

**POST-SYNODAL APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION *AMORIS LÆTITIA*
OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS TO BISHOPS, PRIESTS AND DEACONS
CONSECRATED PERSONS CHRISTIAN MARRIED COUPLES AND ALL THE LAY
FAITHFUL ON LOVE IN THE FAMILY**

19 March 2016

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30. Every family should look to the icon of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Its daily life had its share of burdens and even nightmares, as when they met with Herod's implacable violence. This last was an experience that, sad to say, continues to afflict the many refugee families who in our day feel rejected and helpless. [...]

46. "Migration is another sign of the times to be faced and understood in terms of its negative effects on family life". The recent Synod drew attention to this issue, noting that "in various ways, migration affects whole populations in different parts of the world. The Church has exercised a major role in this area. Maintaining and expanding this witness to the Gospel (cf. Mt 25:35) is urgently needed today more than ever... Human mobility, which corresponds to the natural historical movement of peoples, can prove to be a genuine enrichment for both families that migrate and countries that welcome them. Furthermore, forced migration of families, resulting from situations of war, persecution, poverty and injustice, and marked by the vicissitudes of a journey that often puts lives at risk, traumatizes people and destabilizes families. In accompanying migrants, the Church needs a specific pastoral programme addressed not only to families that migrate but also to those family members who remain behind. This pastoral activity must be implemented with due respect for their cultures, for the human and religious formation from which they come and for the spiritual richness of their rites and traditions, even by means of a specific pastoral care... Migration is particularly dramatic and devastating to families and individuals when it takes place illegally and is supported by international networks of human trafficking. This is equally true when it involves women or unaccompanied children who are forced to endure long periods of time in temporary facilities and refugee camps, where it is impossible to start a process of integration. Extreme poverty and other situations of family breakdown sometimes even lead families to sell their children for prostitution or for organ trafficking". "The persecution of Christians and ethnic and religious minorities in many parts of the world, especially in the Middle East, are a great trial not only for the Church but also the entire international community. Every effort should be encouraged, even in a practical way, to assist families and Christian communities to remain in their native lands".¹

47. [...] Here I would stress that dedication and concern shown to migrants and to persons with special needs alike is a sign of the Spirit. Both situations are paradigmatic: they serve as a test of our commitment to show mercy in welcoming others and to help the vulnerable to be fully a part of our communities. [...]

¹ Relatio Finalis 2015, 24.