

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

2004

(Full text available at

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)

PART TWO

“...the Church’s social teaching is itself a valid instrument of evangelization. As such, it proclaims God and his mystery of salvation in Christ to every human being, and for that very reason reveals man to himself.

In this light, and only in this light, does it concern itself with everything else: the human rights of the individual, and in particular of the ‘working class’, the family and education, the duties of the State, the ordering of national and international society, economic life, culture, war and peace, and respect for life from the moment of conception until death”.
(*Centesimus annus*, 54)

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FAMILY,
THE VITAL CELL OF SOCIETY

I. THE FAMILY, THE FIRST NATURAL SOCIETY

209. *The importance and centrality of the family with regard to the person and society is repeatedly underlined by Sacred Scripture.* “It is not good that the man should be alone” (*Gen* 2:18). From the texts that narrate the creation of man (cf. *Gen* 1:26–28, 2:7–24) there emerges how—in God’s plan—the couple constitutes “the first form of communion between persons” [458]. Eve is created like Adam as the one who, in her otherness, completes him (cf. *Gen* 2:18) in order to form with him “one flesh” (*Gen* 2:24; cf. *Mt* 19:5–6) [459]. At the same time, both are involved in the work of procreation, which makes them co-workers with the Creator: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (*Gen* 1:28). The family is presented, in the Creator’s plan, as “the *primary place of* ‘humanization’ for the person and society” and the “cradle of life and love” [460].

210. *It is in the family that one learns the love and faithfulness of the Lord, and the need to respond to these* (cf. *Ex* 12:25–27, 13:8,14–15; *Deut* 6:20–25, 13:7–11; *1 Sam* 3:13). It is in the family that children learn their first and most important lessons of practical wisdom, to which the virtues are connected (cf. *Prov* 1:8–9, 4:1–4, 6:20–21; *Sir* 3:1–16, 7:27–28). Because of all this, the Lord himself is the guarantor of the love and fidelity of married life (cf. *Mal* 2:14–15).

Jesus was born and lived in a concrete family, accepting all its characteristic features [461] and he conferred the highest dignity on the institution of marriage, making it a sacrament of the new covenant (cf. *Mt* 19:3–9). It is in this new perspective that the couple finds the fullness of its dignity and the family its solid foundation.

211. *Enlightened by the radiance of the biblical message, the Church considers the family as the first natural society, with underived rights that are proper to it, and places it at the centre of social life.* Relegating the family “to a subordinate or secondary role, excluding it from its rightful position in society, would be to inflict grave harm on the authentic growth of society as a whole” [462]. The family, in fact, is born of the intimate communion of life and love founded on the marriage between one man and one woman [463]. It possesses its own specific and original social dimension, in that it is the principal place of interpersonal relationships, *the first and vital cell of society* [464]. The family is a divine institution that stands at the foundation of life of the human person as the prototype of every social order.

a. Importance of the family for the person

212. *The family has central importance in reference to the person.* It is in this cradle of life and love that people are *born* and *grow*; when a child *is conceived*, society receives the gift of a new person who is called “from the innermost depths of self to *communion* with others and to the *giving* of self to others” [465]. It is in the family, therefore, that the mutual giving of self on the part of man and woman united in marriage creates an environment of life in which children “develop their potentialities, become aware of their dignity and prepare to face their unique and individual destiny” [466].

In the climate of natural affection which unites the members of a family unit, persons are recognized and learn responsibility in the wholeness of their personhood. “The first and fundamental structure for ‘human ecology’ is the *family*, in which man receives his first formative ideas about truth and goodness, and learns what it means to love and to be loved, and thus what it actually means to be a person” [467]. The obligations of its members, in fact, are not limited by the terms of a contract but derive from the very essence of the family, founded on the irrevocable marriage covenant and given structure in the relationships that arise within it following the generation or adoption of children.

b. Importance of the family for society

213. *The family, the natural community in which human social nature is experienced, makes a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the good of society.* The family unit, in fact, is born from the communion of persons. “‘*Communion*’ has to do with the personal relationship between the ‘I’ and the ‘thou.’ ‘*Community*’ on the other hand transcends this framework and moves towards a ‘society,’ a ‘we.’ The family, as a community of persons, is thus the first human ‘society’” [468].

A society built on a family scale is the best guarantee against drifting off course into individualism or collectivism, because within the family the person is always at the centre of attention as an end and never as a means. It is patently clear that the good of persons and the proper functioning of society are closely connected “with the healthy state of conjugal and family life” [469]. Without families that are strong in their communion and stable in their commitment, peoples grow weak. In the family, moral values are taught starting from the very first years of life, the spiritual heritage of the religious community and the cultural legacy of the nation are transmitted. In the family one learns social responsibility and solidarity [470].

214. *The priority of the family over society and over the State must be affirmed.* The family in fact, at least in its procreative function, is the condition itself for their existence. With regard to other functions that benefit each of its members, it proceeds in importance and values the functions that society and the State are called to perform [471]. The family possesses inviolable rights and finds its legitimization in human nature and not in being recognized by the State. *The family, then, does not exist for society or the State, but society and the State exist for the family.*

Every social model that intends to serve the good of man must not overlook the centrality and social responsibility of the family. In their relationship to the family, society and the State are seriously obligated to observe the principle of subsidiarity. In virtue of this principle, public authorities may not take away from the family tasks which it can accomplish well by itself or in free association with other families; on the other hand, these same authorities have the duty to sustain the family, ensuring that it has all the assistance that it needs to fulfil properly its responsibilities [472].

II. MARRIAGE, THE FOUNDATION OF THE FAMILY

a. The value of marriage

215. *The family has its foundation in the free choice of the spouses to unite themselves in marriage, in respect for the meaning and values of this institution that does not depend on man but on God himself:* “For the good of the spouses and their offspring as well as of society, this sacred bond no longer depends on human decision alone. For God himself is the author of marriage and has endowed it with various benefits and purposes” [473]. Therefore, the institution

of marriage—“intimate partnership of life and love ... established by the Creator and endowed by him with its own proper laws” [474]—is not the result of human conventions or of legislative prescriptions but acquires its stability from divine disposition [475]. It is an institution born, even in the eyes of society, “from the human act by which the partners mutually surrender themselves to each other” [476], and is founded on the very nature of that conjugal love which, as a total and exclusive gift of person to person, entails a definitive commitment expressed by mutual, irrevocable and public consent [477]. This commitment means that the relationships among family members are marked also by a sense of justice and, therefore, by respect for mutual rights and duties.

216. *No power can abolish the natural right to marriage or modify its traits and purpose. Marriage in fact is endowed with its own proper, innate and permanent characteristics.*

Notwithstanding the numerous changes that have taken place in the course of the centuries in the various cultures and in different social structures and spiritual attitudes, in every culture there exists a certain sense of the dignity of the marriage union, although this is not evident everywhere with the same clarity [478]. This dignity must be respected in its specific characteristics and must be safeguarded against any attempt to undermine it. Society cannot freely legislate with regard to the marriage bond by which the two spouses promise each other fidelity, assistance and acceptance of children, but it is authorized to regulate its civil effects.

217. *The characteristic traits of marriage are: totality, by which the spouses give themselves to each other mutually in every aspect of their person, physical and spiritual; unity which makes them “one flesh” (Gen 2:24); indissolubility and fidelity which the definitive mutual giving of self requires; the fruitfulness to which this naturally opens itself [479].* God’s wise plan for marriage—a plan accessible to human reason notwithstanding the difficulties arising from “hardness of heart” (cf. Mt 19:8; Mk 10:5)—cannot be evaluated exclusively in light of the *de facto* behaviour and concrete situations that are at divergence with it. A radical denial of God’s original plan is found in *polygamy*, “because it is contrary to the equal personal dignity of men and women who in matrimony give themselves with a love that is total and therefore unique and exclusive” [480].

218. *In its “objective” truth, marriage is ordered to the procreation and education of children [481].* The marriage union, in fact, gives fullness of life to that sincere gift of self, the fruit of which is children, who in turn are a gift for the parents, for the whole family and all of society [482]. *Nonetheless, marriage was not instituted for the sole reason of procreation [483].* Its indissoluble character and its value of communion remain even when children, although greatly desired, do not arrive to complete conjugal life. In this case, the spouses “can give expression to their generosity by adopting abandoned children or performing demanding services for others” [484].

b. The sacrament of marriage

219. *By Christ's institution, the baptized live the inherent human reality of marriage in the supernatural form of a sacrament, a sign and instrument of grace.* The theme of the marriage covenant, as the meaningful expression of the communion of love between God and men and as the symbolic key to understanding the different stages of the great covenant between God and his people, is found throughout salvation history [485]. At the centre of the revelation of the divine plan of love is the gift that God makes to humanity in His Son, Jesus Christ, “the Bridegroom who loves and gives Himself as the Saviour of humanity, uniting it to Himself as His body. He reveals the original truth of marriage, the truth of the ‘beginning’ (cf. *Gen* 2:24; *Mt* 19:5), and, freeing man from his hardness of heart, He makes man capable of realizing this truth in its entirety” [486]. It is in the spousal love of Christ for the Church, which shows its fullness in the offering made on the cross that the sacramentality of marriage originates. The grace of this sacrament conforms the love of the spouses to the love of Christ for the Church. Marriage, as a sacrament, is a covenant in love between a man and a woman [487].

220. *The sacrament of marriage takes up the human reality of conjugal love in all its implications* and “gives to Christian couples and parents a power and a commitment to live their vocation as lay people and therefore to ‘seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God’” [488]. Intimately united to the Church by virtue of the sacrament that makes it a “domestic Church” or a “little Church,” the Christian family is called therefore “to be a sign of unity for the world and in this way to exercise its prophetic role by bearing witness to the Kingdom and peace of Christ, towards which the whole world is journeying” [489].

Conjugal charity, which flows from the very charity of Christ, offered through the sacrament, makes Christian spouses witnesses to a new social consciousness inspired by the Gospel and the Paschal Mystery. The natural dimension of their love is constantly purified, strengthened and elevated by sacramental grace. In this manner, besides offering each other mutual help on the path to holiness, Christian spouses become a sign and an instrument of Christ's love in the world. By their very lives they are called to bear witness to and proclaim the religious meaning of marriage, which modern society has ever greater difficulty recognizing, especially as it accepts relativistic perspectives of the natural foundation itself of the institution of marriage.

III. THE SOCIAL SUBJECTIVITY OF THE FAMILY

a. Love and the formation of a community of persons

221. *The family is present as the place where communion—that communion so necessary for a society that is increasingly individualistic—is brought about. It is the place where an authentic community of persons develops and grows* [490], *thanks to the endless dynamism of love, which is the fundamental dimension of human experience, and which finds in the family the privileged*

place for making itself known. “Love causes man to find fulfilment through the sincere gift of self. To love means to give and to receive something which can be neither bought nor sold but only given freely and mutually” [491].

It is thanks to love, the essential reality for defining marriage and the family that every person—man and woman—is recognized, accepted and respected in his dignity. From love arise relationships lived in gratuitousness, which “by respecting and fostering personal dignity in each and every one as the only basis for value ... takes the form of heartfelt acceptance, encounter and dialogue, disinterested availability, generous service and deep solidarity” [492]. The existence of families living this way exposes the failings and contradictions of a society that is for the most part, even if not exclusively, based on efficiency and functionality. By constructing daily a network of interpersonal relationships, both internal and external, the family is instead “the first and irreplaceable school of social life, and example and stimulus for the broader community relationships marked by respect, justice, dialogue and love” [493].

222. Love is also expressed in the generous attention shown to the elderly who live in families: their presence can take on great value. They are an example of connections between generations, a resource for the well-being of the family and of the whole of society: “Not only do they show that there are aspects of life—human, cultural, moral and social values—which cannot be judged in terms of economic efficiency, but they can also make an effective contribution in the workplace and in leadership roles. In short, it is not just a question of doing something for older people, but also of accepting them in a realistic way as partners in shared projects—at the level of thought, dialogue and action” [494]. As the Sacred Scripture says: “They still bring forth fruit in old age” (Ps 92:15). The elderly constitute an important school of life, capable of transmitting values and traditions, and of fostering the growth of younger generations, who thus learn to seek not only their own good but also that of others. If the elderly are in situations where they experience suffering and dependence, not only do they need health care services and appropriate assistance, but—and above all—they need to be treated with love.

223. *The human being is made for love and cannot live without love.* When it is manifested as the total gift of two persons in their complementarities, love cannot be reduced to emotions or feelings, much less to mere sexual expression. In a society that tends more and more to relativize and trivialize the very experience of love and sexuality, exalting its fleeting aspects and obscuring its fundamental values, it is more urgent than ever to proclaim and bear witness that *the truth* of conjugal love and sexuality exist where there is a full and total gift of persons, with the characteristics of *unity* and *fidelity* [495]. This truth, a source of joy, hope and life, remains impenetrable and unattainable as long as people close themselves off in relativism and skepticism.

224. *Faced with theories that consider gender identity as merely the cultural and social product of the interaction between the community and the individual, independent of personal sexual identity without any reference to the true meaning of sexuality, the Church does not tire of*

repeating her teaching: “Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity. Physical, moral, and spiritual *difference* and *complementarities* are oriented towards the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarities, needs and mutual support between the sexes are lived out” [496]. According to this perspective, it is obligatory that positive law *be conformed* to the natural law, according to which *sexual identity is indispensable*, because it is the objective condition for forming a couple in marriage.

225. *The nature of conjugal love requires the stability of the married relationship and its indissolubility.* The absence of these characteristics compromises the relationship of exclusive and total love that is proper to the marriage bond, bringing great pain to the children and damaging repercussions also on the fabric of society.

The stability and indissolubility of the marriage union must not be entrusted solely to the intention and effort of the individual persons involved. The responsibility for protecting and promoting the family as a fundamental natural institution, precisely in consideration of its vital and essential aspects, falls to the whole of society. The need to confer an institutional character on marriage, basing this on a public act that is socially and legally recognized, arises from the basic requirements of social nature.

The introduction of divorce into civil legislation has fueled a relativistic vision of the marriage bond and is broadly manifested as it becomes “truly a plague on society” [497]. Couples who preserve and develop the value of indissolubility “in a humble and courageous manner ... perform the role committed to them of being in the world a ‘sign’—a small and precious sign, sometimes also subjected to temptation, but always renewed—of the unfailing fidelity with which God and Jesus Christ love each and every human being” [498].

226. *The Church does not abandon those who have remarried after a divorce. She prays for them and encourages them in the difficulties that they encounter in the spiritual life, sustaining them in faith and in hope.* For their part, these persons, insofar as they are baptized, can and indeed must participate in the life of the Church. They are exhorted to listen to the Word of God, to attend the sacrifice of the Mass, to persevere in prayer, to perform acts of charity and take part in community projects for justice and peace, to raise their children in faith, and to nurture a spirit of penitence and works of penance in order to beseech, day after day, the grace of God.

Reconciliation in the sacrament of Penance—which opens the way to the sacrament of the Eucharist—can only be given to those who, after repenting, are sincerely disposed to a new form of life that is no longer in contradiction with the indissolubility of marriage [499].

Acting in this fashion, the Church professes her fidelity to Christ and to his truth; at the same time she shows a maternal spirit to her children, especially those who, through no fault of their own, have been abandoned by their legitimate spouse. With steadfast trust she believes that even those who have turned away from the Lord’s commandment, and continue to live in that state,

can obtain from God the grace of conversion and salvation, if they persevere in prayer, penance and charity [500].

227. De facto unions, the number of which is progressively increasing, are based on a false conception of an individual's freedom to choose [501] and on a completely privatistic vision of marriage and family. Marriage is not a simple agreement to live together but a relationship with a social dimension that is unique with regard to all other relationships, since the family—attending as it does to caring for and educating children—is the principal instrument for making each person grow in an integral manner and integrating him positively into social life.

Making “de facto unions” legally equivalent to the family would discredit the model of the family, which cannot be brought about in a precarious relationship between persons [502] but only in a permanent union originating in marriage, that is, in a covenant between one man and one woman, founded on the mutual and free choice that entails full conjugal communion oriented towards procreation.

228. *Connected with de facto unions is the particular problem concerning demands for the legal recognition of unions between homosexual persons, which is increasingly the topic of public debate. Only an anthropology corresponding to the full truth of the human person can give an appropriate response to this problem with its different aspects on both the societal and ecclesial levels [503]. The light of such anthropology reveals “how incongruous is the demand to accord ‘marital’ status to unions between persons of the same sex. It is opposed, first of all, by the objective impossibility of making the partnership fruitful through the transmission of life according to the plan inscribed by God in the very structure of the human being. Another obstacle is the absence of the conditions for that interpersonal complementarity between male and female willed by the Creator at both the physical-biological and the eminently psychological levels. It is only in the union of two sexually different persons that the individual can achieve perfection in a synthesis of unity and mutual psychophysical completion” [504].*

Homosexual persons are to be fully respected in their human dignity [505] and encouraged to follow God's plan with particular attention in the exercise of chastity [506]. This duty calling for respect does not justify the legitimization of behaviour that is not consistent with moral law, even less does it justify the recognition of a right to marriage between persons of the same sex and its being considered equivalent to the family [507].

“If, from the legal standpoint, marriage between a man and a woman were to be considered just one possible form of marriage, the concept of marriage would undergo a radical transformation, with grave detriment to the common good. By putting homosexual unions on a legal plane analogous to that of marriage and the family, the State acts arbitrarily and in contradiction with its duties” [508].

229. *The solidity of the family nucleus is a decisive resource for the quality of life in society, therefore the civil community cannot remain indifferent to the destabilizing tendencies that threaten its foundations at their very roots.* Although legislation may sometimes tolerate morally unacceptable behaviour [509], *it must never weaken the recognition of indissoluble monogamous marriage as the only authentic form of the family.* It is therefore necessary that the public authorities “resist these tendencies which divide society and are harmful to the dignity, security and welfare of the citizens as individuals, and they must try to ensure that public opinion is not led to undervalue the institutional importance of marriage and the family” [510].

It is the task of the Christian community and of all who have the good of society at heart to reaffirm that “the family constitutes, much more than a mere juridical, social and economic unit, a community of love and solidarity, which is uniquely suited to teach and transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values, essential for the development and well-being of its own members and of society” [511].

b. The family is the sanctuary of life

230. *Conjugal love is by its nature open to the acceptance of life* [512]. The dignity of the human being, called to proclaim the goodness and fruitfulness that come from God, is eminently revealed in the task of procreation: “Human fatherhood and motherhood, while remaining *biologically similar* to that of other living beings in nature, contain in an essential and unique way a ‘likeness’ to God which is the basis of the family as a community of human life, as a community of persons united in love (*communio personarum*)” [513].

Procreation expresses the social subjectivity of the family and sets in motion a dynamism of love and solidarity between the generations upon which society is founded. It is necessary to rediscover the social value of that *portion* of the common good inherent in each new human being. Every child “becomes a gift to its brothers, sisters, parents and entire family. *Its life becomes a gift for the very people who were givers of life* and who cannot help but feel its presence, its sharing in their life and its contribution to their common good and to that of the community of the family” [514].

231. *The family founded on marriage is truly the sanctuary of life*, “the place in which life — the gift of God — can be properly welcomed and protected against the many attacks to which it is exposed, and can develop in accordance with what constitutes authentic human growth” [515]. Its role in promoting and building the culture of life [516] against “the possibility of a destructive ‘anti-civilization’, as so many present trends and situations confirm” [517], is decisive and irreplaceable.

Christian families have then, in virtue of the sacrament received, a particular mission that makes them witnesses and proclaimers of the Gospel of life. This is a commitment which in society takes on the value of true and courageous prophecy. It is for this reason that “serving the *Gospel*

of life ... means that the family, particularly through its membership in family associations, works to ensure that the laws and institutions of the State in no way violate the right to life, from conception to natural death, but rather protect and promote it” [518].

232. *The family contributes to the social good in an eminent fashion through responsible motherhood and fatherhood, the spouses’ special participation in God’s work of creation [519].*

The weight of this responsibility must not be used as a justification for being selfishly closed but must guide the decisions of the spouses in a generous acceptance of life. “In relation to physical, economic, psychological and social conditions, responsible parenthood is exercised both in the duly pondered and generous decision to have a large family, and in the decision, made for serious reasons and in respect of the moral law, to avoid for a time or even indeterminately a new birth” [520]. The motivations that should guide the couple in exercising responsible motherhood and fatherhood originate in the full recognition of their duties towards God, towards themselves, towards the family and towards society in a proper hierarchy of values.

233. *Concerning the “methods” for practicing responsible procreation, the first to be rejected as morally illicit are sterilization and abortion [521].* The latter in particular is a horrendous crime and constitutes a particularly serious moral disorder [522]; far from being a right, it is a sad phenomenon that contributes seriously to spreading a mentality against life, representing a dangerous threat to a just and democratic social coexistence [523].

Also to be rejected is recourse to contraceptive methods in their different forms [524]: this rejection is based on a correct and integral understanding of the person and human sexuality [525] and represents a moral call to defend the true development of peoples [526]. On the other hand, the same reasons of an anthropological order justify recourse to periodic abstinence during times of the woman’s fertility [527]. Rejecting contraception and using natural methods for regulating births means choosing to base interpersonal relations between the spouses on mutual respect and total acceptance, with positive consequences also for bringing about a more human order in society.

234. *The judgment concerning the interval of time between births, and that regarding the number of children, belongs to the spouses alone.* This is one of their inalienable rights, to be exercised before God with due consideration of their obligations towards themselves, their children already born, the family and society [528]. The intervention of public authorities within the limits of their competence to provide information and enact suitable measures in the area of demographics must be made in a way that fully respects the persons and the freedom of the couple. Such intervention may never become a substitute for their decisions [529]. All the more must various organizations active in this area refrain from doing the same.

All programmes of economic assistance aimed at financing campaigns of sterilization and contraception, as well as the subordination of economic assistance to such campaigns, are to be morally condemned as affronts to the dignity of the person and the family. The answer to questions connected with population growth must instead be sought in simultaneous respect both

of sexual morals and of social ethics, promoting greater justice and authentic solidarity so that dignity is given to life in all circumstances, starting with economic, social and cultural conditions.

235. *The desire to be a mother or a father does not justify any “right to children”, whereas the rights of the unborn child are evident. The unborn child must be guaranteed the best possible conditions of existence through the stability of a family founded on marriage, through the complementarities of the two persons, father and mother [530].* The rapid development of research and its technological application in the area of reproduction poses new and delicate questions that involve society and the norms that regulate human social life.

It must be repeated that the ethical unacceptability of all *reproductive techniques* — such as the donation of sperm or ova, surrogate motherhood, heterologous artificial fertilization — that make use of the uterus of another woman or of gametes of persons other than the married couple, injuring the right of the child to be born of one father and one mother who are father and mother both from a biological and from a legal point of view. Equally unacceptable are methods that separate the unitive act from the procreative act by making use of laboratory techniques, such as homologous artificial insemination or fertilization, such that the child comes about more as the result of an act of technology than as the natural fruit of a human act in which there is a full and total giving of the couple [531]. Avoiding recourse to different forms of so-called “assisted procreation” that replace the marriage act means respecting—both in the parents and in the children that they intend to generate—the integral dignity of the human person [532]. On the other hand, those methods that are meant to lend assistance to the conjugal act or to the attainment of its effects are legitimate [533].

236. *An issue of particular social and cultural significance today, because of its many and serious moral implications, is human cloning. This term refers per se to the reproduction of a biological entity that is genetically identical to the originating organism.* In thought and experimental practice it has taken on different meanings which in turn entail different procedures from the point of view of the techniques employed as well as of the goals sought. The term can be used to refer to the simple laboratory *replication* of cells or of a portion of DNA. But specifically today it is used to refer to the reproduction of individuals at the embryonic stage with methods that are different from those of natural fertilization and in such a way that the new beings are genetically identical to the individual from which they originate. This type of cloning can have a *reproductive* purpose, that of producing human embryos, or a so-called *therapeutic* purpose, tending to use such embryos for scientific research or more specifically for the production of stem cells.

From an ethical point of view, the simple *replication* of normal cells or of a portion of DNA presents no particular ethical problem. Very different, however, is the Magisterium’s judgment on cloning understood in the proper sense. Such cloning is contrary to the dignity of human procreation because it takes place in total absence of an act of personal love between spouses,

being agamic and asexual reproduction [534]. In the second place, this type of reproduction represents a form of total domination over the reproduced individual on the part of the one reproducing it [535]. The fact that cloning is used to create embryos from which cells can be removed for therapeutic use does not attenuate its moral gravity, because in order that such cells may be removed the embryo must first be created and then destroyed [536].

237. Parents, as ministers of life, must never forget that the spiritual dimension of procreation is to be given greater consideration than any other aspect: “Fatherhood and motherhood represent a responsibility which is not simply physical but spiritual in nature; indeed, through these realities there passes the genealogy of the person, which has its eternal beginning in God and which must lead back to him” [537]. Welcoming human life in the unified aspects of its physical and spiritual dimensions, families contribute to the “communion of generations” and in this way provide essential and irreplaceable support for the development of society. For this reason, “the family has a right to assistance by society in the bearing and rearing of children. Those married couples who have a large family have a right to adequate aid and should not be subjected to discrimination” [538].

c. The task of educating

238. *In the work of education, the family forms man in the fullness of his personal dignity according to all his dimensions, including the social dimension.* The family, in fact, constitutes “a community of love and solidarity, which is uniquely suited to teach and transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values, essential for the development and well-being of its own members and of society” [539]. By exercising its mission to educate, the family contributes to the common good and constitutes the first school of social virtue, which all societies need [540]. In the family, persons are helped to grow in freedom and responsibility, indispensable prerequisites for any function in society. With education, certain fundamental values are communicated and assimilated [541].

239. *The family has a completely original and irreplaceable role in raising children* [542]. The parents’ love, placing itself at the service of children to draw forth from them (“*e-ducere*”) the best that is in them, finds its fullest expression precisely in the task of educating. “As well as being a *source*, the parents’ love is also the *animating* principle and therefore the *norm* inspiring and guiding all concrete educational activity, enriching it with the values of kindness, constancy, goodness, service, disinterestedness and self-sacrifice that are the most precious fruit of love” [543].

The right and duty of parents to educate their children is “*essential*, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is *original and primary* with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children; and it is *irreplaceable and inalienable*, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others

or usurped by others” [544]. Parents have the duty and right to impart a religious education and moral formation to their children [545], a right the State cannot annul but which it must respect and promote. This is a primary right that the family may not neglect or delegate.

240. *Parents are the first educators, not the only educators, of their children. It belongs to them, therefore, to exercise with responsibility their educational activity in close and vigilant cooperation with civil and ecclesial agencies.* “Man’s community aspect itself—both civil and ecclesial — demands and leads to a broader and more articulated activity resulting from well-ordered collaboration between the various agents of education. All these agents are necessary, even though each can and should play its part in accordance with the special competence and contribution proper to itself” [546]. Parents have the right to choose the formative tools that respond to their convictions and to seek those means that will help them best to fulfil their duty as educators, in the spiritual and religious sphere also. Public authorities have the duty to guarantee this right and to ensure the concrete conditions necessary for it to be exercised [547]. In this context, cooperation between the family and scholastic institutions takes on primary importance.

241. *Parents have the right to found and support educational institutions.* Public authorities must see to it that “public subsidies are so allocated that parents are truly free to exercise this right without incurring unjust burdens. Parents should not have to sustain, directly or indirectly, extra charges which would deny or unjustly limit the exercise of this freedom” [548]. The refusal to provide public economic support to non-public schools that need assistance and that render a service to civil society is to be considered an injustice. “Whenever the State lays claim to an educational monopoly, it oversteps its rights and offends justice ... The State cannot without injustice merely tolerate so-called private schools. Such schools render a public service and therefore have a right to financial assistance” [549].

242. *The family has the responsibility to provide an integral education.* Indeed, all true education “is directed towards the formation of the human person in view of his final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and in the duties of which he will, as an adult, have a share” [550]. This integrality is ensured when children—with the witness of life and in words—are educated in dialogue, encounter, sociality, legality, solidarity and peace, through the cultivation of the fundamental virtues of justice and charity [551].

In the education of children, the role of the father and that of the mother are equally necessary. [552] The parents must therefore work together. They must exercise authority with respect and gentleness but also, when necessary, with firmness and vigor: it must be credible, consistent, and wise and always exercised with a view to children’s integral good.

243. *Parents have, then, a particular responsibility in the area of sexual education.* It is of fundamental importance for the balanced growth of children that they are taught in an orderly and progressive manner the meaning of sexuality and that they learn to appreciate the human and moral values connected with it. “In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the

person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality” [553]. Parents have the obligation to inquire about the methods used for sexual education in educational institutions in order to verify that such an important and delicate topic is dealt with properly.

d. The dignity and rights of children

244. *The Church’s social doctrine constantly points out the need to respect the dignity of children.* “In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, and a great respect and generous concern for their rights. This is true for every child, but it becomes all the more urgent the smaller the child is and the more it is in need of everything, when it is sick, suffering or handicapped” [554].

The rights of children must be legally protected within juridical systems. In the first place, it is necessary that the social value of childhood be publicly recognized in all countries: “No country on earth, no political system can think of its own future otherwise than through the image of these new generations that will receive from their parents the manifold heritage of values, duties and aspirations of the nation to which they belong and of the whole human family” [555]. The first right of the child is to “be born in a real family” [556], a right that has not always been respected and that today is subject to new violations because of developments in genetic technology.

245. The situation of a vast number of the world’s children is far from being satisfactory, due to the lack of favourable conditions for their integral development despite the existence of a specific international juridical instrument for protecting their rights [557], an instrument that is binding on practically all members of the international community. These are conditions connected with the lack of health care, or adequate food supply, little or no possibility of receiving a minimum of academic formation or inadequate shelter. Moreover, some serious problems remain unsolved: trafficking in children, child labour, the phenomenon of “street children”, the use of children in armed conflicts, child marriage, the use of children for commerce in pornographic material, also in the use of the most modern and sophisticated instruments of social communication. It is essential to engage in a battle, at the national and international levels, against the violations of the dignity of boys and girls caused by sexual exploitation, by those caught up in paedophilia, and by every kind of violence directed against these most defenceless of human creatures [558]. These are criminal acts that must be effectively fought with adequate preventive and penal measures by the determined action of the different authorities involved.

IV. THE FAMILY AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN SOCIAL LIFE

a. Solidarity in the family

246. *The social subjectivity of the family, both as a single unit and associated in a group, is expressed as well in the demonstrations of solidarity and sharing not only among families themselves but also in the various forms of participation in social and political life.* This is what happens when the reality of the family is founded on love: being born in love and growing in love, solidarity belongs to the family as a constitutive and structural element.

This is a solidarity that can take on the features of service and attention to those who live in poverty and need, to orphans, the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, to those who are in mourning, to those with doubts, to those who live in loneliness or who have been abandoned. It is a solidarity that opens itself to acceptance, to guardianship, to adoption; it is able to bring every situation of distress to the attention of institutions so that, according to their specific competence, they can intervene.

247. *Far from being only objects of political action, families can and must become active subjects, working “to see that the laws and institutions of the State not only do not offend but support and positively defend the rights and duties of the family. Along these lines, families should grow in awareness of being ‘protagonists’ of what is known as ‘family politics’ and assume responsibility for transforming society” [559]. To this end, family associations must be promoted and strengthened. “Families have the right to form associations with other families and institutions, in order to fulfil the family’s role suitably and effectively, as well as to protect the rights, foster the good and represent the interests of the family. On the economic, social, juridical and cultural levels, the rightful role of families and family associations must be recognized in the planning and development of programmes which touch on family life” [560].*

b. The family, economic life and work

248. *The relationship existing between the family and economic life is particularly significant.* On one hand, in fact, the economy (“*oiko-nomia*”, household management) was born from domestic work. The home has been for a long time—and in many regions still is—a place of production and the centre of life. The dynamism of economic life, on the other hand, develops with the initiative of people and is carried out in the manner of concentric circles, in ever broader networks of production and exchange of goods and services that involves families in continuously increasing measure. The family, therefore, must rightfully be seen as an essential agent of economic life, guided not by the market mentality but by the logic of sharing and solidarity among generations.

249. *Family and work are united by a very special relationship.* “The family constitutes one of the most important terms of reference for shaping the social and ethical order of human work.” [561] This relationship has its roots in the relation existing between the person and his right to possess the fruit of his labour and concerns not only the individual as a singular person but also as a member of a family, understood as a “*domestic society*” [562].

Work is essential insofar as it represents the condition that makes it possible to establish a family, for the means by which the family is maintained are obtained through work. Work also conditions the process of personal development, since a family afflicted by unemployment runs the risk of not fully achieving its end [563].

The contribution that the family can make to the reality of work is valuable and, in many instances, irreplaceable. It is a contribution that can be expressed both in economic terms and through the great resources of solidarity that the family possesses and that are often an important support for those within the family who are without work or who are seeking employment. Above all and more fundamentally, it is a contribution that is made by educating to the meaning of work and by offering direction and support for the professional choices made.

250. *In order to protect this relationship between family and work, an element that must be appreciated and safeguarded is that of a family wage,* a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently [564]. Such a wage must also allow for savings that will permit the acquisition of property as a guarantee of freedom. The right to property is closely connected with the existence of families, which protect themselves from need thanks also to savings and to the building up of family property [565]. There can be several different ways to make a family wage a concrete reality. Various forms of important social provisions help to bring it about, for example, family subsidies and other contributions for dependent family members, and also remuneration for the domestic work done in the home by one of the parents [566].

251. *In the relationship between the family and work, particular attention must be given to the issue of the work of women in the family,* more generally to the recognition of the so-called work of “housekeeping,” which also involves the responsibility of men as husbands and fathers. The work of housekeeping, starting with that of the mother, precisely because it is a service directed and devoted to the quality of life, constitutes a type of activity that is eminently personal and personalizing, and that must be socially recognized and valued [567], also by means of economic compensation in keeping with that of other types of work [568]. At the same time, care must be taken to eliminate all the obstacles that prevent a husband and wife from making free decisions concerning their procreative responsibilities and, in particular, those that do not allow women to carry out their maternal role fully [569].

V. SOCIETY AT THE SERVICE OF THE FAMILY

252. The starting point for a correct and constructive relationship between the family and society is the recognition of the subjectivity and the social priority of the family. Their intimate relationship requires that “society should never fail in its fundamental task of respecting and fostering the family.” [570] Society, and in particular State institutions, respecting the priority and “antecedence” of the family, is called to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of family life and to avoid and fight all that alters or wounds it. This requires political and legislative action to safeguard family values, from the promotion of intimacy and harmony within families to the respect for unborn life and to the effective freedom of choice in educating children. Therefore, neither society nor the State may absorb, substitute or reduce the social dimension of the family; rather, they must honour it, recognize it, respect it and promote it according to the principle of subsidiarity [571].

253. *Society’s service of the family becomes concrete in recognizing, respecting and promoting the rights of the family* [572]. *This means that authentic and effective family policies must be brought about with specific interventions that are able to meet the needs arising from the rights of the family as such. In this sense, there is a necessary prerequisite, one that is essential and indispensable: the recognition—which entails protecting, appreciating and promoting—the identity of the family, the natural society founded on marriage.* This recognition represents a clear line of demarcation between the family, understood correctly, and all other forms of cohabitation which, by their very nature, deserve neither the name nor the status of family.

254. *The recognition on the part of civil society and the State of the priority of the family over every other community, and even over the reality of the State, means overcoming merely individualistic conceptions and accepting the family dimension as the indispensable cultural and political perspective in the consideration of persons.* This is not offered as an alternative, but rather as a support and defense of the very rights that people have as individuals. This perspective makes it possible to draw up normative criteria for a correct solution to different social problems, because people must not be considered only as individuals but also in relation to the family nucleus to which they belong, the specific values and needs of which must be taken into due account.

Endnotes

[458] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 12: AAS 58 (1966), 1034.

[459] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1605.

[460] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, 40: AAS 81 (1989), 469.

[461] The Holy Family is an example of family life: “May Nazareth remind us what the family is, what the communion of love is, its stark and simple beauty, its sacred and inviolable character; may it help us to see how sweet and irreplaceable education in the family is; may it teach us its natural function in the social order. May we finally learn the lesson of work”: Paul VI, Address at Nazareth (5 January 1964): *AAS* 56 (1964), 168.

[462] John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 17: *AAS* 86 (1994), 906.

[463] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067–1069

[464] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 11: *AAS* 58 (1966), 848.

[465] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, 40: *AAS* 81 (1989), 468.

[466] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus annus*, 39: *AAS* 83 (1991), 841.

[467] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus annus*, 39: *AAS* 83 (1991), 841.

[468] John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 7: *AAS* 86 (1994), 875; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2206.

[469] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 47: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2210.

[470] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2224.

[471] Cf. Holy See, *Charter of the Rights of the Family*, Preamble, D-E, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 6.

[472] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 45: *AAS* 74 (1982), 136-137; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2209.

[473] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067–1068.

[474] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067.

[475] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1603.

[476] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067.

[477] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1639.

[478] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1603.

[479] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 13: *AAS* 74 (1982), 93–96.

[480] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 19: *AAS* 74 (1982), 102.

[481] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48, 50: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067–1069, 1070–1072.

[482] Cf. John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 11: *AAS* 86 (1994), 883–886.

[483] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 50: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1070–1072.

[484] [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2379.

[485] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 12: *AAS* 74 (1982), 93: “For this reason the central word of Revelation, ‘God loves His people’, is likewise proclaimed through the living and concrete word whereby a man and a woman express their conjugal love. Their bond of love becomes the image and the symbol of the covenant which unites God and His people (cf. *Hos* 2:21; *Jer* 3:6–13; *Is* 54). And the same sin which can harm the conjugal covenant becomes an image of the infidelity of the people to their God: idolatry is prostitution (cf. *Ezek* 16:25), infidelity is adultery, disobedience to the law is abandonment of the spousal love of the Lord. But the infidelity of Israel does not destroy the eternal fidelity of the Lord, and therefore the ever-faithful love of God is put forward as the model of the faithful love which should exist between spouses (cf. *Hos* 3).”

[486] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 13: *AAS* 74 (1982), 93–94.

[487] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067–1069.

[488] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 47: *AAS* 74 (1982), 139; the quotation in the text is taken from Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*, 31: *AAS* 57 (1965), 37.

[489] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 48: *AAS* 74 (1982), 140; cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 1656–1657, 2204.

[490] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 18: *AAS* 74 (1982), 100–101.

[491] John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 11: *AAS* 86 (1994), 883.

[492] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 43: *AAS* 74 (1982), 134.

[493] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 43: *AAS* 74 (1982), 134.

[494] John Paul II, Message to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid (3 April 2002): *L’Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 24 April 2002, p. 6; cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 27: *AAS* 74 (1982), 113–114.

[495] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 48: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1067–1069; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 1644–1651.

[496] [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2333.

[497] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2385; cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 1650–1651, 2384.

[498] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 20: *AAS* 74 (1982), 104.

[499] The respect owed to the sacrament of Marriage, as well as to the married couples themselves, their families and the faith community, forbids pastors regardless of motivation and pretext—even pastoral—from setting up any kind of ceremony for the divorced who wish to remarry. Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 20: *AAS* 74 (1982), 104.

[500] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 77, 84: *AAS* 74 (1982), 175–178, 184–186.

[501] Cf. John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 14: *AAS* 86 (1994), 893–896; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2390.

[502] Cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2390.

[503] Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, [*Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*](#) (1 October 1986), 1–2: *AAS* 79 (1987), 543–544.

[504] John Paul II, [*Address to the Tribunal of the Roman Rota*](#) (21 January 1999), 5: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 10 February 1999, p. 3.

[505] Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Document on [*Some Considerations Concerning the Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons*](#) (23 July 1992): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 24 July 1992, p. 4; cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration *Persona humana* (29 December 1975), 8: *AAS* 68 (1976), 84–85.

[506] Cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2357–2359.

[507] Cf. John Paul II, [*Address to Spanish Bishops on their Ad Limina Visit*](#) (19 February 1998), 4: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 March 1998, p. 5; Pontifical Council for the Family, [*Family, Marriage and “De facto Unions”*](#) (26 July 2000), 23, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 2000, pp. 40–43; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, [*Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons*](#) (3 June 2003), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 2003.

[508] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, [*Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons*](#) (3 June 2003), 8, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 2003, p. 9.

[509] Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, 71: *AAS* 87 (1995), 483; Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, q. 96, a. 2 (“Utrum ad legem humanam pertineat omnia vitia cohibere”): Ed. Leon. 7, 181.

[510] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 81: *AAS* 74 (1982), 183.

[511] Holy See, *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (24 November 1983), Preamble, E, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 6.

[512] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1652.

[513] John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 6: *AAS* 86 (1994), 874; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2366.

[514] John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 11: *AAS* 86 (1994), 884.

[515] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus annus*, 39: *AAS* 83 (1991), 842.

[516] Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, 92: *AAS* 87 (1995), 505–507.

[517] John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 13: *AAS* 86 (1994), 891.

[518] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, 93: *AAS* 87 (1995), 507–508.

[519] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 50: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1070–1072; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2367.

[520] Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Humanae vitae*, 10: *AAS* 60 (1968), 487; cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 50: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1070–1072.

[521] Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Humanae vitae*, 14: *AAS* 60 (1968), 490–491.

[522] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 51: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1072–1073; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2271–2272; John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 21: *AAS* 86 (1994), 919–920; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, 58, 59, 61–62: *AAS* 87 (1995), 466–468, 470–472.

[523] Cf. John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 21: *AAS* 86 (1994), 919–920; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, 72, 101: *AAS* 87 (1995), 484–485, 516–518; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2273.

[524] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 51: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1072–1073; Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Humanae vitae*, 14: *AAS* 60 (1968), 490–491; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 32: *AAS* 74 (1982), 118–120; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2370; Pius XI, Encyclical Letter *Casti connubii* (31 December 1930): *AAS* 22 (1930), 559–561.

[525] Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter [*Humanae vitae*](#), 7: *AAS* 60 (1968), 485; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation [*Familiaris consortio*](#), 32: *AAS* 74 (1982), 118–120.

[526] Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter [*Humanae vitae*](#), 17: *AAS* 60 (1968), 493–494.

[527] Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter [*Humanae vitae*](#), 16: *AAS* 60 (1968), 491–492; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation [*Familiaris consortio*](#), 32: *AAS* 74 (1982), 118–120; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2370.

[528] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution [*Gaudium et Spes*](#), 50: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1070–1072; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2368; Paul VI, Encyclical Letter [*Populorum progressio*](#), 37: *AAS* 59 (1967), 275–276.

[529] Cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2372.

[530] Cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2378.

[531] Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction [*Donum vitae*](#) (22 February 1987), II, 2, 3, 5: *AAS* 80 (1988), 88–89, 92–94; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2376–2377.

[532] Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum vitae* (22 February 1987), II, 7: *AAS* 80 (1988), 95–96.

[533] Cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2375.

[534] Cf. John Paul II, [*Address to the Pontifical Academy for Life*](#) (21 February 2004), 2: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 3 March 2004, p. 7.

[535] Cf. [*Pontifical Academy for Life, Reflections on Cloning*](#): Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 1997; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, [*The Church and Racism. Contribution of the Holy See to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*](#), 21, Vatican Press, Vatican City 2001, p. 22.

[536] Cf. John Paul II, [*Address to the Eighteenth International Congress of the Transplantation Society*](#) (29 August 2000), 8: *AAS* 92 (2000), 826.

[537] John Paul II, Letter to Families [*Gratissimam sane*](#), 10: *AAS* 86 (1994), 881.

[538] Holy See, [*Charter of the Rights of the Family*](#), art. 3 c, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 9. The United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (10 December 1948) affirms that “the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State” (article 16, 3).

[539] Holy See, [*Charter of the Rights of the Family*](#), Preamble, E, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 6.

[540] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration [*Gravissimum educationis*](#), 3: *AAS* 58 (1966), 731–732; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution [*Gaudium et spes*](#),

52: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1073–1074; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 37, 43: *AAS* 74 (1982), 127–129; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#) 1653, 2228.

[541] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 43: *AAS* 74 (1982), 134–135.

[542] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration *Gravissimum educationis*, 3: *AAS* 58 (1966), 731–732; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 61: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1081–1082; Holy See, [*Charter of the Rights of the Family*](#), art. 5, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, pp. 10–11; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2223. The [*Code of Canon Law*](#) devotes canons 793–799 and canon 1136 to this right and duty of parents.

[543] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 36: *AAS* 74 (1982), 127.

[544] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 36: *AAS* 74 (1982), 126; cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2221.

[545] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration *Dignitatis humanae*, 5: *AAS* 58 (1966), 933; John Paul II, *Message for the 1994 World Day of Peace*, 5: *AAS* 86 (1994), 159–160.

[546] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 40: *AAS* 74 (1982), 131.

[547] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration *Gravissimum educationis*, 6: *AAS* 58 (1966), 733–734; [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2229.

[548] Holy See, [*Charter of the Rights of the Family*](#), art. 5 b, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 11; cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Dignitatis humanae*, 5: *AAS* 58 (1966), 933.

[549] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Libertatis conscientia*, 94: *AAS* 79 (1987), 595–596.

[550] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration *Gravissimum educationis*, 1: *AAS* 58 (1966), 729.

[551] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 43: *AAS* 74 (1982), 134–135.

[552] Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 52: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1073–1074.

[553] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 37: *AAS* 74 (1982), 128; cf. Pontifical Council for the Family, [*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family*](#) (8 December 1995), Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1995.

[554] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 26: *AAS* 74 (1982), 111–112.

[555] John Paul II, [*Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations*](#) (2 October 1979), 21: *AAS* 71 (1979), 1159; cf. John Paul II, *Message to the Secretary-General of the United*

Nations on the occasion of the World Summit for Children (22 September 1990): *AAS* 83 (1991), 358–361.

[556] John Paul II, Address to the Committee of European Journalists for the Rights of the Child (13 January 1979): *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 22 January 1979, p. 5.

[557] Cf. Convention on the Rights of the Child, which came into force in 1990 and which the Holy See has ratified.

[558] Cf. John Paul II, Message for the 1996 World Day of Peace, 2–6: *AAS* 88 (1996), 104–107.

[559] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 44: *AAS* 74 (1982), 136; cf. Holy See, Charter of the Rights of the Family, art. 9, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 13.

[560] Holy See, Charter of the Rights of the Family, art. 8 a–b, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 12.

[561] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, 10: *AAS* 73 (1981), 601.

[562] Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter *Rerum novarum*: *Acta Leonis XIII*, 11 (1892), 104.

[563] Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, 10: *AAS* 73 (1981), 600–602.

[564] Cf. Pius XI, Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo anno*: *AAS* 23 (1931), 200; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 67: *AAS* 58 (1966), 1088–1089; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, 19: *AAS* 73 (1981), 625–629.

[565] Cf. Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter *Rerum novarum*: *Acta Leonis XIII*, 11 (1892), 105; Pius XI, Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo anno*: *AAS* 23 (1931), 193–194.

[566] Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, 19: *AAS* 73 (1981), 625–629; Holy See, Charter of the Rights of the Family, art. 10 a, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 14.

[567] Cf. Pius XII, Allocution to Women on the Dignity and Mission of Women (21 October 1945): *AAS* 37 (1945), 284–295; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, 19: *AAS* 73 (1981), 625–629; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 23: *AAS* 74 (1982), 107–109; Holy See, Charter of the Rights of the Family, art. 10 b, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City 1983, p. 14.

[568] Cf. John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane*, 17: *AAS* 86 (1994), 903–906.

[569] Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, 19: *AAS* 73 (1981), 625–629; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 23: *AAS* 74 (1982), 107–109.

[570] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 45: *AAS* 74 (1982), 136.

[571] Cf. [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](#), 2211.

[572] Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 46: *AAS* 74 (1982), 137–139.