

# VI FAMILIES WORLD ENCOUNTER. BYSTANDERS OR PARTICIPANTS?

## Introduction:



### Dear Parents:

Thank you for allowing us into your home once again. **With God's help we begin another school year and the 10th anniversary of the SJS Family Bulletin. We wish to be in tune with the preparation of the VI Families World Encounter which will take place in Mexico City, on January 13th through the 18th, 2009.**

Each Families World Encounter has a specific theme that helps to look deeper into some aspects of the life and mission of Christian families.

The Holy Father chooses the theme for each Encounter and provides an opportunity for a true preparation through reflection so that families may grow in love, unity, faith, values, etc.

The theme that Pope Benedict XVI has chosen for the VI Encounter is: **“THE FAMILY AS FORMATOR OF HUMAN AND CHRISTIAN VALUES”**. Following this theme, we will continue to make a careful study of values as we did last school year 2007-2008, so that this VI World Encounter will help us to make of this year a very special opportunity for families to live with joy its own vocation and mission..

## Message:

The Families World Encounter is a convocation of families made by the Pope, every three years to celebrate the divine gift of family. It brings together hundreds of thousands of families of the five continents that gather to pray, dialogue, learn, share, and deepen the understanding of the role of the Christian family as “Domestic Church” and as the basis for evangelization.



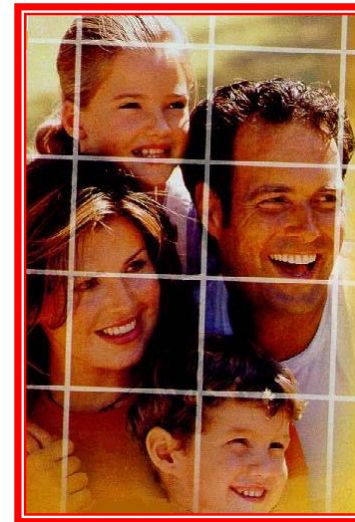
### LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY (Author unknown).

One hundred years ago, in an Oriental City, lived a man who carrying a burning candle in his hand walked down the dark streets one night. There was no moon so the whole city was extremely dark. As he proceeded in his journey he walked past a friend who recognized him as Guno, the blind man of the town and asked: **What are you doing Guno, why do you need to carry a burning candle if you are blind?**



To which the blind man responded: I am not carrying it to see where I am going. I know the darkness of these streets by memory. **I am carrying this light so that others can find the way when they see me... It is not only important for me to make use of this light; but others can make use of this light to find their path.**

Each one of us can light our own way and let others see us, even though others apparently do not need it. **To illumine the path for others is not an easy task...** Sometimes instead of being Light for others we make it harder for them to see their path... through discouragement, criticism, selfishness, lack of love, hatred, resentment. **It would be so beautiful if all of us would light the path for others!**



**«It is in the family where the future of Humanity lies.» John Paul II proclaimed when he announced the creation of the Families World Encounter.** The first encounter took place in Rome (Italy), in 1994; the second in Río de Janeiro (Brasil), en 1997; the third in Rome in 2000; the fourth in Manila (Philippines) in 2003; the fifth in Valencia (Spain) in 2006. México will be where the VI Families World Encounter will take place in January 2009.

**Pope Benedict XVI, believes it is urgent to transform the world, by having families that are united, happy and of deep faith who will teach values to their children, recognize life as a value and face the future with confidence.** He tells us: “As the first school of life and faith, and as “Domestic Church”, **family is called to teach the new generations about human and Christian values, so that enlightened by the light of truth and guiding its life having Jesus as model, they will produce well rounded personalities”.**

**Pope Benedict XVI affirms: «In this time, in which we can sense a frequent disassociation between what is said to be believed and everyday behavior, this Families World Encounter has as a goal to encourage Christian homes, in the formation of a good moral conscience that, strengthened by the grace of God, will help to faithfully follow His will that has been revealed through Jesus Christ and that He has planted in the most intimate recesses of the persons heart ».**

This historic moment points out the fact that many families have given up on what it means to be family and on their mission of forming the person; as a consequence we find relativism, subjectivism, sensuality and lack of values in society.

Reflection on values is “a science of social behavior”. There are many and varied social behaviors that spring from the family. It is here that the relationship between the “ego” and another “ego” takes place considering his or her dignity as a person.



The family must work incessantly in restoring the values that will give this world true humanness; a new life that prefers peace not war; dialogue not imposition or violence; Knowledge before ignorance; truth not lies; self mastery, rather than enslavement of the other; solidarity instead of selfishness; inclusion not exclusion and discrimination.



**LOGO OF THE VI FAMILIES WORLD ENCOUNTER:**

The logo has silhouettes which represent a family; the family is born out of love — symbolized by three hearts — ruled by faith which is represented by the cross.

The cross represents the presence of God as the support of family unity. Christ gives strength, light and life. The three hearts show that family unity comes from their relationship in love. The attitude of the family members is one of trust and happiness in the Lord. The family, the hearts and the cross are on a base that represents the world, to show global fraternity.

The logo also shows the family united in love and faith, which are fundamental to an authentic development of all human and Christian values; from the family comes the integral development of the person. The family is in the world but transcends the world thanks to human and Christian values.

There is a detail in the figure of the mother to show she is pregnant. This detail points out life as the fundamental and foremost value to be promoted, cared for and celebrated by the family. Finally, the green color stands for hope in the future of the family and Mexico's colors where the Encounter is to be held.

*Discuss:*

- What are the characteristics of your family which illumine the path for others?
- Which aspects of your family need to be transformed by human and Christian values; so that the Encounter can be an opportunity of Grace for your family?

**Bibliography:**

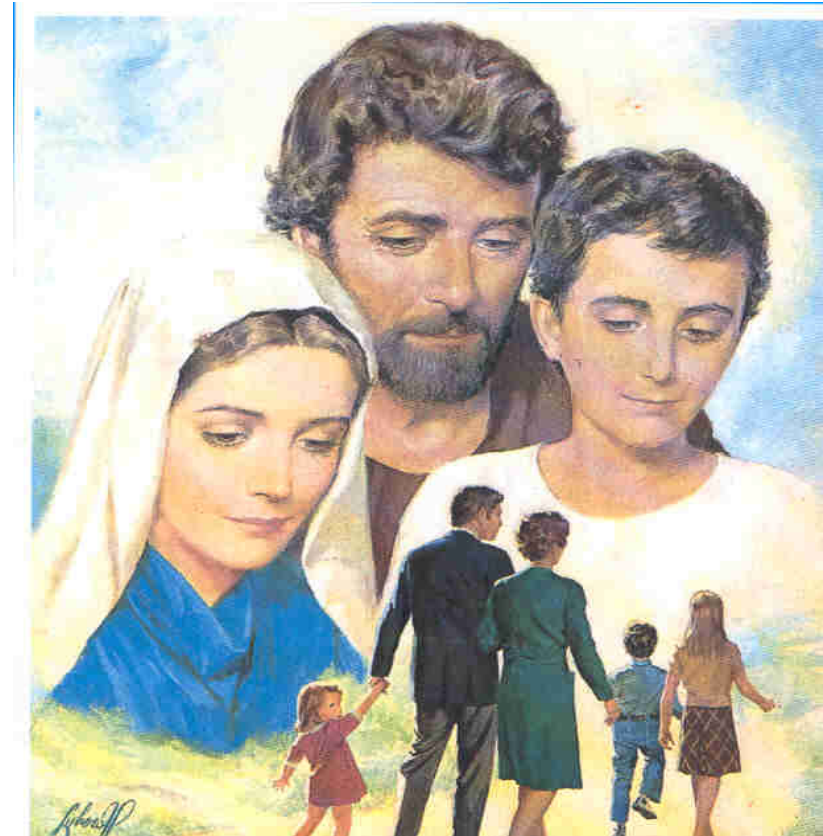
La familia formadora en los valores humanos y cristianos Dimensión Episcopal de Pastoral Familiar.  
(Subsidios formativos de preparación)

Bulletin Translation: Sr. Hilda Maria Reynoso, SJS



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 SEPTEMBER 2008 Siervas de Jesús Sacramentado  
 Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, 3173 Winnetka Dr. Bonita, CA  
[vocationsjs@yahoo.com](mailto:vocationsjs@yahoo.com)



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