



CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS
AND THE CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR LIFE AND FAMILY



AMORIS LAETITIA

REFLECTION GUIDE

TO ACCOMPANY WEBCASTS



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CHAPTER ONE: IN THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: CARDINAL GÉRALD CYPRIEN LACROIX

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/qGzZRF1E-uw>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Describe the ways in which your family is a laboratory where the word of God is lived.
2. In your family, how is the joy of love experienced?
3. In what ways does the Gospel serve as a source of that joy?
4. How does the covenant between a man and a woman parallel the covenant between God and his people?
5. How do we experience the joy of love in the midst of difficulties, struggles and times of sorrow?
6. Do these experiences help us to grow in our relationships with others? How?
7. How does the word of God enlighten and guide you?

“...the word of God is not a series of abstract ideas but rather a source of comfort and companionship for every family that experiences difficulties or suffering. For it shows them the goal of their journey...”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 22



CHAPTER TWO: THE EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF FAMILIES

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: DR. MOIRA MCQUEEN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CANADIAN CATHOLIC BIOETHICS INSTITUTE

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/A43eokzBdgw>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How does Pope Francis present the situation regarding marriage and family today?
2. According to *Amoris Laetitia*, what are some challenges for Church teaching?
3. Are all marriages affected by the challenges Pope Francis identifies?
4. How have cultural changes affected marriage and the family?
5. What are some societal influences, especially in the Western world?
6. How is the Church called to respond to these challenges?
7. What other social challenges does Pope Francis raise?
8. What are the factors identified by Pope Francis that are contributing to the deconstruction of the family?
9. What are some positive notes that Pope Francis identifies in Chapter Two of *Amoris Laetitia*?

“I thank God that many families, which are far from considering themselves perfect, live in love, fulfill their calling and keep moving forward, even if they fall many times along the way. The Synod’s reflections show us that there is no stereotype of the ideal family, but rather a challenging mosaic made up of many different realities, with all their joys, hopes and problems.”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 57



CHAPTER THREE: LOOKING TO JESUS: THE VOCATION OF THE FAMILY

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: CARDINAL THOMAS COLLINS

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/aamGDMm3q-I>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How would you describe to your spouse your experience of encountering Christ?
2. What is the relationship between “kerygma” or proclamation and “catechesis” or teaching? Why must the two always go together?
3. How does the indissolubility of the marriage covenant, “a gift of divine grace,” strengthen couples through times of trial and hardship?
4. What is the meaning of “the vocation of the family”? How is this vocation lived out in your day-to-day experiences?

“The Church is a family of families,
constantly enriched by the lives of all those
domestic churches.”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 87

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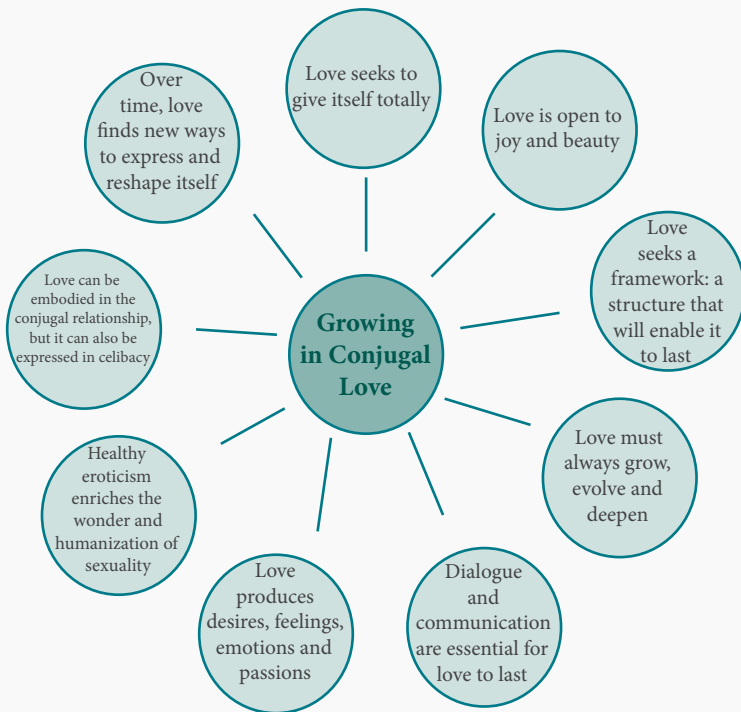
CHAPTER FOUR: LOVE IN MARRIAGE

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: ARCHBISHOP PAUL-ANDRÉ DUROCHER

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/-M3I80V1hG8>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is the meaning of the Greek expression *agape*?
2. Identify the four characteristics of love that St. Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13:7.
3. How might you use these four characteristics to examine “the concrete quality of your love for someone”?
4. Consider the nine subthemes outlined in Chapter Four of *Amoris Laetitia*. In what ways do they speak to your own experience of love?



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CHAPTER FIVE: LOVE MADE FRUITFUL

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: ARCHBISHOP PAUL-ANDRÉ DUROCHER

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/VFWY6mzgIBs>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. In Chapter Five, Pope Francis invites couples to reflect on their call to give expression to their conjugal love through generativity as parents. How do children challenge the love of a married couple? How do they enrich it?

“By their witness as well as their words, families speak to others of Jesus. They pass on the faith, they arouse a desire for God and they reflect the beauty of the Gospel and its way of life.”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 184

2. The words of Mario Benedetti in his poem “I Love You” describe beautifully the call for the couple to work together for justice. Who are the wounded and outcast that you reach out to?

*Your hands are my caress,
The harmony that fills my days.
I love you because your hands
Work for justice*

*If I love you, it is because you are
My love, my companion and my all,
And in the street, side by side,
We are much more than two...¹*

3. Couples often find themselves called to support their parents in times of need and, at the same time, give equal attention to the needs of their children. Describe some ways in which you work together to attend to these responsibilities.



¹ Mario Benedetti, “Ti Quiero”, in *Poemas de otros*, Buenos Aires 1993, 316: “Tus manos son mi caricia / mis acordes cotidianos / te quiero porque tus manos / trabajan por la justicia. // Si te quiero es porque sos / mi amor mi cómplice y todo / y en la calle codo a codo / somos mucho más que dos”.

CHAPTER SIX: SOME PASTORAL PERSPECTIVES

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: ARCHBISHOP TERRENCE PRENDERGAST, S.J.

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/y6fYHXFjKhI>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How must we defend and normalize families that promote a culture of life?
2. What are effective strategies to shepherd families towards wholeness?
3. In what ways must clergy and lay leaders acknowledge their own woundedness and seek Christ's healing?
4. What resources must be mobilized to strengthen marriages to weather any storm?
5. What steps can the Church take to recognize Catholics in irregular states and to minister to them in both love and truth?
6. How must we assist in the healthy upbringing of children in unstable environments?
7. How can we better communicate that Christ is with us from conception to natural death and beyond?
8. How will we reorient pastoral care to a missionary objective?

“Why shouldn't we tell God our troubles and ask him to grant us the healing and help we need to remain faithful?”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 227



CHAPTER SEVEN: TOWARDS A BETTER EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: ARCHBISHOP RICHARD SMITH

WEBCAST LINK: https://youtu.be/rS_gwpXUHko

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What concrete strategies can parents and teachers use to assist children to answer the question “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15)?
2. How would you describe the difference between knowing Jesus intellectually and knowing Jesus as “real, personally present and active in our lives”? Why must these two tasks be taken together in order to complete a child’s growth in faith?
3. What can be done to mitigate the impact of “virtual relationships”?
4. How do we move away from a “virtual” culture to one that is rooted in personal and concrete interaction with the other, in order to promote life-giving and sustainable relationships?

“The family is the first school of
human values, where we learn the wise
use of freedom.”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 274



CHAPTER EIGHT: ACCOMPANYING, DISCERNING AND INTEGRATING WEAKNESS

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: BISHOP NOËL SIMARD

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/VpE98m1m73Q>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How can the call to “accompany, discern and integrate weakness” open the doors to healing and reconciliation for those who are striving to live the Christian ideal in an incomplete manner?
2. What effect can “merciful accompaniment” have on the lives of others?
3. How does the “law of gradualness” help us as we seek to grow in faith?
4. How do I help others to act and live according to their conscience?

“The Church must accompany with attention and care the weakest of her children, who show signs of a wounded and troubled love, by restoring in them hope and confidence...”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 291

5. Pope Francis uses the image of a “field hospital” to describe the Church. How does this image help us to understand the call to be merciful towards our brothers and sisters?

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CHAPTER NINE: THE SPIRITUALITY OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

WEBCAST REFLECTION BY: ARCHBISHOP CHRISTIAN LÉPINE

WEBCAST LINK: <https://youtu.be/BzvzEo8CwXc>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Describe experiences in which you felt the presence of Christ knocking on your family's door.
2. How are we transformed by our relationship with Jesus Christ?
3. How does our relationship with Christ transform our relationship with our loved ones?
4. When faced with difficulties, do we look to the “cross of Christ to transform our sorrows into love”?
5. In what ways can the domestic church contribute to the transformation of the whole Church?

“The Lord’s presence dwells in real and concrete families, with all their daily troubles and struggles, joys and hopes.”

—*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 315



