

FAMILY COMMISSION OF THE TANZANIA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE - TEC

Introduction

The Blessed Pope John Paul once affirmed that, the future of humanity passes through the Family, this is because, the Family is the foundation, the primary living cell of not only the Church, but also of any society . Apart from this truth, the Family today faces many challenges coming out from different enemies of humanity, the challenges which prevent it from becoming Good News for the 3rd Millenium.

The challenges of the Family today.

There is a famous African saying which goes this way: How can you eat and finish the elephant? Yes piece by piece. This is, infact, what the enemies of humanity are doing. They are destroying humanity piece by piece. They want to destroy humanity by destroying the Family. They are all over the world and they would like to destroy the Family by promoting what can be called DEATH, yes, "death" of the Family. DEATH which in this context is an acronym of the following:

D= Divorce

E= Euthanasia or the culture of Death within the Family

A= Abortion

T= Total use of contraceptives

H= Homosexuality.

The above DEATH, which some years ago were unheard of in Africa, and in Tanzania in particular, in recent years they are being promoted by many organizations, in the name of defending human rights, rights of the minorities, safe motherhood and all sorts of "good names". The evil campaigns of these organisations to destroy the Family have reached the remotest villages in Africa and also in Tanzania, to the extent that people in the villages would lack even

pure and clean drinking water, but women will be given access to free means of total birth controls and even to abortion. All these evil practices are aimed at destroying the Family, the Society and consequently the Church. In this context, the Family needs to be protected through an apostolate so that it may become Good News for the 3rd Millenium.

Family Apostolate in Tanzania.

Family Apostolate in Tanzania is as old as the Church herself. Nevertheless, in recent years especially after the rise of different movements which aim at destroying the Family, there has been a need to have in place a well structured Family Apostolate, which will help to protect the Family so that it may continue to be the foundation of the Society and the Church, the primary cell where the Faith is lived and witnessed. Among many initiatives, for example, in 2006 the Conference started a Family Desk within the Lay Apostolate Department which in 2009 was raised to a full fledged Commission with the Bishop Chairman and a Priest as its Secretary. Apart from that, there is a National Family Council, composed of eight people: 1 Priest, 1 Religious, 2 Laity (man and woman) 4 People coming from different groups which are engaged in Family Apostolate: Couples For Christ, Marriage Encounter, Pro-Life Tanzania and UFATA (Uimarishaji wa Familia Tanzania i.e Strengthening of the Family in Tanzania). The work of this Council, which has the Bishop Chairman of the Commission for the Family at its top and Secretary of the Family Commission as its Secretary, is to advise the Conference on all issues related to the Family.

The Conference has also solicited the formation of Family Committees in each Diocese whose main function is to lobby for the Family both within and outside the Church. In the last three years, thanks to the financial assistance from MISSIO Germany, the Conference has been working hard to empower these Diocesan Family Committees.

Conclusion

It is our hope that all these initiatives of the Conference will help the Family in Tanzania to become Good News for the 3rd Millenium.

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