

*D. In Benedict XVI's ordinary magisterium there are often significant passages on marriage, the family, the education of children, the defense of life in all its stages ... You already knows him well as a theologian. What is theology's line on the family and its extreme topicality?*

R. There is one aspect, in Pope Benedict's mind, that is extremely important for his vision of the family. This is his great confidence in the Logos, in the fact that in Jesus the deeply relational structure of reality was revealed. This topic important because through Christ we reach man in his deepest roots; we can discover an identity that applies to any human being, even to a non-believer, as to a disciple of Jesus Christ. I believe that the Pope has well developed this anthropological consideration of the dignity of the family, in talking about the family. For example, his reflections on the so-called "ideology of gender", "gender ideology": the intention is not to demonize anyone, but to recognize the human being's deep status as relational being, of man and woman made for reciprocity, for a fruitful reciprocity, open to giving and procreation; for a reciprocity that becomes not only a sign and instrument of the grace of God-Trinity but also, for the Church, an image and an enrichment. The Pope has a vision of the family that can speak to every human being, and that this has a charge of anthropological confidence, of the positivity that we need so much.

*D. You participated in the recent **Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization** and you have seen many interventions given by bishops from all countries and continents on the family and on the related issues. What then is the role of the family in the work of evangelization? How can the family express its own ecclesiastical subjectivity?*

R. Many Synod Fathers spoke about the family. I would just like to point out three thoughts that I consider particularly significant. First, the new evangelization stems from what I call "a wounded love": the love of Christ, the love of the married couple, the love of parents for their children. A love that sometimes appears injured, because we would like to convey the joy and beauty of life in Christ, but often we are faced with indifference, rejection, estrangement, solitude. And this wounded love gives the impulse for a new missionary efforts, the search for new methods, new criteria and new zeal to bring the joy of the Lord into people's hearts. Of course, the family especially experiences this wounded love; everyone sees how, in the secularized society of the West, the family is touched by the deep need for a new evangelization, by the need to invent –in the power of the Spirit- within the Church new ways and a new impetus to reach the hearts of our young people, which like every human heart hunger for goodness, hunger for beauty. In this sense –and this is the second point- the Synod Fathers strongly emphasized the role of the family as the subject of evangelization, the subject of pastoral care; as protagonists of the new evangelization, in which the whole Church proclaims the entire Gospel to the whole person and to every person. I am convinced of the need to insist on how the "catholicity" of the actors and recipients of the Gospel message concerns, in particular, the family as the subject of evangelization. Finally, we must not overlook the fact that the family is also recipient-object of evangelization, both in the sense that we must preach the gospel of the family, in the sense that we must care for and be close to the family in a sort of co-responsibility and educational alliance, in order to reach young people with the gospel of love and God's beauty, so that they may be introduced into the reality of this love that illuminates with meaning every aspect of life. And in that is, properly speaking, what education is all about.