

# WORLD & NATION

## Pope calls for rejection of anti-family trends

By Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil — During a four-day trip to Brazil, Pope John Paul II said the family is a gift that must be defended, and attacks on the values that hold it together must be repelled.

Waving the banner of Catholic teaching on the permanence of marriage and the evil of abortion, the pope spent much of his Oct. 2-5 stay in Rio de Janeiro, rallying Catholic families to defend and strengthen their bonds.

"In the design of God, matrimony — indissoluble matrimony — is the foundation of a healthy and responsible family," he said Oct. 5 during a seaside Mass closing the Second World Meeting of Families.

God wants all people to be happy, the pope told the crowd, which police said numbered between 1.5 million and 2 million people. But God also wants people "to always join fidelity to happiness, because one cannot exist without the other."

Pope John Paul told the couples gathered from around the world that they have a great task before them.

"Be bearers of peace and joy at the heart of the family," he said.

At an evening rally Oct. 4 with families in the Maracana Stadium, the pope told the crowd that "a false message of impossible and inconsistent happiness is being spread in the world today, and it carries with it only desolation and bitterness."

"Happiness is not found by following the way of freedom without truth, because this is the way of irresponsible egoism, which divides and separates families and society," he said.

After listening to the testimonies of families who explained how hardships and tensions were overcome by discovering or putting into practice church teaching, the pope told the crowd, "Defend your families as a precious and irreplaceable gift."

He encouraged them to be faithful to their spouses and to welcome children as signs of their love for each other and as signs of their hope for humanity's future.

"Societies that are not interested in children are inhuman and irresponsible," he said.

"Welcome your children with responsible love," the pope said. "Defend them as a gift of God from the moment they are conceived and from the time human life is born from its mother's womb."

The pope prayed "that the abominable crime of abortion, the shame of humanity, will no longer condemn the unborn to the

injustice of execution."

"The seed of the new humanity sleeps in the mother's womb. In children's faces there shines the future, the coming millennium, the future which is in God's hands," he said.

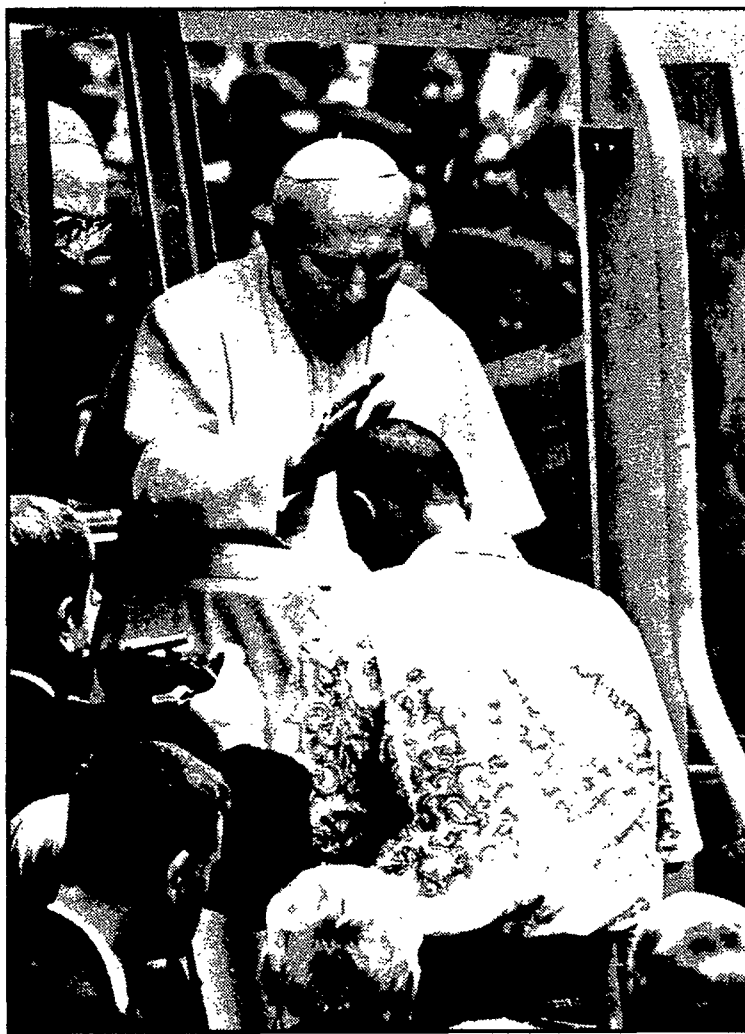
Meeting Oct. 3 with participants in an international theological congress, the pope said modern forces of evil are attacking God and human dignity by attacking the family.

"Today it seems that the enemies of God, more than conducting a frontal attack on the author of creation, strike him through his works," he told the more than 2,600 delegates from 77 nations.

The human person is the height of God's creation, he said, and it is through the family that human life is created, welcomed, loved and educated. But the family is one of the main targets of attacks on human dignity.

Pope John Paul listed the main strategies of attack on the family as being situations in which, "The equal dignity of the spouses and their necessary diversity and sexual complementarity are not recognized nor respected," and "Conjugal fidelity and respect for life in all phases of its existence are subverted by a culture which does not admit the transcendence of the human person created in the image and likeness of God."

The pope and Vatican officials repeatedly have affirmed Catholic teaching that marriage must be based on the permanent union of a man and a woman who are open to having children. They have denounced attempts to grant legal recognition to the unions of homosexual couples.



CNS/Reuters  
**Pope John Paul II blesses a prison inmate during a drive through the streets of Rio de Janeiro Oct. 4. A group of 40 inmates sang a hymn for the pope, who was in Brazil for the Second World Meeting of Families.**

"When the destructive forces of evil manage to separate matrimony from its mission relative to human life, they attack humanity itself, depriving it of the essential guarantees of its future," the pope said.

The pope encouraged the participants

to increase their efforts of education, outreach and support for family life.

He also asked them to increase their political involvement and dialogue with government authorities whose decisions have a great influence on the family and its mission to welcome and protect human life.

Celebrating Mass for them the next day in Rio's cathedral, the pope said that while marriage and parenthood belong to the natural order, they also have a spiritual significance, because God created human beings — male and female — in his image and likeness. When couples have children, they participate in the creation of others like themselves, also made in God's image.

"God wants you to be beautiful, to live the fullness of human dignity and the holiness of Christ and to be at the service of love and life," the pope told them.

"You have your beginning in the Creator, and you have been sanctified by the Spirit-Paraclete in order to become the hope of all nations," he said.

While the international congress and family gathering were the focal points of Pope John Paul's visit, he also met upon his arrival and privately with Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

During his Oct. 2 arrival address, the pope spoke of some of the challenges facing Brazil, calling particular attention to the plight of Brazilian street kids and to the huge gap between the country's rich and poor.

"The social imbalances, the unequal and unjust distribution of economic resources that generate conflicts in the city and the countryside, the need for a vast diffusion of basic health and cultural structures, the problem of children abandoned in the large cities, to not cite other things, are a challenge of enormous proportions for the government," he said.

The pope said he hoped the cultural and religious values of the country would serve as "the basis for promoting just decisions in defense of family values and of the country."

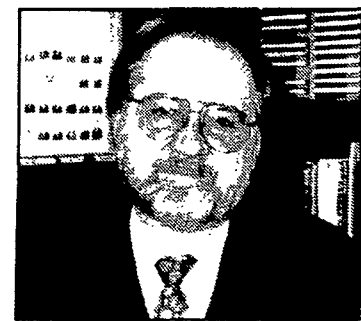
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### Thoughts to Consider



**EDWIN SULEWSKI**  
Funeral Director

**When should we get back to a regular routine after a loved one dies?**

No two people react in exactly the same way to the death of a loved one! Some people do well by plunging into old routines or setting up new ones. Others need time to adjust without the deceased. They need time to express feelings, to learn new ways of doing things and to put affairs in order. The critical matter is that the grieving person be aware of and willing to deal with the changes death has created. Activity solely for the purpose of escaping feelings and running from pain will not work. On the other hand inactivity can further depression. The newly bereaved should take time to deal with feelings and then begin the tasks necessary to make life meaningful.

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### Latin Gregorian Chant Mass

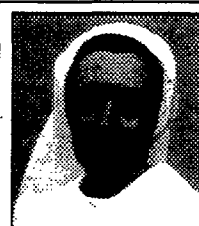
Congregational singing of  
**Mass VIII Missa de Angelis**  
Kyrie, Gloria, Credo III, Sanctus,  
Mysterium Fidei, Agnus Dei.

**Second Sunday**  
of the Month (Oct. 12, Nov. 9)  
at 11:30 AM Mass

**Saint Anne Church**  
1600 Mt. Hope Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14620-4598

Thomas G. Donohue, *choirmaster*  
Brink Bush, *organist*

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**Sr. Margaret**  
Registered Nurse from Louisville, Kentucky

"My vocation was a gradual process. It began with a recurring idea that God was calling me to something more. I prayed for guidance, asking Our Blessed Mother's assistance through her rosary, attended daily Mass and Holy Communion, and made two Holy Hours weekly. I also did a lot of spiritual reading. Several articles on "older vocations" encouraged me to explore my vocation.

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