



*The joy of love experienced
by families is also the joy
of the Church*

POPE FRANCIS

Frequently Asked
Questions and Answers
About the World
Meeting of Families
2018

The theme of the family is central to the ministry of Pope Francis

Shortly after his election, Pope Francis began a process of reflection within the Church across the world on the family. He announced the holding of two sessions of the Synod of Bishops: one on the situation of families across the world and the other on how to respond to the challenges facing family life. Pope Francis recently published a wide-ranging document as a fruit of that process, entitled *Amoris Laetitia*, on love in the family.

Why does Pope Francis consider the family as so important?

- The welfare of the family is decisive for the future of the world and that of the Church.
- The experience of love in families is a perennial source of strength for the life of the Church.
- The family is like a factory of hope.
- God likes most to knock on the doors of families and to find families that are united, that love each other and that raise their children in view of creating a society of truth, goodness and beauty.

What is the World Meeting of Families?

In 1994, Pope St John Paul II asked the Pontifical Council for the Family to establish the World Meeting of Families as an international event of prayer, catechesis and celebration, drawing participants from around the globe. It seeks to strengthen the bonds between families and to bear witness to the crucial importance of marriage and the family for all of society. The World Meeting of Families also fosters gestures of solidarity for families in difficulty.

When is the World Meeting of Families held?

The World Meeting of Families was first celebrated in Rome in 1994. Since then, meetings have been in Rio de Janeiro (1997), Rome (2000), Manila (2003), Valencia (2006), Mexico City (2009), Milan (2012), Philadelphia (2015) and now Dublin, Ireland (2018). The principal events of the World Meeting of Families 2018 will be held in Dublin, but events will also take place in other centres around Ireland. The title and the dates of the 2018 meeting will be decided and announced by Pope Francis himself.

Who will organise the World Meeting of Families 2018?

The World Meeting of Families 2018 will be organised jointly by the Pontifical Council for the Family and by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, as bishop of the host diocese. The planning will involve teams of women and men – clergy, religious and lay – from all over Ireland. A committee of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference has been set up to oversee fundraising for the event. In preparation for the meeting, a programme of pastoral preparation centered on the family will take place across Ireland, in particular during 2017. It is hoped that alongside the events, gestures of solidarity will be fostered, especially with the setting up of a Pope Francis Fund for Homelessness.

How can I make a donation to the World Meeting of Families?

The Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference will be holding three national Sunday church collections over the coming years. It will also be possible to donate online through our website, by bank transfer, cheque or money order. Over the coming months the details will be available on the website www.worldmeeting2018.ie

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