



Ten years after *Amoris laetitia*: *proclaiming the Gospel with families today*

Meeting of the Holy Father Leo XIV
with the Heads of Eastern Churches
and the Presidents of Episcopal Conferences

7-14 October 2026

Introduction to the theme of the day

Saturday, 10 October 2026

H.Em. Card. Kevin Farrell

Married life. The first years of marriage: a decisive time

Since the Second Vatican Council, considerable pastoral efforts have been made to enrich preparation for marriage, drawing on the experience of married couples and offering engaged couples opportunities to experience fraternity and prayer within the Christian community.

Yet we see that this is not always enough to help newly married couples understand and deepen the conjugal love that is taking shape within them during the first years of marriage, or to face the difficulties that may arise with the birth of children or as they come to know one another more deeply. We also see that a period of cohabitation before marriage does not necessarily make couples better prepared to face such difficulties.

The Church's pastoral conversion therefore calls us to listen closely to the experience of young married couples: to how they speak about what they are learning together, or about what prevents them from learning and growing; the resources they discover in the sacrament of marriage; what they expect from Christian communities; and how they understand their own missionary responsibility.