

## WFWP and UPF Italy Celebrate the UN International Day of the Family

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WFWP Italy in collaboration with Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Italy celebrated the "International Day of the Family" on May 14, a day proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993. The event began with a quote from the UN statement read by Mr. Zonato, President of UPF Italy. He read, "The family is the fundamental social group and the natural environment for the development and well-being of all its members, particularly children." Mr. Zonato then explained UPF's vision of peace, in which the family represents a major cornerstone. This statement opened the roundtable discussion centered on the theme "Which Family...Towards Which Future."

Ms. Baldini, journalist and moderator of the event, recalled Pope Francis' words at the States-General of Birth urging to consider children as a gift. She then quoted Dr. Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Co-Founder of Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI): "The family is the school, where love for humanity is taught and learned. When children who have grown up in the love of their parents go out into the world, they care for people in need, as they have learned in their own homes." Ms. Baldini also added that the family is "the core of society, where we learn the values that shape us into human beings."

Ms. Nistri, President of WFWP Italy, stated that "without family and children there is no renewal of development, no economy and no future," stressing the urgent need for this institution to be supported through economic policies and appropriate structures, especially concerning women's work. She also spoke of motherhood as an opportunity for enrichment and growth, that, just like fatherhood, enables the development of a sense of responsibility towards others, which in turn benefits the world of work. Ms. Nistri concluded by emphasising the value of affective relationships in shaping young people's character, which is also the best way to prevent the phenomenon of violence against women."

Ms. Bramanti, Professor of Family Sociology at the Catholic University of Milan, explained how "most Italians, young people included, consider family the most important aspect of their lives, and yet marriage is in free fall." She shared about the emerging phenomenon of free unions, as an alternative to the formalization of the marriage bond. Ms. Bramanti expressed her hope that "this gap can be bridged by an overall commitment of society."

Mr. Sesta, Professor of Moral Philosophy and Bioethics at the University of Palermo, compared the family to water, "which is among the simplest and most vital things," saying that "more often than not, we realize its importance when it is no longer there." On the topic of family conflicts, he noted how "the family is the heart of society, the last refuge. The crisis that tears apart family ties affects society at its most intimate core."

Lastly, Ms. Ronchi, Family and Teen coach, shared the importance of families instilling values into the youth. She quoted Rudolf Steiner: "In the first seven years we have to nurture children with goodness; in the second seven years with beauty, so that in the third seven years they can see the truth through the eyes of goodness and beauty". She concluded by saying "the family has changed, but in its heart, it must always remain firm in its values."

The event was followed by an engaging Q and A session.