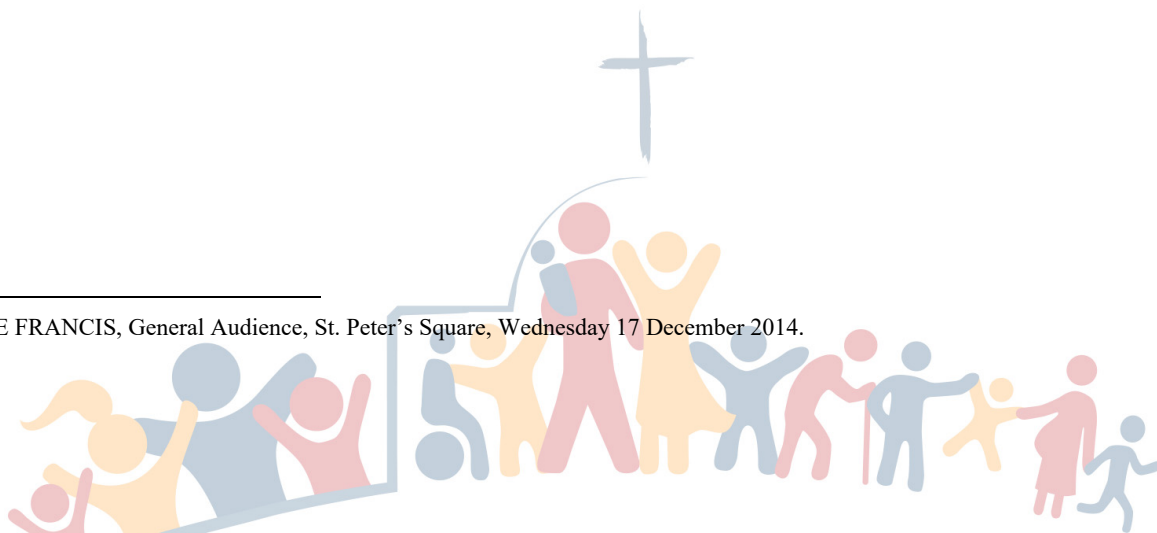
Fulfilling our calling and rendering love normal can only be done by making room for Jesus. «*It means learning to find Jesus in the faces of others, in their voices, in their pleas*» (Evangelii Gaudium 91)

Our relationships are always auspicious and favorable occasions to live out our relationship with Christ; they represent for us the possibility of encountering *His face, His voice, His pleas*.

By rendering love normal, **each of our families can make an irreplaceable contribution to the world**, so that we can grow in true love and in the most authentic solidarity.

No other school can teach authentic, genuine, trustworthy, and credible love the way a family can.

⁴ POPE FRANCIS, General Audience, St. Peter's Square, Wednesday 17 December 2014.





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

- How can we “render love normal” in our families?
- How can we “make room for Jesus” in our families?

Points of discussion within the community

- “Each of our families can offer the world their irreplaceable contribution”: to distribute the “perfume” of Jesus' love around themselves.
- Therefore, the family is a fundamental “player” within our community. How can we enhance the presence of each family?

For more details:

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/audiences/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20141217_udienza-generale.html

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/audiences/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150909_udienza-generale.html





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

