

Vatican City
October 27, 2016

Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family
Opening of the 2016-2017 Academic Year
Greeting to the Holy Father
Presented by Most Reverend Vincenzo Paglia
Grand Chancellor

Most Holy Father,

Thank you for choosing to open our Institute's 2016-2017 Academic Year in person. Celebrating the thirty-fifth Anniversary of the Institute's founding, we recognize the farsighted intuition of its founder Saint John Paul II, whose feast day we have just celebrated.

Holiness, your presence among us reinforces the encouragement you are giving to our Institute, encouragement you first gave us by calling for a more active cooperation with the Pontifical Academy for Life and with the new Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life. Harmonizing our activities with the activities of those institutions, which both aim at deepening the Christian vision of themes fundamental to the human condition, is the proper starting point for the renewed and more effective commitment to the Church's life and mission that the Lord is asking of us today.

At the Institute we are fully aware of how hard we must work to live up to the confidence you have in our undertakings, and I want to assure you, Holy Father, that we have already begun enthusiastic implementation of our development programs both at our main campus, located within the Lateran University, and at our subsidiary campuses around the world. The Institute's accomplishments of these last thirty-five years are not simply memories that inspire our gratitude, they are a legacy of experience and wisdom that offers reliable assurance that we will bring to fruition the development that the Church needs today.

The two Synod gatherings that dealt with the family showed clearly the opportunities and challenges faced today by the Church's mission and thus by our Institute. You, Holy Father, with your Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, have traced out the path we must follow to reach a deeper understanding of our task. And the vistas opened by the Jubilee of Mercy now drawing to a close will ever more surely inspire a missionary commitment in all we do.

Thank you again, Holy Father, for the sign of your benevolence that we welcome as a call to responsibility. We will stand with you, the Bishop of Rome, so that all over the world, and particularly through the work of our Institute, so close to you in such a special way, the beauty and power of the family and its divine origin is made manifest. In closing, Holy Father, we assure you of our prayers as we ask the Lord to bless you and keep you.