



Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

June 15th, 2022

Re: 10th World Meeting of Families: June 22nd – 26th

Dear Families of the Corner Brook and Labrador Diocese:

Grace and peace in our lord, Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis has asked that the 10th World Meeting of Families be held in Rome as well as in each diocese around the world. In response to this invitation, I have invited all parishes to promote two specific events: 1) a Canada-wide family-focused virtual rosary on Sunday, June 19th beginning at 4 p.m. local time (3:30 p.m. in Labrador), hosted through the www.cccb.ca website, and 2) a family-centered Mass in your home parish on Sunday, June 26th, celebrating the end of the school year.

Far from being an incidental, Christ is at the centre and heart of Christian family life. Beginning with their wedding ceremony, where husband and wife are invited to draw on the love, forgiveness and self-gift of Christ on the cross and model their union on the faithful and indissoluble union Christ has established with his people, Christ is both teacher and source of strength and hope, not only for the couple, who are made one in him, but for the children who proceed from the union. The family, in this way, is a school, with Christ at its centre, where Christ is made known, Christ teaches and Christ forms each member into a deeper relationship with him and one another.

Christ's role in Christian marriage and family life is indispensable. Each day he is called upon to teach us, give us the grace to forgive and ask forgiveness, bear with one another, offer ourselves to the other and deepen our love for one another. There is not a moment in marital and family life when Christ is not available or accessible, not only to heal or deepen marital and familial bonds, but to open the hearts of each member to a deeper and more intimate union with him and one another. It is unfortunate, therefore, that Christ often becomes an after thought, or even an inconvenience, to some couples and families, who leave him very little room or consideration to act.

Marital and familial life is diminished when Christ ceases to be drawn on or acknowledged. Disagreements become harder to resolve. The giving and asking for forgiveness becomes more difficult. Ordinary tasks

are no longer seen as opportunities to walk in Christ's footsteps and to make his love known. Simple acts of kindness, generosity and acts of self-denial become less prevalent, and there is an imminent danger to focus on one's own benefit at the expense of others.

It is my hope that Christian families continue to put Christ first in their daily interactions and take time, each day and each week, to turn to him in both private and communal prayer. The placing of a crucifix on a prominent wall, the saying of prayers at shared meals and at bedtime, and the conscious acknowledgment of Christ at the centre of each week, by attending Mass, are but some ways to acknowledge his importance in our shared life together. So, too, the time we take to reflect on our lives, and to help our children reflect on theirs, in personal prayer, journal keeping or the debriefing of notable events in your life together.

In all of this, I call on the intercession of Mary, as mother of the Holy Family and Mother of the Church, and Joseph, as husband and father. May their "yes" to Christ echo in your in your hearts, and may your willingness to welcome him once more fill you and your family with joy.

I would also like to take this occasion, the 10th World Meeting of Families, to impart my apostolic blessing on each one of you and your families, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Fraternally in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Bart van Roijen".

Bishop Bart van Roijen

Bishop of the Corner Brook and Labrador Diocese

