



THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

PLENARY SESSION ON

THE FAMILY AS RELATIONAL GOOD: THE CHALLENGE OF LOVE



WEDNESDAY 27 - FRIDAY 29 APRIL 2022 CASINA PIO IV | VATICAN CITY



The welfare of the family is decisive for the future of the world and that of the Church. Countless studies have been made of marriage and the family, their current problems and challenges. We do well to focus on concrete realities, since “the call and the demands of the Spirit resound in the events of history”, and through these “the Church can also be guided to a more profound understanding of the inexhaustible mystery of marriage and the family.

(Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia, 31)

The ability of the family to initiate its members to human fraternity can be considered a hidden treasure that can aid that general rethinking of social policies and human rights whose need is so urgently felt today.

(Pope Francis, Humana Communitas, 2019)

Concept Note

All surveys conducted at national and international levels show that the family is at the top of the scale of people's values under every latitude. People claim that the family is the most important thing in their lives. However, when one tries to clarify what is meant by 'family', one enters a field of great uncertainties and contingencies as to the affective, cognitive and symbolic references that the idea and the experience of the family brings with it. In all cases, the challenge is how to think and live the love between family members. It is therefore a question of specifying, understanding and evaluating the different answers to this challenge that emerge today in people's life-worlds. What is the ideal of the family? And what is its reality? In the gap between everyday experience and the desired ideal of a beautiful family lies the challenge of love.

We are all aware that the family is undergoing profound social and cultural transformations that must be understood and valued in their scope and in their consequences. If we consider the deep and rapid changes that the family faces today all over the world, due to the processes of modernization and globalization, it seems necessary to ask ourselves some basic questions that push us to rethink the fundamentals of the family and its reasons for existence in the present society and in the near future: "why the family, and what for?". What are the roots of the family as a natural society and to what extent can culture change them? What reasons support the necessity and the goodness of the family beyond the changes in its social functions?

The plenary intends to answer these questions. It is intended to assess the phenomenology of the family in the contemporary world from the point of view of the social sciences and social policies, in order to offer the Catholic social doctrine in-depth elements of knowledge about the current situation and, as far as possible, the near future on a global level.

By referring to the analysis of social facts, the conference will reflect on the family on the horizon of its ontological being and in the perspective of exercising its primary tasks. It is a question of understanding how the family can today humanize the person in a society that is not always friendly with the family. The purpose of the Plenary is not to draw up a general descriptive report (there are plenty of them, at national and international level), but to focus on the lines of thought and action that can best support the family in the world of tomorrow. On the one hand, we need to clarify the deeper meaning of the family's existence – family ontology, from the social, philosophical and theological viewpoints – and, on the other, to evaluate the practical implications for a better family promotion – social legislation, policies, and good

practices in family services – in the perspective of an integral human ecology. In order to survive, our society needs 'family friendly' policies. It is still a question of implementing article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State"). To implement these human rights concerning the family, it seems appropriate to deepen the meaning of family relationships, couple dynamics and intergenerational relationships in present societies, taking into account the fact that they are necessary for the humanization of people, but also strongly contingent on the life course of people. The target is to make the family flourish as the primary relational good of society. To say that the family is a relational good means to affirm that the destiny and happiness of people depend on the fact that they share their family relationships as their fundamental common good.

Modern social sciences have shown that family changes decide the most profound and significant changes in society. Every new society is the fruit of new family models. In the apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (AL), Pope Francis proposes a realistic approach to the theme of the family. He invites us to see the family not as an abstract ideal, but as a "craft" task (AL 16) which must be approached with tenderness (AL 28), considering that the Word of God "is not shown as a sequence of abstract theses, but as a traveling companion also for families who are in crisis or experiencing some pain, and indicate the destination of the journey" (AL 22). He writes: "anthropological-cultural change, that today influences all aspects of life and requires an analytic and diversified approach, does not permit us to limit ourselves to practices in pastoral ministry and mission that reflect forms and models of the past. We must be informed and impassioned interpreters of the wisdom of faith in a context in which individuals are less well supported than in the past by social structures, and in their emotional and family life. With the clear purpose of remaining faithful to the teaching of Christ, we must therefore look, with the intellect of love and with wise realism, at the reality of the family today in all its complexity, with its lights and its shadows" (AL 32).

Thinking the family as a relational good, and practicing it as such, can be a way to build a new 'good society.'

Programme

WEDNESDAY APRIL 27, 2022

SESSION 1. FAMILY STRUCTURES AND DYNAMICS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES

Chair: Stefano Zamagni

9:00	<i>Word of Welcome</i> Stefano Zamagni H.E. Msgr. Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo
9:15	<i>Opening Speech</i> H.Em. Card. Pietro Parolin
9:45	<i>The Demographic Dynamics of Family Structures: A World View</i> Gérard-François Dumont
10:15	Discussion
10:30	<i>The Gift of Life: The New Challenges of the Transition to Parenthood</i> Raffaella Iafrate
11:00	Discussion
11:15	Coffee Break
11:45	<i>Where Is the Family Going? An American Perspective</i> Robert Putnam
12:15	Discussion
12:30	General Discussion
13:00	Lunch at the Casina Pio IV

SESSION 2. THE SOCIETAL ROLE OF THE FAMILY

Chair: Ana Marta González

14:30	<i>Conceptions of the Family in Western Philosophy</i> Vittorio Hösle
15:00	Discussion
15:15	<i>The Self, the Family and Citizenship. The Case of India</i> Niraja Gopal Jayal
16:00	Coffee Break
16:30	<i>The Family: Love and Work in the Great Migrations of the 21st Century</i> Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Carola Suárez-Orozco
17:00	Discussion
17:15	<i>Family and Culture in Africa</i> Paulus M. Zulu
17:45	Discussion
18:00	<i>The Family and the Care Economy</i> Jeffrey D. Sachs
18:30	Discussion
18:45	General Discussion
19:00	Dinner at the Casina Pio IV

THURSDAY APRIL 28, 2022

SESSION 3. EMERGING ISSUES

Chair: Paolo Carozza

9:00	<i>Preserving and Supporting the Vocation of Women in Families</i> Elizabeth Schiltz
9:30	Discussion
9:45	<i>Coping With Stress in Times Crisis: An Opportunity for Strengthening Family Bonds</i> Mariana Falconier
10:15	Discussion
10:30	<i>Facing Family Morphogenesis: When Families Become Relational Goods</i> Pierpaolo Donati
11:00	Discussion
11:15	Coffee Break
11:45	<i>United, but Not Uniform. Experimental Evidence About Risk Taking in the Family</i> Christoph Engel
12:15	Discussion
12:30	General Discussion
13:00	Lunch at the Casina Pio IV

SESSION 4. THE MEANING OF THE FAMILY: THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Chair: Gregory M. Reichberg

14:30	<i>A Relational Reading of Family and Love</i> Rocco Buttiglione
15:00	Discussion
15:15	<i>Families in the Light of God's Project</i> H.E. Msgr. Roland Minnerath
15:45	Discussion
16:00	Coffee Break
16:30	<i>The Family as Source of Meaning and Responsibility: the Psychological Perspective</i> Alexander Batthyány
17:00	Discussion
17:15	<i>On the Manifold Dimensions of Human Love</i> Ana Marta González
17:45	Discussion
18:00	General Discussion
19:00	Dinner at the Casina Pio IV

FRIDAY APRIL 29, 2022

SESSION 5. THE FAMILY AS A GOOD PER SE AND FOR ALL NATIONS

Chair: Vittorio Höfle

9:00	<i>Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Relationships: The Family as the 'Fundamental Group Unit of Society' in Constitutional Law</i> Paolo Carozza
9:30	Discussion
9:45	<i>From the Nuclear Family to the Family of Nations: Exploring the Analogy</i> Gregory M. Reichberg
10:15	Discussion
10:30	Coffee Break
11:30	Papal Audience
13:00	Lunch at the Casina Pio IV
SESSION 6. FAMILY LEGISLATION	
Chair: Allen D. Hertzke	
14:30	<i>Family and Policy Making in the Post-industrial Society</i> Stefano Zamagni
15:00	Discussion
15:15	<i>When is Legislation Ever Family Friendly? The UK Experience</i> John F. McEldowney
15:45	Discussion
16:00	Coffee Break
16:30	<i>Family Associations and Their Societal Role</i> Vincenzo Bassi
17:00	Discussion
17:15	General Discussion
18:00	End of the Plenary
18:10	Closed Session for Academicians
19:30	Dinner at the Casina Pio IV

List of Participants

BASSI Vincenzo

President FAFCE - Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe, Italy

BATTHYÁNY Alexander

Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest, Hungary

BUTTIGLIONE Rocco

PASS Academician
President of the UDC National Council
Palazzo Montecitorio
Rome, Italy

CAROZZA Paolo

PASS Academician
Professor of Law, Concurrent
Professor of Political Science, Director, Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame, IN, USA

DONATI Pierpaolo

PASS Academician
University of Bologna
Department of Political and Social Sciences
Bologna, Italy

DUMONT Gérard-François

PASS Academician
Université de Paris-Sorbonne
Paris, France

ENGEL Christoph

PASS Academician
Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods
Bonn, Germany

FALCONIER Mariana

Family Science, University of Maryland, USA

GONZÁLEZ Ana Marta

PASS Academician
Institute for Culture and Society and Department of Philosophy
University of Navarra, Spain

HERTZKE Allen D.

PASS Academician
David Ross Boyd Professor
Department of Political Science
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK, USA

HÖSLE Vittorio

PASS Academician
University of Notre Dame
Institute for Advanced Study
Notre Dame, IN, USA

IAFRATE Raffaella

Full Professor of Social Psychology
Department of Psychology
Catholic University of Milan
Milan, Italy

JAYAL Niraja Gopal

PASS Academician
Centre for the Study of Law and Governance
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi, India

McELDOWNEY John F.

PASS Academician
School of Law
University of Warwick
Coventry, United Kingdom

MINNERATH H.E. Msgr. Roland

PASS Academician
Archevêché
Dijon, France

PAROLIN H.Em. Card. Pietro

Secretary of State
Vatican City

PUTNAM Robert

University of Harvard, MA

REICHBERG Gregory

PASS Academician
Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)
Oslo, Norway

SACHS Jeffrey D.

PASS Academician
Center for Sustainable Development
Columbia University
New York, NY, USA

SÁNCHEZ SORONDO H.E. Msgr. Marcelo

PASS Chancellor
Vatican City

SCHILTZ Elizabeth

Co-Director of the Murphy Institute, Herrick Professor of Law, and Thomas J. Abood Research Scholar, University of St Thomas, St Paul, Minnesota, USA

SUÁREZ-OROZCO Carola

UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Los Angeles, CA, USA

SUÁREZ-OROZCO Marcelo

PASS Academician
University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA, USA
and UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Los Angeles, CA, USA

VIGANÒ Msgr. Dario Edoardo

PASS Vice-Chancellor
Vatican City

ZAMAGNI Stefano

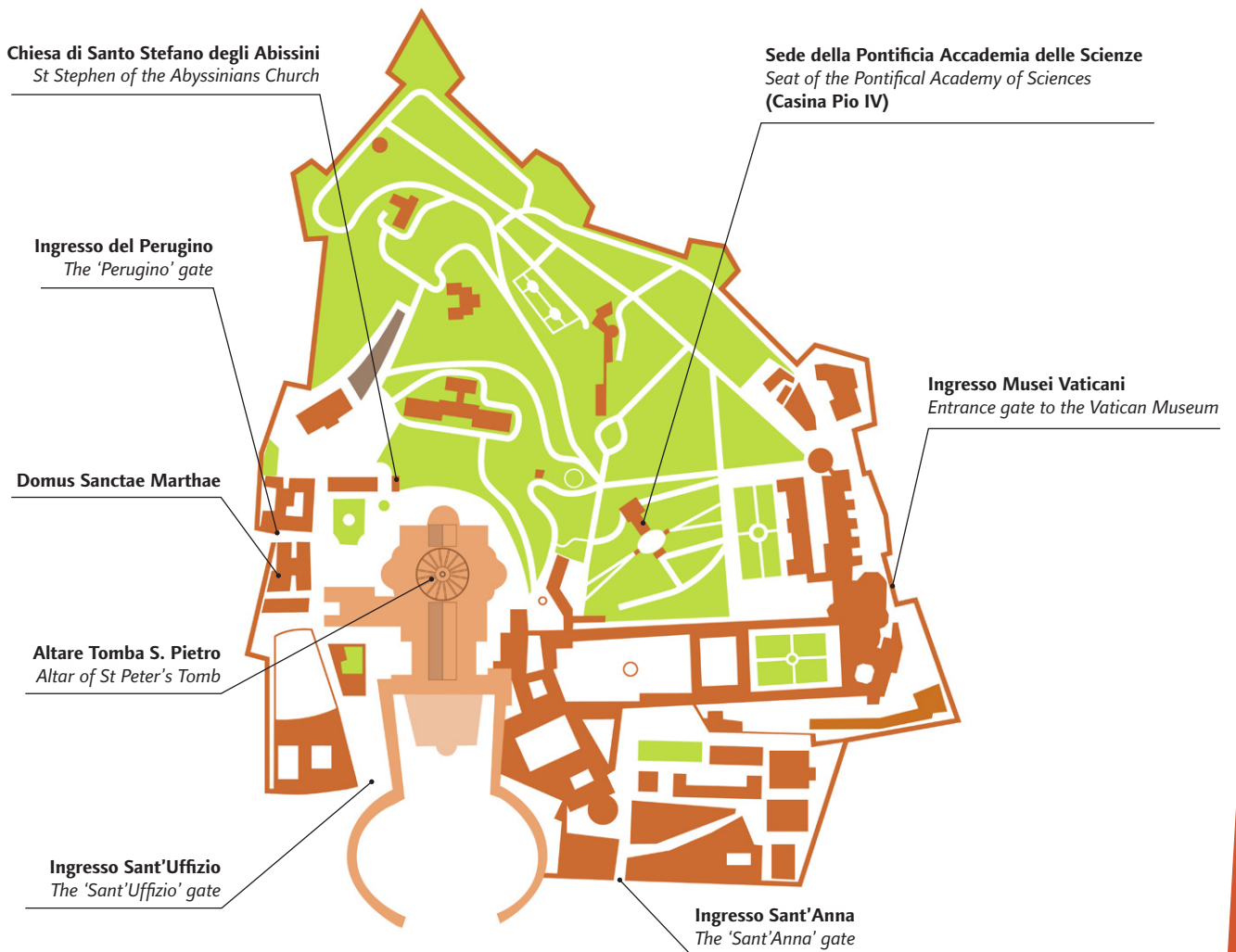
PASS President
University of Bologna
Professor of Economics,
Department of Economic Sciences,
Bologna, Italy

ZULU Paulus M.

PASS Academician
University of Natal
Centre for Social and Development Studies
Durban, South Africa

Observer:

SPERANZA Nicola



THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES | CASINA PIO IV | V-00120 VATICAN CITY
 Tel: +39 0669881441 | Fax: +39 0669885218 | Email: pass@pass.va
 For further information please visit: www.pass.va | www.endslavery.va

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