

HOLY SEE

## The Vatican opens up to 'LGBT families'

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What is the difference between the family and the 'Amoris Laetitia family'? Until now it had naively been thought that the Amoris Laetitia Family Year, promoted by Pope Francis, was merely a way of addressing family issues in light of the post-synodal exhortation that insists on the need for pastoral priority. But the press conference on 31 May, organised by the Holy See to present the Tenth World Meeting of Families, to be

held in Rome from 22 to 26 June and which will also close the Amoris Laetitia Family Year, instead made it clear that we are facing an attempt to rewrite the very concept of family.

**The issue was evident in the reply** that Professor Gabriella Gambino, Under-Secretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, gave to journalist Giuseppe Rusconi (rossoporpora.org), who asked “whether this meeting would take place under the banner of ‘Love is Love’, whether the phrase ‘rainbow families’ would be accepted, whether there would be LGBT flags, and whether the ‘rainbow’ ones are families, according to you, or are they aggregations of another kind?” ([here you can see the video](#), minute 56:50). The question was not far-fetched, given what is going on in the Church (see the [claims of the German Synod](#), the ambiguities of the [Synod on Synodality](#), and the new appointment as Cardinal of the Bishop of San Diego, California, Robert W. McElroy, an open supporter of the LGBT cause in the Church) and after what happened at the [previous World Meeting of Families](#) in Dublin (2018), when among the speakers featured the American Jesuit Father James Martin to explain what the Church should do to welcome LGBT people.

**Even if Professor Gambino did not want to answer the questions directly**, her words are nonetheless very significant. She begins: “The meeting, as we know, is dedicated to the Amoris Laetitia family”, which already suggests that it is something different from the family as we know it: founded on marriage between a man and a woman and open to generating life. And indeed immediately afterwards she speaks of “promoting (...) a truly inclusive pastoral approach towards all”. She then goes on to emphasise the importance of “a pastoral approach that knows how to accompany everyone”, obviously with “an attitude of mercy” that is “an attitude of welcoming and accompaniment towards the Father's love”. And: “Beyond the themes that will be addressed, the idea is to promote processes of spiritual welcome and discernment”. And: “There are no recipes for all situations (...), the Church's task is to accompany so that each one of us learns to put Christ at the centre of our lives, in whatever situation we find ourselves”.

**The Translation of this clerical jargon:** “Yes, the meeting will be under the banner of ‘Love is Love’, there are many different forms of family and the Church provides some spiritual comfort to all, confirming each one on the path they have chosen. Then, for the time being, in order not to create strong reactions, we cannot state everything explicitly; we are starting a process; but it is clear that at the end of the process we expect the

recognition of all possible forms of family”.

**It is therefore clear that the neologism 'Amoris Laetitia family'** is a concept in direct opposition to the known concept of 'family'. And confirmation also comes from Gambino's second reply to Rusconi's response: intervening again, he asked for a more precise answer to his question: "I repeat," was her reply, "the theme of the family is addressed in the light of Amoris Laetitia”. In other words, let's give up defining what is and what is not family, what is true and what is false, what is right and good and what is wrong and evil: every road has some good in it.

**Here we are faced with the announcement of an anthropological revolution in the Church.** One cannot imagine anything more contradictory to the Magisterium of previous pontificates.

**Let's recall, for example, the great catecheses on the family given by St John Paul II in 1994,** also through the Sunday Angelus, to counter culturally the war on the family that had been unleashed at the UN Cairo International Conference on Population and Development. One of the most debated points at the time was precisely the attempt to introduce the concept of 'families' as opposed to 'family', with the clear aim of having homosexual unions recognised as a family. An ambiguous formula emerged then, but there too we were at the beginning of a process that has led to the concept of 'families' being taken for granted in our societies today.

**The clear impression given by Professor Gambino is that the 'Amoris Laetitia family'** is the ecclesial equivalent of 'families', all the more so since this intervention takes place in a context in which homosexual unions have already been widely accepted in the Church, albeit not equal to marriage between a man and a woman. It was Pope Francis himself, in an [interview broadcast on Tv2000](#) last 15 September, who pleaded the case of civil unions, while maintaining that they are "nothing to do with marriage as a sacrament, which is between a man and a woman". And in Italy, let us recall how on the occasion of the approval of the Cirinnà law, exactly six years ago, the newspaper owned by the Italian bishops, *Avvenire*, had already several times expressed that it was in favour of the recognition of civil unions, although not equating them to the family as defined by our Constitution.

**But where a union between persons of the same sex is considered a good thing to promote,** it is not clear why then it should not be fully recognised as a family; which is why sooner or later we will necessarily arrive at the full acceptance in the Church of all forms of union. Germany is simply the most advanced point in this process, a little

impatient for Rome's slowness, but nevertheless the path is the same.

**The process has therefore been underway for some time and the 'Amoris Laetitia family'** represents the breaking point with the Church's traditional teaching, which - it is right to remember, vis-à-vis a certain current narrative - is not about excluding people from the Church, but about clarifying the goal of the path of accompaniment.