

Vatican Gives Tool to Prepare for '12 Family Meeting

"Work and Celebration" Manual in 7 Languages

VATICAN CITY, MAY 26, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The 7th World Meeting of Families is scheduled to begin in almost exactly one year, and the Vatican is offering families a tool to prepare for it.

On Tuesday, a volume released by the Vatican Publishing House was presented by Cardinal Ennio Antonelli, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family.

The next family meeting will be held in Milan from May 29 to June 3, 2012. The theme is "The Family: Work and Celebration."

The preparation manual has that same title and has been published in Italian, English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese and Polish. It is online as an [e-book](#) so far in Italian.

The manual includes 10 biblical catecheses modeled on lectio divina, supported with texts of the magisterium and questions for couples and family groups or communities. Artwork complements the reflections.

Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi, archbishop of Milan, spoke of the volume as a reaffirmation of the challenges presented by Blessed John Paul II in "Familiaris Consortio" and "Laborem Exercens."

The texts of the catecheses were provided by the Diocese of Milan and the Pontifical Council for the Family.

"The issue is that work and celebration are anthropological dimensions of every place and every time and especially affect the structure of the family," Cardinal Tettamanzi said. He suggested that Catholics must have a "singular and original way" of meeting challenges that every family has.

Humanizing time

Auxiliary Bishop Franco Giulio Brambilla of Milan coordinated the group that prepared the catecheses.

He reflected that the three subjects of the theme -- family, work and celebration -- "form a trinomial that begins with the family to open it to the world: work and celebration are ways that the family lives in the social 'space' and in human 'time.'"

"The catecheses attempt to unwind the theme of tension between family and society," he explained. "The family tends to live in its own world in the private sphere and society is thought of and projected as an ensemble of individuals."

Bishop Brambilla observed that civil life tends to push the family into a separate sphere, whereas families experience vulnerability to social influences.

"Hence," he said, "the catecheses begin from daily life to open it to the world, emphasizing the family as a place of free bonds."

The auxiliary bishop noted that families have to be realistic in living today's social situation, where work and free time influence the life of the couple and the education of children.

On the other hand, he said, Catholic families can be a transforming force, "to humanize time through the Christian meaning of celebration, in particular of Sunday."

Cardinal Antonelli offered a preview of the World Meeting [program](#), announcing that "special attention will be given to children, so that they will be able to have virtually a parallel congress."

On the Net:

7th World Meeting of Families: www.family2012.com/index.php?l=en

Pontifical Council for the Family (in Italian): www.familia.va