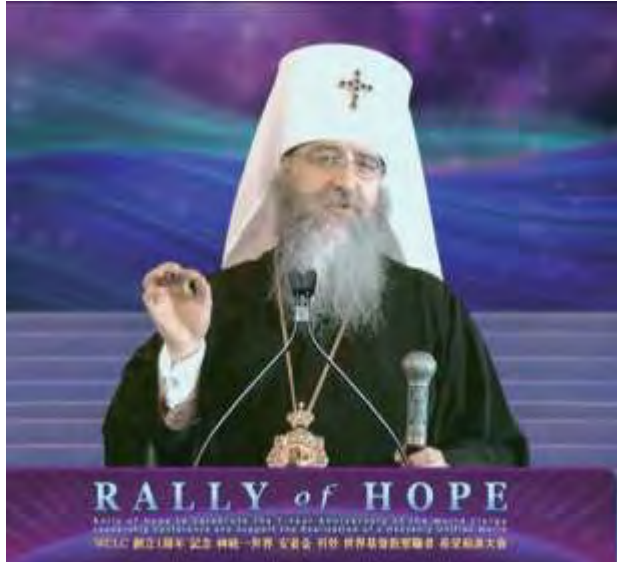


The Importance Of The Family As The Cornerstone Of The Church And Nation

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Rally of Hope to Celebrate the 1-Year Anniversary of the World Clergy Leadership Conference and Support the Realization of a Heavenly Unified World



It is a privilege and an honor for me as metropolitan archbishop of the Orthodox Church to address a few words on the importance of the family as the cornerstone of the church and nation in this the World Christian Leadership Conference event. In this presentation, I will include a small message on the matters of peace and family.

The family is not a collection of individuals, but a living and developing system whose members are essentially interconnected. A family perspective assumes that an individual lives connected to others by relationships, not in isolation. Among the most important of these relationships are familial ones. Family strengths lead to family health. Family strengths, and ultimately family health, develop because a family is both cohesive and

adaptive. The church, like employment centers and service organizations, works with families in fulfilling some basic family responsibilities, such as education, support, religion and value formation, religious practice, socialization, health care and social services. The church is also very much involved in social issues of direct importance to families, such as economics and nuclear disarmament. Consequently, the church must address the issue of its partnership with families.

The principles that apply to social institutions and to social policy apply to the church as well. What the church does and how it does it affect the unity, well-being, health and stability of families. Church leaders need to be aware of how the church's policies, programs, ministries and services can either help or hinder families in fulfilling their own basic responsibilities.

Besides affecting employment and service organizations and the church, changes in families also have affected the partnership that exists between families and the government, as reflected in public social policy. The family as a mediating structure needs to play a crucial role by interacting with society in the pursuit of the public good. When families are working well, they carry out responsibilities essential for the functioning of society.

When families are in trouble, the government must often act in their place. The government then establishes remedial programs for individuals in trouble, but at tremendous cost. Perhaps such trouble frequently could be prevented if all institutions worked to support family strengths and to develop services for individuals that consider families. The reason government policies and programs deserve specific attention when discussing partnerships between families and institutions is because they often set the direction for institutional services. In addition, and even more fundamental, the role of government in family life is becoming pervasive. Today, government policies and services have a tremendous effect on the functioning of families. They provide vital and essential support for families to help them fulfill their basic responsibilities.

Even two decades ago, over two hundred government programs had a direct or indirect impact on family life. Family is, undoubtedly, the cornerstone of a healthy society that cooperates well with the church and nation. Without family, we simply cannot have church or nation. The Orthodox Church has worked hard worldwide for centuries on this idea. It is perfectly aligned with the ideal of one family under God, which Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon promotes through UPF and the World Christian Leadership Conference. As a member of the Steering Committee, I send my deep recognition to the Mother of Peace for her hard work, particularly in this wonderful Rally of Hope, to spread these important messages to all humanity.