



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE TRIENNIAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY
ORGANIZED BY THE ANTILLES EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE (AECYA)**

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Good morning!

I affectionately greet you young people who want to transform the Caribbean family. It's a big job! You obviously have courage and want to join the effort. So go ahead!

It is a challenging issue; you are young. But I do wonder: are you young people, or young people who have grown old? Because if you are young people who have grown old, you cannot accomplish anything! You have to be youthful 'young people'! It takes all the strength of youth to be able to change things. And the first thing you need to do is check to see if you have gotten too comfortable. It's not a good thing if you have. For those who are "comfortable" you must jump into action and join the effort.

You want to change things; you want to move forward. You have taken seriously the indications of the [Post-Synodal Exhortation on the Family](#), and you want the family to move forward, in order to transform the family of the Caribbean. You want to transform it today for tomorrow: working in the present to build the future. And today, if you want to grasp the present, you must know how to describe it, how to understand it, in order to face tomorrow. To make the journey from today to tomorrow, you need the teaching on the family, and you can find it in Chapter Four of the Exhortation: the heart of it is there. Study it, examine it, and you will have the guidelines you need to move forward.

It is for today and tomorrow: but we also need yesterday. We cannot imagine tomorrow without considering the past. We can't contemplate the future without reflecting on the past. You are getting ready to transform something that has been given to you by your elders. Your history

comes from yesterday, your traditions come from yesterday. You have roots. And this is what I want to focus on for a moment: you can't do anything in the present, or in the future, if you are not rooted in the past, in your history, in your culture, in your family; if you don't have deep-seated roots. It's from your roots that you will get the strength to continue. None of us, neither you nor I, was manufactured in a laboratory: we have a history, we have roots. And everything we do, the results we achieve, the beauty we create in the future, all comes from those roots.

A poet concludes his great poem with this verse: "Everything the tree produces, derives from what is beneath it". Look back, so as to have roots; refer to your grandparents and your elders. Talk to them. And then bring it all with you into the future. To transform: but there you will have roots, the strength to transform the family. It is a transforming harmony. We cannot transform without harmony.

I told you that the heart of *Amoris Laetitia* is in Chapter Four. How to experience love. How to live the love of the family. Discuss Chapter Four among yourselves. There, you will find much strength to go forward and to transform things. And don't forget something else: love has a strength all its own. And love never ends. Saint Paul says: Faith and hope will end when we are united with the Lord, but love will continue with Him (cf. 1 Cor 13:13). You are transforming something that is for all eternity. It is precisely this strength of love that will remain forever. You have a lot of work to do! Keep going. May God bless you. I pray for you, and I ask you please do not forget to pray for me. *Adiós.*