

The VII National Pilgrimage of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

A great participation was recorded in the initiative of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement, this year scheduled for the eve of the Synod of Bishops for the family. It was an important opportunity for reflection and encounter. The Eucharistic celebration was presided by Bishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Council for the Family.



Salvatore Martinez, National President of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Msgr. Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Council for the Family and Msgr. Tommaso Caputo, Archbishop-Prelate of Pompeii.

Gospel of the family in a vital and experiential way. Afterwards, concrete testimonies of family life were given by Costanza Miriano, a journalist and writer on family issues; the Butturinis, who talked about their experience of a large missionary family (10 children); Saverio Sgroi, educational consultant especially engaged with adolescents; the exiled African family of Siaca Kone and Helen Simon, who reunited in Italy thanks to the work of evangelization of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Gianluca Mencarelli, who converted through the prayers of the children hosted in a community of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. At 4:30 pm, the crowd of families, coming from all over Italy, moved from Scafati to reach the Shrine of Pompeii, where they arrived at 6:00 pm. Along the way, 'the Rosary of the Family' was recited, animated and meditated on seven of the traditional 20 Mysteries.

In Pompeii, Archbishop Tommaso Caputo welcomed the pilgrims, inviting them to always look at Mary, "at how She accepted what God was asking of Her, how She loved and overcame all the difficulties She encountered along the way, how She never gave in", so as to learn from Her "to live our difficult present". He finally exhorted everyone "to pray for all the families in pain of the world, especially those living in areas of war or persecuted because of their faith".

The 7:00 pm Eucharistic celebration, broadcast live on TV2000, was presided by Msgr. Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Council for the Family. In his homily he spoke of the importance of the pilgrimage to Pompeii to celebrate the Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, "because it means to have a new familiarity, new links, new forms of solidarity sprung from Jesus' highest love that binds together different people, being based on Jesus' love. From Jesus' love, a new life springs out for humanity, the one we need today in a world poisoned by the snakes of war, selfishness, individualism, violence". Msgr. Paglia, who among other things revealed that he received his First Communion right in the Shrine of Pompeii, also stressed the value of the Renewal's initiative, in the light of the forthcoming Synod for the Family, so that this event "may show what the Synod must promote throughout the world: namely, a new springtime of Christian families".

The pilgrimage ended with the lighting of candles, a sign that anticipates the initiative 'Turn on a light in the family', issued by the IEC and addressed to all the Italian families, inviting them to light a candle, on October 4th, as a sign of union of prayer on the eve of the Synod of Bishops on the Family.

Loreta Somma

Fifteen thousand people to entrust the Christian family to Mary



The VII National Pilgrimage of families for the family promoted by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal involved fifteen thousand people. It was organized in collaboration with the Pontifical Prelature of Pompeii, the Pontifical Council for the Family, the National Office for the Pastoral Care of the Family of IEC, the Forum of Family Associations and the Municipalities of Scafati and Pompeii. The venue was the market area in Scafati, where participants listened to the speeches and testimonies of Francesco Belletti, President of the Forum of Family Associations; Fr. Paolo Gentili, Director of the National Office for the Pastoral Care of the Family of IEC; and Salvatore Martinez, President of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement.

The moderator of the meeting was Msgr. Giovanni D'Ercole, Bishop of Ascoli Piceno. Fr. Paolo Gentili urged that the value of the family should be defended because, "in someone's opinion – he explained – it is almost being blackened, but in Italy this sun is still alive thanks to many men and women who build their family together. The family is not a return to the past: to be together in communion, male and female, is not a return to the past, but a return to have a real future". Francesco Belletti instead focused on the theme of the day, 'Male and female God created them', "Today – he said – some want to introduce a family that has nothing to do with man and woman, and has nothing to do with acceptance of life. The debate in our country is in a state of great alarm, because it seems that today's man wants to invent

a new kind of family refusing the beauty of the very nature of the family". Salvatore Martinez urged then to proclaim together that "The family is alive! Long live the family! Because Jesus is alive and must grow in the spouses' reciprocal love and in their children's lives". Martinez added: "The family is and remains an event of love, a miracle of the Spirit. Therefore, even before man's will the family is called upon to always put herself before God's will: it was God who willed her, God who created her as such, and God Himself defends her, still before men and their laws. The real solution to the family's current spiritual and identity crisis can be found in the humble conversion of hearts, minds and wills to the Gospel of Jesus, which claims the stability of love in the spousal form of marriage and its fertility in the procreation of children. These are the two essential elements of human civilization and social life that believers and non-believers are called to respect, as an act of honour towards the generations that have gone before us, and as an act of love for those to come. We believe that nothing more than prayer may explain to us the