



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERRELIGIOUS COLLOQUIUM: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY
IN TODAY'S WORLD**

*Consistory Hall
Friday, 23 September 1994*

Dear Friends,

I am happy to meet the participants in the *Interreligious Colloquium: Marriage and the Family in Today's World* organized by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in collaboration with the Pontifical Council for the Family.

Your Colloquium has brought you together for an exchange of ideas on a theme which concerns human society in every part of the globe. Within the context of the *International Year of the Family* the object of your discussion has already received widespread attention.

The Church has had many occasions to speak out about the Family during this year, including my own World Day of Peace Message on the theme: *The Family creates the Peace of the Human Family*. Church doctrine stresses that the Family is the basic cell of society, the first place in which cultural, social and religious values are transmitted and assimilated. It is normally within a family that a person first experiences love and compassion, and learns to show them to others. The family is the place in which each individual is helped to come to full maturity and so to build up a society of harmony, solidarity and peace.

At the same time, we must recognize that the family is today under threat in many ways. Where a materialistic vision and an individualistic approach to life reign, there develops a tendency to question the fundamental truths and values on which marriage and the family are based. Elsewhere it is harsh material conditions, outright poverty, or the dispersion brought about by armed conflict, which prevents the family from fulfilling its mission with dignity.

As members of the one human race, ever more conscious of our interdependence, and united as believers, though belonging to different religious traditions, we must work together so that civil society may recognize and safeguard the sacredness of human life at every stage and promote the family as the one way to defend human dignity.

May God, from whom all good things come, assist us in carrying out this common commitment. And may his blessings be upon each one of you.

© Copyright 1994 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana