



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

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Introduction to the proceedings

Thursday, 8 October 2026
H.Em.R. Card. Mario Grech

Quite often, we lament the growing noise that surrounds us, the endless stream of voices competing for our attention. Yet there are also sounds that reach not only our ears but our hearts. Among these are echoes. An echo is the sign that a voice has travelled, encountered a receptive space, and returned enriched by that encounter. In this sense, our gathering may be understood as an attentive exercise in listening to those echoes that continue to resonate in the life of the Church and in the hearts of families.

I take the liberty of describing this meeting as a response to the many echoes that reach us, as pastors, from different areas of ecclesial and human life.

First of all, there is the echo of the words of Jesus as they have been preserved and transmitted in the Gospel. It is this echo that resonates most profoundly in our midst. We are here because the Lord has entrusted us with a mission: to proclaim the Good News and to bear witness to the joy of the Gospel in every age and circumstance. The Gospel of the family is the lamp unto our feet and the light for our path during these days of reflection and dialogue. It is not simply one voice among many others; it is the foundational voice from which all authentic Christian pastoral care must draw its inspiration. Every pastoral initiative, every discernment, every proposal that we make ultimately finds its origin and its criterion in the saving message of Christ.

A second echo to which we are called to listen attentively is that of the Church's Magisterium, and in a particular way the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. This document continues to generate reflections, insights, and pastoral initiatives across the world. Ten years after its publication, we are invited to hear how this synodal teaching has resonated within local Churches: the paths undertaken, the fruits borne, the difficulties encountered, and the questions that remain open. Its reception has also involved tensions and differing interpretations. All of this belongs to the history we are here to revisit together, asking what we have learned as we have sought to put *Amoris Laetitia* into practice. In each particular Church, the same Gospel truth has inspired diverse pastoral responses, shaped by different cultural contexts, ecclesial traditions, opportunities, and challenges. While the message remains one and the same, its reception and application reveal the richness and creativity of the Holy Spirit at work in the life of the Church. By listening to these different experiences, we become better able to learn from one another and to discern paths that may enrich our common mission.

There is, however, a third echo that I would invite you to hear with particular attentiveness: the voices of families themselves. These voices do not reach us as statistics, theories, or abstract concepts. They come to us through the concrete experiences of husbands and wives, parents and children, young couples preparing for marriage, elderly people living their vocation faithfully, and countless families striving to embody the Gospel in daily life. Among them are many families who are living examples of hope. Their daily efforts to love, forgive, care for one another, and begin again bear witness to the Gospel, often amid considerable difficulties. Their witness deserves recognition, encouragement, and gratitude. Families are subjects of the Church's mission, and we have much to receive and learn from them. Their experience can help us understand more deeply how the Gospel takes flesh in daily life and how we are called to proclaim it today.

Faithfulness and fragility are often intertwined within the same family story. Families deeply committed to their vocation can also experience uncertainty, strained relationships, suffering, and the need for help. Numerous families find themselves overwhelmed by economic uncertainty, cultural and ideological pressures, social fragmentation, and political instability, while others endure the devastating consequences of wars and armed conflicts, which disrupt family life, separate loved ones, and force many from their homes. Some struggle under burdens that seem too heavy to bear. We are invited to listen also to the difficulties families encounter in their relationship with our Christian communities and to ask how our pastoral care can better support them. Even in situations of uncertainty and brokenness, there remains a profound longing in the human heart: the desire to love and be loved, to belong, to form stable relationships, and to build a future marked by hope. Attending to this longing can help us recognise how God's grace is already at work in their lives and how the Gospel can speak to their deepest aspirations.

Our task during this meeting is therefore to listen and, through listening, to learn from experience and evaluate the paths we have taken. We listen to the echo of the Gospel, which continually calls the Church back to Christ. We listen to the echo of the Magisterium, which helps us interpret the signs of the times in the light of faith. And we listen to the voices of families, whose joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties continue to challenge and inspire our pastoral ministry. During these days, all these echoes will reach us through the narratives and testimonies of others: the families who share their lives with us, those who offer their reflections, and our fellow pastors who recount the experience of their Churches. Let us allow their words to reach us and resonate within us, attending to what through them the Holy Spirit awakens, illuminates, or challenges, and bring these resonances into our conversations. May this shared listening deepen our communion and renew our commitment to accompany families with Evangelical truth, compassion, wisdom, and hope. It may also help us understand differences more clearly and recognise questions that call for further discernment. Through it, may we be better prepared to fulfil the mission entrusted to us by the Lord and to proclaim the joy of the Gospel together with families.