

**THE AFRICAN FAMILY AS A CONTEXT FOR
THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY**

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Abstract

The Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, Misericordia Vultus was given on April 11th 2015, the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday. In the Bull, the Holy Father, Pope Francis said that he proclaimed the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy so that the Church may gaze even more attentively on mercy so that she may become a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives. It is also a special time for the Church when her witness might grow stronger and more effective. The present research focuses on the contextualization of the Bull within the familiar parameters of the family. This contextualization is necessitated and anchored on the socio-economic experiences of families in Africa. For the purpose of this research, the phenomenological and particularist approach are employed for the purpose of contextualization. This piece has discovered that the contextualization of the Jubilee Year of Mercy to the African family provides a locale for a more effective discourse in the Jubilee Year of Mercy for progressive transformation.

Keywords: African, Family, Socio-Economic, Jubilee Year Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*.

Introduction

The concept 'mercy' is at the heart of the redeeming mission of Christ. The whole episodes of leaving the glory of the Father, the Word taking flesh, dying on the cross of Calvary, etc., was simply to give mercy to fallen humanity. And even when the disciples were called by Jesus and sent out, it was to communicate this mercy to those they met. In a world of selfishness, greed, individualism, etc., mercy connected the heart of a person with the other: the unfortunate with the fortunate, the loved with the unloved, the 'alive' with the dying, etc. The Latin word for mercy is *misericordia*. Thomas Aquinas interpreted the word *misericordia* in its linguistic sense: to have one's heart (*cor*) with the unfortunate (*miseri*), to have one's heart with those who are suffering. It has something to do with feeling with or suffering with (compassion): *miserumcorhaben super miseriaalterius* (having an unhappy heart on account of the misery of another).¹

This notwithstanding, fundamentally, mercy is an attribute of God, which has defined the relationship between God and the human person right from the very beginning of time. The human person, therefore, shares in the life of God- as his image and likeness, who is Merciful. We thus, attain our true humanity when we show mercy after the image and likeness of God. As the church gazes more attentively on mercy in the Jubilee Year of Mercy, that she may become a more effective sign of God's mercy, situations have arisen when there is a need for the contextualization of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Following the current conditions of life in the African Family, especially as the African family occupies a fundamental place in the community of traditional African institutions, the present work has chosen the African family as a socio-cultural context for reflection in the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

The Jubilee Year of Mercy

On March 13th 2015, Pope Francis I, at the second anniversary of his election as the 266th successor of Saint Peter, announced that he would be convoking the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. The celebration began on 8th December 2015-the feast of the Immaculate Conception- and it is scheduled to end on 20th November 2016-the Solemnity of Christ the King. Right from the beginning of the pontificate of Francis I, mercy has occupied a central place in his teachings and actions. His Papal motto is the same with the one he had as the Archbishop of Buenos Aires: *miserando atque eligendo*: By having mercy on him, he chose him; this motto is taken from Matthew's experience of Jesus' call to discipleship. Matthew was a tax collector, a sinner, however, when Jesus passed by the tax office, he had mercy on him, and in spite of his sins and sinfulness, he called him to be a disciple saying to him: *follow me*. The choice of this motto was also based on his experience at the confessional in September 21, 1953 on the feast of Matthew the apostle. At the age of 17, as a young boy, at the confessional, he had a deep spiritual experience of God's mercy. This experience informed his decision of embracing the religious life in the footsteps of St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits.

The Roman Pontiff, thus, sees himself in the light of Matthew the tax collector whom Jesus had mercy upon and chose. More so, the call for the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy was inspired by the Letter of St Paul to the Romans: *for God has consigned all men to disobedience that he may have mercy upon all* (11:32). Also by Matthew's gospel: *Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy* (5:7). In Luke's gospel, the Pope also drew inspiration from the scripture that says: *Be merciful just as your father is merciful*. More concretely, we live in a history that is filled with all kinds of terrors, violence of all kinds against women, children and men. The level of abortion is alarming. Efforts to curb terrorism have created more issues than it set out to control. The number of refugees in the world is on the increase. The Roman Pontiff sees this as an opportune time to seek for God's mercy and be merciful to one another.

The Bull of Indiction - *Misericordia Vultus*

The Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus* was given on April 11th 2015, the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday. In the Bull, the Holy Father, Pope Francis I said that he proclaimed the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy so that the Church may gaze even more attentively on mercy so that she may become a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives². It is also a special time for the Church when her witness might grow stronger and more effective³. The Jubilee year opens on 8 December 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception⁴, reason being that it recalls God's redemptive action of mercy from the very beginning of the history of mankind. After the sin of Adam and Eve, God did not wish to leave humanity alone in the throes of evil. So he turned his gaze to Mary, holy and immaculate in love (cf. Eph 1:4), choosing her to be the Mother of man's Redeemer. When faced with the gravity of sin, God responds with the fullness of mercy. The Roman Pontiff writes, "I have chosen the date of 8 December because of its rich meaning in the recent history of the Church. In fact, I will open the Holy Door on the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. The Church feels a great need to keep this event alive."⁵ This is based on the teachings of his predecessors and the vision of Vatican II. Saint John XXIII, at the opening of Vatican Council II, indicated the path to follow: "Now the Bride of Christ wishes to use the medicine of mercy rather than taking up arms of severity."⁶ The Jubilee Year would end on 20th November 2016, the Solemnity of Christ the

King. "On that day, as we seal the Holy Door, we shall be filled, above all, with a sense of gratitude and thanksgiving to the Most Holy Trinity for having granted us an extraordinary time of grace"⁷.

Expounding on the implications of the theological content of the Year of Mercy, the Holy Father taught that this year is a key that indicates God's action towards us. In the Sacred Scripture, God does not limit himself merely to affirming his love, but makes it visible and tangible. Love, after all, can never be just an abstraction. By its very nature, it indicates something concrete: intentions, attitudes, and behaviours that are shown in daily living. The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us⁸. This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do his children. This is at the heart of the Church's mission: her credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love. "Mercy is the foundation of the Church's life. All her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her tenderness to the world can be lacking in mercy"⁹.

To reinforce the message of mercy, Pope Francis drew attention to the great teaching of John Paul II's encyclical *Dives in Misericordia (Rich in Mercy)*. He drew attention to two passages: First, Saint John Paul II highlighted the fact that we had forgotten the theme of mercy in today's cultural milieu: "The present-day mentality, more perhaps than that of people in the past, seems opposed to a God of mercy, and in fact tends to exclude from life and to remove from the human heart the very idea of mercy."¹⁰ Furthermore, Saint John Paul II pushed for a more urgent proclamation and witness to mercy in the contemporary world: "It is dictated by love for man, for all that is human and which, according to the intuitions of many of our contemporaries, is threatened by an immense danger. The mystery of Christ ... obliges me to proclaim mercy as God's merciful love, revealed in that same mystery of Christ. It likewise obliges me to have recourse to that mercy and to beg for it at this difficult, critical phase of the history of the Church and of the world."¹¹ The church is, therefore, called upon to be a servant of mercy and to mediate it to all peoples.

The Vicar of Christ places the practice of pilgrimage at the heart of the Year of Mercy. The act of pilgrimage to the Holy Door of Mercy in Rome and other parts of the world requires pilgrimage, which further teaches believers that mercy requires dedication and sacrifice¹². He further expresses his burning desire that during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy when he said:

It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples. Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead¹³.

The document also teaches that the season of Lent during this Jubilee Year is to be lived more intensely, with emphasis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation: "The season of Lent

during this Jubilee Year should also be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's mercy. How many pages of Sacred Scripture are appropriate for meditation during the weeks of Lent to help us rediscover the merciful face of the Father?"¹⁴ Focusing more intensely on the sacrament of reconciliation, the Roman Pontiff writes: "Let us place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the centre once more in such a way that it will enable people to touch the grandeur of God's mercy with their own hands. For every penitent, it will be a source of true interior peace"¹⁵. In a very practical way, Pope Francis will send out Missionaries of Mercy during Lent of this Holy Year, who will be a sign of the Church's maternal solicitude for the People of God, enabling them to enter the profound richness of this mystery so fundamental to the faith. Added to this is that the jubilee year entails the granting of indulgences¹⁶.

The Pope went on to extend the message of mercy to members of criminal organizations and to those who engage in corrupt practices. He writes,

May the message of mercy reach everyone, and may no one be indifferent to the call to experience mercy. I direct this invitation to conversion even more fervently to those whose behaviour distances them from the grace of God. I particularly have in mind men and women belonging to criminal organizations of any kind. For their own good, I beg them to change their lives. The same invitation is extended to those who either perpetrate or participate in corruption. This festering wound is a grave sin that cries out to heaven for vengeance, because it threatens the very foundations of personal and social life. Corruption prevents us from looking to the future with hope, because its tyrannical greed shatters the plans of the weak and tramples upon the poorest of the poor"¹⁷.

The Pope takes the practice of mercy beyond the walls of the church to include other peoples: Muslims and Christians. He writes:

There is an aspect of mercy that goes beyond the confines of the Church. It relates us to Judaism and Islam, both of which consider mercy to be one of God's most important attributes. ... I trust that this Jubilee year celebrating the mercy of God will foster an encounter with these religions and with other noble religious traditions; may it open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; may it eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination¹⁸.

Towards the end of the bull, Pope Francis turns to Mary, Mother of Mercy:

My thoughts now turn to the Mother of Mercy. May the sweetness of her countenance watch over us in this Holy Year, so that all of us may rediscover the joy of God's tenderness. No one has penetrated the profound mystery of the incarnation like Mary. Her entire life was patterned after the presence of mercy made flesh. The Mother of the Crucified and Risen One has entered the sanctuary of divine mercy because she participated intimately in the mystery of his love¹⁹.

After Mary as the Mother of Mercy, the Pope extends his thoughts to the saints and blessed ones who have made divine mercy their mission in life. In this regard, he singles out St. Faustina:

Our prayer also extends to the saints and blessed ones who made divine mercy their mission in life. I am especially thinking of the great apostle of mercy, Saint Faustina Kowalska. May she, who was called to enter the

depths of divine mercy, intercede for us and obtain for us the grace of living and walking always according to the mercy of God and with an unwavering trust in his love”²⁰.

He ended the Bull by asking us to open our hearts to God who can surprise us on the path of mercy²¹.

A Theological Concept of the Family

A cursory glance at the historical evolution of the Church, reveals that throughout the centuries, the Church has maintained her constant teaching on marriage and family. In the Second Vatican Council document, *Gaudium et Spes*, an entire chapter was devoted to the promotion of the dignity of marriage and the family²². It defined marriage as a community of life and love²³, placing love at the center of the family and manifesting, at the same time, the truth of this love in counter distinction to the various forms of reductionism present in contemporary culture. It further emphasized the grounding of the spouses in Christ. So that the bride and groom, consecrated and, through his grace, build up the Body of Christ²⁴. After the Second Vatican Council, the Church through different documents and in various ways has refined its teaching on marriage and the family. Pope Paul VI, in his Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*,²⁵ displayed the intimate bond between conjugal love and the generation of life. In like manner Pope St. John Paul II, in his Letter to Families *Gratissimam Sane*²⁶ and Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*²⁷, devoted special attention to the family.

More recently, Pope Benedict XVI, in his Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, took up the topic of the marriage and the family, emphasizing that “marriage based on an exclusive and definitive love becomes the icon of the relationship between God and his people and vice versa. God's way of loving becomes the measure of human love”²⁸. Furthermore, in his Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, he emphasizes the importance of love as the principle of life in society²⁹. In his Encyclical *Lumen Fidei*, Pope Francis, reflected on the relationship between the family and faith: “Encountering Christ, letting themselves (young people) be caught up in and guided by his love, enlarges the horizons of existence, gives it a firm hope which will not disappoint. Faith is no refuge for the fainthearted, but something which enhances our lives. It makes us aware of a magnificent calling, the vocation of love. It assures us that this love is trustworthy and worth embracing, for it is based on God’s faithfulness which is stronger than our every weakness”³⁰.

Since the family is a miniature Church, a place where the gospel if accepted and transmitted, it is an evangelizing community: it is first evangelized and evangelizes. It is evangelized through the parents receiving and communicating the gospel to their children and the family radiates this gospel, touching other families and the neighborhood of which it forms part. For the fulfillment of these fundamental roles, Pope Benedict XVI called on families to draw strength from the Eucharist, the sacrament from which the marriage covenant flows, is structured and continually renewed³¹.

The Challenges of the Family in Africa

Focusing on the African family, Betty and Khadiagala avers that African families are embedded in political and socio-economic circumstances that are characterized by long-standing domestic dynamics of economic fragility, debilitating poverty, poor governance and civil conflicts. Throughout the 1990s, the scourge of HIV/AIDS has put additional pressures on the sustainability of families and households. Similarly, the new demands unleashed by forces of globalization have had mixed outcomes for African families, simultaneously

enhancing the chances of families to seize the opportunities for participation in larger economic exchanges while at the same time heightening their vulnerability to these forces³².

John Paul II observes that in the midst of obvious developments and advancements:

Signs are not lacking of a disturbing degradation of some fundamental values: a mistaken theoretical and practical concept of the independence of the spouses in relation to each other; serious misconceptions regarding the relationship of authority between parents and children; the concrete difficulties that the family itself experiences in the transmission of values; the growing number of divorces; the scourge of abortion; the ever more frequent recourse to sterilization; the appearance of a truly contraceptive mentality³³.

There are also cases of selfishness, self-affirmation, a troubling individualism which destroys matrimonial union; there are cases of poverty, the lack in the necessary means of survival, such as food, work, housing and medicine, and the most elementary freedoms. The Fourteenth Ordinary General Assembly observes that there is a general feeling of powerlessness in the face of socio-cultural realities that oftentimes end in crushing families. "The negative impact on the family is clear, as seen in the demographic crisis, in the difficulty of raising children, in a hesitancy to welcome new life and in considering the presence of older persons as a burden"³⁴.

The Assembly further observes that some cultural and religious contexts pose particular challenges like polygamy and arranged marriages; in places where Catholicism is the minority, there are cases of mixed and interreligious marriages with difficulties in terms of jurisprudence, Baptism, the upbringing of children and the mutual respect with regards to difference in faith. This creates the danger of relativism or indifference. There are cases of cohabitation before marriage or simply cohabitating with no intention of a legally binding relationship. There are places where civil legislation has compromised marriage and the family. There are also places where a great number of children are born outside marriage, many of whom subsequently grow up with just one of their parents or in a blended or reconstituted family. Children thus, become a source of contention between parents and become the real victims of family break-ups. In many parts of Africa, simply being a woman is a source of discrimination and the gift of motherhood is often penalized rather than esteemed. There is an increasing violence against women, where they become victims, unfortunately, often within families and as a result of the serious and widespread practice of genital mutilation in some African cultures. The sexual exploitation of children is still another scandalous and perverse reality in present-day Africa.

The family and the Jubilee Year of Mercy

1. The Family and Reconciliation in the Year of Mercy

Pope Francis teaches that "No family drops down from heaven perfectly formed; families need constantly to grow and mature in the ability to love". People grow in holiness, and the family must be there to give them a helping hand rather than turn them away because they have not attained some degree of perfection. Parenting is a unique relationship, a pilgrim journey from birth to death. It is being like God who from the beginning of history still continues to deal with children who can be wayward, disobedient and disrespectful at times and at others loving, caring and obedient. Whoever plays a parenting role in a family can practice and teach the Spiritual Works of Mercy. In fact, it is part of parental obligation to admonish the sinner, instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, bear

wrongs patiently, forgive injuries and pray for the living and the dead³⁵. The Jubilee Year of Mercy provides the opportunity for families in discord to come together again.

2. The Family and Education in the Jubilee Year of Mercy

One of the corporal works of mercy is to teach the ignorant. Within the context of the family, one of the fundamental vocations of married couples is giving education that is, teaching their children. In this way, they participate in the creative activity and authority of God the Father, Jesus the Good Shepherd and the motherly love of the Church, by helping the newly born child to live a fully human life. This responsibility on the part of the parents is essential, original and primary. It is a role that is irreplaceable and inalienable, and thus cannot be delegated to others to do³⁶. The Church teaches that,

Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it devolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reverence for God and others that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered among the children. Hence, the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs³⁷.

In the whole process of educating the child is the importance of parental love. Parental love is a basic element in this curriculum. Parental love is an animating principle, which places education at the service of life and enriches it with the values of kindness, constancy, goodness, service and self-sacrifice. *Africae Munus* teaches that,

The family is the best setting for learning and applying the culture of forgiveness, peace and reconciliation. “In a healthy family life we experience some of the fundamental elements of peace: justice and love between brothers and sisters, the role of authority expressed by parents, loving concern for the members who are weaker because of youth, sickness or old age, mutual help in the necessities of life, readiness to accept others and, if necessary, to forgive them³⁸.”

As the first fundamental school of social living, Children in the family must be taught the true sense of justice. By maintaining peace and love within the family, the family therefore becomes the first teacher of peace and reconciliation. This flows from the relationship between the husband and wife; their self-giving therefore becomes a model and a norm for the self-giving that must be practiced in the relationships between brothers and sisters.

For this reason, the family is the first and indispensable teacher of peace.”

By virtue of its central importance and the various threats looming over it – distortion of the very notion of marriage and family, devaluation of maternity and trivialization of abortion, easy divorce and the relativism of a “new ethics” – the family needs to be protected and defended, so that it may offer society the service expected of it, that of providing men and women capable of building a social fabric of peace and harmony³⁹.

Another important element that must not be left out in educating the family is sex education. It is a basic right and duty of parents which develops the child’s authentic maturity and makes the child capable of respecting and fostering the nuptial meaning of the body. There is no time when the education of the child assumes more importance than during the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

3. The Family and Prayer in the Jubilee Year of Mercy

Christian families are to offer prayers together, as husband and wife and as parents and children. The words of Jesus have great relevance here: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them”⁴⁰. Family prayer has for its own very object *family life itself*, which in all its varying circumstances is seen as a call from God and lived as a filial response to (remove the) God’s call. Therefore, parents have the specific responsibility of educating their children in prayer, introducing them to the gradual discovery of the mystery of God⁴¹ and to personal dialogue with him⁴². By praying together with their children, parents exercise their royal priesthood and penetrate the innermost depths of their children’s hearts, making an impression that the future events of their lives may not be able to efface. Thus Pope Paul VI recommends the Family Rosary Prayer⁴³. Paul VI teaches that it is thus that we build the church⁴⁴, for there is a deep and vital bond between the prayer of the family and the prayer of the church⁴⁵.

Moments of prayer in families during the Jubilee Year of Mercy should be seen as suitable moments for thanksgiving, petition and trusting abandonment of the family into the hands of their common Father in heaven and above all, a time to ask for mercy. The dignity and responsibility of the Christian family as the domestic church can be achieved only with God’s unceasing aid, which will surely be granted if it is humbly and trustingly petitioned in prayer.

4. The Family and the Aged in the Year of Mercy

The Year of mercy is also a time when families must ask themselves questions about their commitment to the aged among them, especially aged parents and grandparents. This commitment must include even the members of the Consecrated life. For the Second Vatican Council document *Quitte Ton Pays* creates a bridge between the Consecrated Persons call to detachment from former material and spiritual values, including family and the fourth commandment’s obligation to honour parents during times of sickness, age and infirmity⁴⁶. This is very important in relation to families whose condition or situation worsens as a result of sickness, age, infirmity or economic set-backs after the person might have entered the Religious Life⁴⁷. When cases of this kind arises, the document teaches that:

More direct help from sons and daughters in religion may then become necessary. In principle, this problem concerns both men and women religious, but it must be acknowledged that, when it comes to providing nursing or home-help, sisters feel more directly involved because generally speaking they are better qualified to render such services⁴⁸.

This is very important as people are living longer and this has led to an increase in the number of the aged who need help; Urbanization, with family apartments in the cities not being big enough to accommodate the nuclear family. As such, the aged are not easily accommodated in the cities; Increase in the number of religious sisters, and as such, increase in the number of aged parents who need attention; Religious communities are beginning to be more aware of this need⁴⁹.

Conclusion

The family in African ontology among other social, economic, political and cultural institutions occupy a fundamental place. It is an institution that is loved, nurtured and protected. Because of the fundamental place it occupies, the foregoing has studied the Papal document of the Roman Pontiff on the Jubilee Year of Mercy- *Misericordia Vultus* with the purpose of finding application for it within the context of the socio-economic experiences of families in Africa. It therefore, studied the theology of the family, revealing the Church’s

long commitment to the development of the family. This was followed by the analysis of the challenges of the family in Africa, and from this analysis, it drew out areas where the Year of Mercy can contribute towards the growth of the African Family. This paper strongly believes that a focus on the institution of the family in Africa during the Jubilee Year of Mercy would create the avenue to give the family the attention it deserves and more so, to attend to the retinue of problems that Africa families are facing.

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- ² Pope Francis I, The Face of Mercy: Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. Kenya: Paulines. No. 2. p.6
- ³ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*, no. 3. p.6
- ⁴ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*, no. 3-4. pp. 6-8.
- ⁵ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus* No. 4. p.7
- ⁶ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 4. p.7
- ⁷ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 5. pp.8-9
- ⁸ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 6-9. p.8-13
- ⁹ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 10. p.13
- ¹⁰ Pope John Paul II, Rich in Mercy, *Dives in Misericordia*, no. 15
- ¹¹ Pope John Paul II, Rich in Mercy, *Dives in Misericordia*, no. 15
- ¹² Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 14. p.16
- ¹³ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 15. p.18
- ¹⁴ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 17. p.20
- ¹⁵ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 17. p.21
- ¹⁶ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 22. p.27
- ¹⁷ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. no. 19. p.23
- ¹⁸ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. no. 23. pp.28-29
- ¹⁹ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 24. pp.29-30
- ²⁰ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 24. p. 30
- ²¹ Pope Francis I, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordia Vultus*. No. 25. pp. 30-31
- ²² *Gaudium et Spes*, 47-52
- ²³ *Gaudium et Spes*, 48
- ²⁴ *Lumen Gentium*, 11
- ²⁵ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Humane Vitae* on the 25th day of July, the feast of St. James the Apostle, in the year 1968, Vatican City, 7-10.
- ²⁶ John Paul II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam Sane*, Saint Peter's, on 2 February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, in the year 1994, Vatican.
- ²⁷ John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, Rome, at St. Peter's, on the twenty-second day of November, the Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King, Vatican City.
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- ²⁹ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 44
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- ³¹ Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus*, no. 44
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- ³⁷*Gravissimum Educationis*. 3
- ³⁸Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus*, no. 43
- ³⁹Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus*, no. 43
- ⁴⁰Matthew 18:19-20
- ⁴¹*Catechesi Tradendae*, 36
- ⁴²*Gravissimum Educationis*, 3
- ⁴³*Marialis Cultus* 52, 54
- ⁴⁴*Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, 11th August 1976, Vi, XIV, 640
- ⁴⁵*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 12
- ⁴⁶*Quitte Ton Pays*, 1976, p. 228
- ⁴⁷*Quitte Ton Pays*, 1976, p. 228
- ⁴⁸*Quitte Ton Pays*, 1976, p. 228
- ⁴⁹*Quitte Ton Pays*, 1976, pp. 229-30