



Exhortation offers tender tone, generous spirit, and faithfulness to Church teaching: Archbishop Miller

Archbishop J. Michael Miller today shared his thoughts on Pope Francis' post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia, "The Joy of Love: On Love in the Family," released today.

VANCOUVER (April 8, 2016) – As I read Amoris Laetitia, “The Joy of Love: On Love in the Family,” one word sums up for me the prevailing message of this beautiful Apostolic Exhortation: tenderness.

Pope Francis notes that the virtue of tenderness is often overlooked in our world of “frenetic and superficial relationships.” As you read and reflect on this document, I invite you to keep tenderness in mind.

Amoris Laetitia is the fruit of two Synods on the Family in 2014 and 2015 – gatherings of bishops convoked by the Holy Father to examine the concerns and challenges faced by today’s families. This Exhortation addresses those concerns and challenges with a tender tone, a generous spirit, and faithfulness to the Church’s teachings on marriage.

The important issue of divorce, remarriage and the Eucharist will naturally receive much attention. The Pope rightly reminds us that those who are divorced and remarried “need to be more fully integrated” into the life of the Church in a variety of ways.

The Holy Father’s recent reform of the marriage annulment procedure addresses the perceived burden of this process. Now, Francis calls us as priests and bishops to a fresh approach of personal and pastoral discernment when ministering in these sensitive situations.

As a local Church, we can undoubtedly improve on our pastoral accompaniment of the divorced and remarried, and of those living together without the graces of the Sacrament of Marriage. I look forward to discerning ways of helping our brothers and sisters to “reach the fullness of God’s plan for them, something which is always possible by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Our world presents many other challenges to marriage and family life, and this Exhortation addresses a number of them, including selfishness, distorted views of sexuality, and domestic violence. People seeking answers to these complex questions will find an abundance of compelling truth and practical guidance in the Holy Father’s writing.



Significant portions of this document integrate providentially with the Archdiocese of Vancouver’s Priorities and Goals – in particular, our priority to strengthen marriages and families by equipping parents with new skills, and providing more support services to families.

Amoris Laetitia puts considerable focus on improving marriage preparation. In the Archdiocese we are committed to helping dating, engaged and newly married couples by offering mentorship, and by giving increased attention to evangelization in the support provided.

I am very grateful to Pope Francis for giving us this Exhortation during the Jubilee Year of Mercy, just as the Archdiocese of Vancouver prepares to concentrate more of its pastoral ministry on families. Amoris Laetitia is a timely call to accompany and encourage families as they seek to be “a sign of mercy and closeness wherever family life remains imperfect or lacks peace and joy.”

Every parish is a family of families. Let us pray together for a renewal of family life in our Archdiocese, one that will have a profound influence on our parishes and the wider culture. Amoris Laetitia is a compassionate and inspiring blueprint for bringing renewed vitality to our families.

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