

Cardinal: Strong Families Essential for the Future

Urges Proclamation of Gospel of Love

MADRID, Spain, MARCH 1, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Future generations depend "decisively" on strong Christian families, says Cardinal Antonio María Rouco Varela.

The archbishop of Madrid affirmed this during his opening address at the 97th plenary assembly of the Spanish Episcopal Conference, of which he is president.

Referring to the upcoming World Youth Day in August, which will take place in his city, the prelate spoke about the two topics of "vital importance for young people of today."

He highlighted "the necessary collaboration between family, parish and school in the education of children and young people in the faith; and the question of the truth of human love, as a key element of the maturation of young people as persons."

Experience shows that "the mission of the school is seriously dulled and even made impossible when it does not have the collaboration of parents and of a family life in accord with the natural and divine law," the cardinal noted.

The state, he stressed, "cannot replace, and not even make up for, the role proper to those two basic institutions for the development of the person."

For this reason, Cardinal Rouco stressed the need of a synergy between the family, school and parish, as from this synergy "depends in good measure the fruit of the evangelizing action of the Church for the benefit of the youngest and, in the last analysis, of the whole society."

Decisive truth

In regard to the question of human love, he reported this plenary assembly will consider a draft document on this topic prepared by the Episcopal Sub-commission for the Family and the Defense of Life.

Ignorance of the truth of love, the prelate said, "is causing much suffering and breaking many lives."

He continued, "The Church, our families, schools and parishes, with the very special encouragement of the pastors, must help young people to avoid ignorance of such a decisive truth for their lives and palliate the negative influence of an environment marked by so many disorienting forces and currents."

"The emotional and individualist reduction of love, prevailing in present-day public culture, has led to a critical situation that makes education for love and for marriage very difficult," the cardinal affirmed.

For this reason, he concluded, "to proclaim the Gospel of marriage and of the family is, undoubtedly, one of the most beautiful aspects of the new evangelization and of youth."

"Its urgency, moreover, is evident," Cardinal Rouco said. "We are urged by the painful situation alluded to, but we are urged, above all, by the love of Christ and of young people."

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