

VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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Queridos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo, ¡saludos! Agradezco la oportunidad de dirigirme a ustedes en la conferencia de este año. Deseo saludar y dar las gracias a mi hermano en Cristo, el obispo Jorge Rodríguez, Representante Episcopal con la Catholic Family Life Association. Muchas gracias también al Sr. Jason Kidd, presidente saliente, por su servicio a la CFLA y a las familias católicas. Doy la enhorabuena y la seguridad de mis oraciones a la Sra. Socorro Truchan, que comienza su mandato como nueva presidenta. La Sra. Truchan ya ha sido una líder dentro de la Federación para el Ministerio de la Familia Hispana. En la providencia de Dios, el ministerio a los hispanos y a las familias en general está cada vez más unido. Esto es verdaderamente una respuesta a los "signos de los tiempos", y algo por lo que damos gracias.

As the Holy Father's representative to the United States, I want to convey to everyone who is part of this Association the spiritual closeness of Pope Francis, and his pastoral encouragement of the work you do for families. Your mission is "to implement a vision of marriage and family ministry encompassing the entire life cycle"¹. It is just such a vision that the Pope expressed in his letter on love in the family, *Amoris Laetitia*. I encourage all of you, as leaders in family ministry, to continue to be formed and guided by the Holy Father's pastoral vision. In particular, we must make it clear to families that *Jesus is with them* at all times. He doesn't distance himself from families when their members are experiencing serious difficulties and imperfections. Rather, Jesus wants to enter their lives in order to show them his compassion and mercy.

This, my brothers and sisters, is why the Eucharist is so central to our mission. Your theme for this conference is: *Marriage & Family: A Eucharistic Journey for a Lifetime!* When we walk a true "Eucharistic journey", this means that we do not keep the Eucharist on a shelf or in a library. The Eucharist is about relationship. Jesus gave us the Eucharist so that we can be his presence today, in the reality in which we live. Pope Francis has urged us to recover the practice of adoration because, as he said, "Only in adoration, only in the presence of the Lord, do we truly rediscover our taste and passion for evangelization."² In other words, true adoration leads us to carry the real presence of Jesus to others: to those we encounter, and to the families we serve.

As I mentioned before, I am happy that your Association has a subsidiary Federation for Hispanic Family Ministry. A few days ago, I gave a video address to the National Association of Diocesan Directors of Hispanic Ministry, who were gathered in Houston. At that conference, the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic/Latino ministry was initiated, which gives a direction to Hispanic ministry for the next ten years. This Plan has been developed through the *Encuentro* process, which is a good model for the way of being Church: a synodal way of encountering, listening, discerning, and acting. I encourage you as leaders, and especially those whose ministry is focused on Hispanic and Latino people, to become familiar with this Pastoral Plan.

Por último, sigamos rezando por la Asamblea General del Sínodo que se está celebrando en Roma en estos momentos. Que todos participemos en este camino compartido como Pueblo de Dios.

Que Dios los bendiga. Que esta Conferencia sea ocasión de mucha alegría y aliento en la misión. Gracias.

¹ “Who We Are”, Catholic Family Life Association, 2023, www.nacflm.org/who-we-are.

² Pope Francis; Homily for Vespers with Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Persons, Seminarians, and Pastoral Workers; Lisbon, Portugal; August 2, 2023.