

Global Day of Parents Observed at the UN

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New York, United States—UPF co-sponsored an event at United Nations headquarters commemorating Global Day of Parents 2018.

The June 1 event, organized jointly by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN and the Universal Peace Federation, was titled “The Impact of Good Parents on Children and Society: The Many Benefits of Nurturing Children’s Integrity in the Home.”

After opening remarks by H.E. Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the permanent observer of the Holy See to the UN, each of the five speakers contributed significant insights into the essential roles and responsibilities of mothers and fathers in shaping the conscience and character of their children. The discussion stressed that a thriving and peaceful society, in fact, can be built only with parents’ engagement with and dedication to their children.

The expert speakers were Dr. Pat Fagan, the founder and director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute; Dr. Thomas Lickona, the director of the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs (Respect and Responsibility); Dr. Rima Salah, the chair of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium of UNICEF; Dr. Melissa Moschella, an assistant professor of medical ethics at Columbia University; and Shelly Locke, the CEO of the organization The Power of Mothers.

The Impact Of Good Parenting On Children And Society

**Opening Remarks of H.E. Archbishop Bernardito Auza
Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations
at the side event on the occasion of the Global Day of Parents, Entitled “The Impact of Good Parenting on Children and Society: The Many Benefits of Nurturing Children’s Integrity in the Home”
United Nations, New York, 1 June 2018**

Excellencies, Distinguished Panelists,

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

On September 17, 2012, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/292 proclaiming June 1 to be the annual Global Day of Parents, dedicated to honoring parents throughout the world for their selfless, life-long dedication to nurturing and protecting their children and helping their full maturation as human beings.

It gives me particular joy to welcome you, on this sixth commemoration of Global Parents Day, to this Conference on the crucial and positive impact that parents have on children and society that the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See is sponsoring together with the Universal Peace Federation.

The importance of moms and dads, and of their joint commitment in raising the next generation, cannot be overstated. The future of humanity depends on the how well moms and dads do in their mission as teachers in the “home school” where they form their children in so many essential human values, like socialization, trust, mutual respect and responsibility, education, hard work, affection, compassion, forgiveness, solidarity, and ethical development.

Good parenting is essential to achieve the biggest hopes that the international community strives to accomplish here at the United Nations. Whenever one visits the Security Council, one cannot but notice that in the center of Per Krohg's mural behind the chair of the President, we see an image of the family, with mother and father kneeling reverently before each other arm and arm, with a child resting at their feet peacefully holding a dove in his arms next to his heart, with a brother helping out a sister and another son seeming to take a rest from his work on fertile ground. This image is immediately above the phoenix showing how the world is to rise from the ashes of World War II. The message that Krohg is communicating is that the family is at the heart of peacebuilding. The good parenting of a committed mother and father who respect each other is essential for forming children with peaceful hearts, who help each other, who learn how to work and till the soil for peace.

Peace is the most fundamental of the four pillars of the United Nations, for without it the other pillars could not be achieved. But good parenting is essential likewise to the other three, which are development, the promotion and defense of human rights, and keeping international agreements and treaties.

With regard to the development necessary to lift people up out of poverty, the family is similarly the foundational building block to education, health, nutrition, the equality and promotion of women, and so many of the other SDGs. Respect for human rights based on human dignity flows from the way people learn respect for their family members, which is how most of us learn to treat others with fraternity and solidarity. It's in the home that people learn how to keep commitments, from the way moms and dads keep their commitments to each other and to them, and in the many means they use to train children in accountability by doing homework and chores, telling the truth and keeping their word.

As decisive as the work of parents is for the welfare of the world, however, the contributions of moms and dads to their children's present and future and to society as a whole do not get the attention and credit they deserve. An excessive individualism has led some to discount the crucial importance of familial bonds. Political ideologies focused obsessively on the State have made partisans fear other institutions and allegiances, like the most fundamental one of all, the family. The wounds that come from broken families and relationships can sometimes make people treat broken homes as the rule rather than the exception and therefore to ignore families altogether lest some be unintentionally offended.

This annual observance of the Global Day of Parents aims to restore familial bonds. This Global Day of Parents should serve, in particular, to highlight and acknowledge the contributions of moms and dads toward the good of children and society. The world will only be as strong as its families, and families will only be as strong as its parents. Peace on our planet begins with peace in the home. The sustainable development of our societies depends on the work of moms and dads collaborating to help each other raise not just kids but fully and integrally developed adults. Respect for human dignity and rights flows much more easily from the school of familial love. Since the future of the world passes by way of families today, parents and future parents need to be prepared, supported and encouraged to carry out their indispensable role, individually and mutually as a committed dynamic duo.

Today we have several speakers who will be able to help nourish our understanding of the importance of motherhood and fatherhood in the integral development of their children and society. They will speak from their scholarship as well as their personal experience as daughters and sons, moms and dads. They will help us to mark the Global Day of Parents in such a way that we will become, I hope, more grateful for the gifts we have received from the love of our own parents, and help us to see more clearly how important it is for us to prioritize care for mothers, fathers and their mutual collaboration in the work of the international community.

Thank you once again for your participation in today's event.