

FAMILY ALBUM

10

Decisive
snapshots



1 AFFECTION

My father and my mother show us with their example the essence of true love. From them we learn to give ourselves to others, not because of what they have but because of who they are, fully and disinterestedly, loving them and accepting them just the way they are, with their virtues and their defects. Mum and Dad are for us a school of self-denial, affection and self-effacement.



2 COMMITMENT

My parents' wedding. A man and woman in love made a commitment to each other for life. From that moment on, that common bond has held primacy over their personal interests. Since then they have been building our family, day in, day out, with their mutual loyalty and fidelity.



3 FORMATION

Grandfather and grandson at the computer. Today's family, immersed in an ever-changing world, is in need of a continual and specialised formation suited to the individual circumstances of each of its members. This helps to bring about the family project.



4 COMMUNICATION

A family get-together. Communication within the family is the sum total of the efforts of every one of its members. All need to contribute through their initiative, optimism, capacity to listen to the others and willingness to reach a compromise and accept any disagreements calmly, not wishing to impose one's own views on everybody else all the time or to ridicule others when their opinions do not coincide with ours.

5 EXTENDED FAMILY AND FRIENDS

The extended family circle. A family realises its full potential when it knows how to establish ties of affection and friendship with the extended family made up of grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins, etc. and other families. These ties become a source of joy, of support in everyday life and of invaluable assistance in times of difficulty.



6 TRANSCENDENCE AND PURPOSE

Around the newly born. One more! The family finds its true purpose and transcends itself when it welcomes a new life in its midst. The family must remain faithful to the fundamental reason that gives meaning to its existence. Their faith and hope in a God whom they know and who knows them strengthen families of believers.



7 FAMILY BIOGRAPHY

The genealogical tree. The family is like a tree that carries on growing in space and in time, thanks to the sap from its roots. This sap is nourished by cherished family values that are permanent. The tree is watered every day with our respect for the family traditions and for those who went before us.



8 SHARED LEISURE TIME

A family stroll. Sharing our leisure time with the members of our own family and with friends through simple, non-costly and attractive activities of various types, contributes to family bonding. In those precious shared moments older and younger members of the family pick up new values and skills and the danger of becoming isolated is removed.



9 ORDER IN MATERIAL THINGS

The family clock. Order is a crucial virtue for any family. Order is required to work together, looking after the house and turning it into a home. Order is the rhythm of life of everyone in the family and demands a personal effort to harmonise the timetables of those still at school and those already in employment.



10 FACING CRISES AND DIFFICULTIES

Things do not always turn out well. Difficulties, great and small, present a challenge to any family. If faced together and with optimism that challenge can turn into an opportunity to strengthen all family members and foster the unity amongst them.

This family album is a memory of the *Family Watch* for the XVII International Family Congress: “The family: rights and responsibilities” (Rome, March, 23-25). *Family Watch* is an observatory of the *International Federation for Family Development*.



STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

**FAMILY
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