



Synod  
2021  
2023  
For a synodal Church  
communio | participatio | missio

## Reflection 8

*Following Clelia's Footsteps  
Toward the Heart of Jesus*

### 10th WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES – ROME 2022



#### *See with eyes raised to Heaven*

Pope Francis emphasizes that families have a mission to accomplish in the world. He exhorts them to journey together: "together as couples, together with other families, together with the Church."

"I think of the parable of the Good Samaritan who meets someone wounded and in need. He draws near to him, cares for him and helps him to resume his journey. That is what I want the Church to be for all of you! A Good Samaritan that draws near to you and helps you to continue your journey and *to take a step forward*, however small. Never forget that closeness is the "style" of God, closeness and tender love. I will now try to indicate a few "steps forward" that need to be taken together, by reflecting on the testimonies we have heard."

"Family life is not 'mission impossible'! By the grace of the sacrament, God makes it a wonderful journey, to be undertaken together with him and never alone."

"Each of your families has a mission to carry out in our world, a testimony to give. We the baptized are especially called to be 'a message that the Holy Spirit takes from the riches of Jesus Christ and gives to his people.' . . . Stop and listen. Let yourselves be changed by him, so that you too can change the world and make it 'home' for all those who need to feel welcomed and accepted, for all those who need to encounter Christ and to know that they are loved. We need to live with our eyes raised to heaven."

## **The Good Samaritan (Luke, 10: 30-37)**



*Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.*

*Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

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## **The Good Samaritan is central to the encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" of Pope Francis**

"The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the Good Samaritan" (FT 67). The Good Samaritan manifests the compassion and tenderness of God, shows us that fraternity is the best way to grow and live as individuals and societies, and helps us see ourselves as brothers and sisters in a common home.

The story of the Good Samaritan emphasizes, among other things, a frequent attitude of ours: omission, that is, the neglect or refusal to notice, to speak, to act, to help. How often have we ignored a need, avoided a poor person and his call for help. Maybe we turned away or changed course to avoid seeing or hearing. Often we are influenced by a culture of indifference and exclusion, many times incapable of compassion, and we are slow to respond to someone's pain. Jesus

“asks us not to decide who is close enough to be our neighbor, but rather that we ourselves become neighbors to all” (FT 80). It is as if he were saying, “Go and do likewise.” It is important for us to be clear about “our conviction of the inalienable dignity of each person, and our reasons for loving and accepting all our brothers and sisters” (FT 86).

The ancient invitation to “not do to others what you would not like done to you” is restated in a positive sense: “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Mt 7: 12). This call is intended for everyone, because God is Father and Mother to everyone.

Love and mercy embrace all, regardless of a wounded person’s social class or origin, “for love shatters the chains that keep us isolated and separate; in their place, it builds bridges. Love enables us to create one great family, where all of us can feel at home... Love exudes compassion and dignity” (FT 62).

To transform our hearts and our way of seeing and acting is the conversion to which we are called. The Samaritan does not ask himself who the wounded man is. His help is disinterested, generous, and real. We cannot define or predetermine the neighbor we need to help. He is simply the one you meet during the day and who sometimes needs support. Is there room in our hearts to draw near to men and women in need? Whoever they may be, whatever their origin, whatever their need may be? It means making Jesus’ words our own: to see, to have compassion, to draw near, to be neighbor, to bind wounds, to pour oil and wine, to place the person on our own beast, to take him to an inn, to take care, to offer two denaros.

We need to rebuild society, and this is done “by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbors, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good (FT 67).

“The parable clearly does not indulge in abstract moralizing, nor is its message merely social and ethical. It speaks to us of an essential and often forgotten aspect of our common humanity: we were created for

a fulfilment that can only be found in love. We cannot be indifferent to suffering; we cannot allow anyone to go through life as an outcast. Instead, we should feel indignant, challenged to emerge from our comfortable isolation and to be changed by our contact with human suffering. That is the meaning of dignity.” (FT 68)

... Through his compassion and actions the Good Samaritan transforms a site of aggression into ground on which to build a society where we are able to “see the other,” to “give our time to him,” to “dialogue and relate with each other,” to “meet.” Charity animates this action; it is a charity that goes beyond the purely sociological; it is a charity centered in a God we must love above all things and who is revealed in the neighbor we are to love as ourselves. (cf. Pope Francis, February 12, 2021)

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**MOTHER CLELIA**

Mother Clelia’s human and Christian journey was marked by great obstacles, suffering, hostility, misunderstanding, suspicion. But if we look at her with eyes of faith, we see her life as the perfect image of a disciple of Christ. ***“Open to me, O dear Jesus, Your most gentle heart, and make me find therein all that I desire.” “When divine love is truly in the heart, there arises a great desire to see God known, loved and served.”***

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- ***What “step forward” is asked of my family today?***
  - ***How do I help others as a Samaritan?***

**SHARING – TESTIMONIES**

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**Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you and bring the Gospel of salvation to all people. We want to tell you once again of our willingness. You give us the grace to persevere. Keep us, we pray, in your love now and all the days of our life. You are God and you live and reign with the Father, in union with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

