

**Day of Prayer
for the III Extraordinary General Assembly of the
Synod of Bishops**

Sunday, 28 September 2014

Sunday, 28 September is to be set aside as a Day of Prayer for the III Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, scheduled to take place from 5 to 19 October to treat the topic: *The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization*.

Particular churches, parish communities, institutes of consecrated life, associations and movements are invited to pray for this intention during Mass and at other liturgical celebrations, in the days leading to the synod and during the synod itself. In Rome, in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, prayers will be recited each day in the chapel of the icon, *Salus Populi Romani*. The faithful, individually but above all in families, are invited to join in these prayers.

The suggested prayers include the *Prayer to the Holy Family for the Synod*, composed by Pope Francis, and the following proposed intentions during the Prayers of the Faithful which can be adapted at Sunday Mass on 28 September and during the synod. These intentions can also be included in the petitions at Lauds and Vespers. The recitation of the Holy Rosary is also recommended for the duration of the synodal assembly.

I - Prayer to the Holy Family for the Synod

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
in you we contemplate
the splendour of true love,
to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
grant that our families too
may be places of communion and prayer,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
may families never again
experience violence, rejection and division:
may all who have been hurt or scandalized
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
may the approaching Synod of Bishops
make us once more mindful
of the sacredness and inviolability of the family,
and its beauty in God's plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
graciously hear our prayer.

Amen.

II - Prayer of the Faithful

Brothers and Sisters,
gathered together as God's family and inspired by our faith, we raise our minds
and hearts to the Father, that our families, sustained by the grace of Christ, might
become true domestic churches where all live and bear witness to God's love.

Together we pray:

Lord, bless and sanctify our families.

For Pope Francis: the Lord has called him to preside over the Church in charity;
sustain him in his ministry of service to the communion of the episcopal college
and the entire People of God, we pray:

For the synod fathers and the other participants at the III Extraordinary General
Assembly of the Synod of Bishops: may the Spirit of the Lord enlighten their
minds so that the Church might respond, in faithfulness to God's plan, to the
challenges facing the family, we pray:

For those who have the responsibility of governing nations: that the Holy Spirit
might inspire programmes which acknowledge the value of the family as the
basic unit of society in God's plan and which offer support to families in
difficulty, we pray:

For Christian families: may the Lord who has sealed the union of husband and
wife with his presence, make our families cenacles of prayer and ardent
communities of life and love, after the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth,
we pray:

For couples undergoing difficulties: may the Lord, rich in mercy, be present to
them through the Church's motherly care and concern in showing understanding
and patience in their journey towards pardon and reconciliation, we pray:

For families who, for the sake of the Gospel, are forced leave their fatherland: may the Lord who endured exile with Mary and Joseph, comfort them with his grace and open for them paths of fraternal charity and human solidarity, we pray:

For grandparents: may the Lord who was received in the Temple by the elders Simeon and Anna, make them wise collaborators with parents in transmitting the faith and the raising their children, we pray:

For children: may the Lord of life, who in his ministry welcomed them and made them a model for entering the Kingdom of heaven, inspire a respect for life in the womb and programmes in raising children which conform to the Christian outlook towards life, we pray:

For young people: may the Lord, who made holy the Wedding at Cana, lead them to discover the beauty of the sacredness and inviolability of the family in God's plan and sustain engaged couples as they prepare for marriage, we pray:

O God, you never forsake the work of your hands, hear our prayer; send the Spirit of your Son to enlighten the Church as the synodal journey begins, so that contemplating the splendour of true love which shines forth in the Holy Family of Nazareth, she might learn the freedom and obedience to respond with boldness and mercy to the challenges of today's world. Through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.