



**GREETING TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE DIOCESAN FAMILY DAY  
CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (TANGIER) MAY  
25-26, 2024**

**IN THE IMAGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY, LET US BE CHRISTIAN FAMILIES,  
WITNESSES OF GOD'S MERCY, AND ENGAGED WITH THE CHURCH**

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Lord give you peace.

As the pastor of the diocesan Church of Tangier, I greet you with immense joy; it is a great happiness for me to be able to express to you through this video a cordial and fraternal welcome in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the head and mother of all the Catholic communities of the archdiocese.

As you know, a recent surgery, from which I am recovering, does not allow me to be physically with you, sharing the richness of this Meeting. Know that always, but especially during the celebration of the Diocesan Family Day, the Christian families of the archdiocese hold a privileged place in my prayer and in the celebration of the Eucharist.

I ask the Lord to accomplish in each family what you express through the theme of the Day: **IN THE IMAGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY, LET US BE CHRISTIAN FAMILIES, WITNESSES OF GOD'S MERCY, AND ENGAGED WITH THE CHURCH.**

**1.** The family, every family, is the fundamental cell upon which all society rests; it is in the family that the foundations of the person are forged; the education and values transmitted and received in the family during childhood and adolescence accompany the person throughout their life, largely shaping their personality and way of acting. When families are "healthy," the entire society is strengthened and enriched.

**2.** But you are not just "families," you are "Christian families," families that, sharing with all other families the matrimonial love open to parenthood and the care and education of children, have the additional particularity of being "Christian families," that is, families that, fortified by the grace received in the sacrament of marriage, look to the Holy Family of Nazareth: Saint Joseph, the Virgin Mary, and Jesus as a model on which to shape your own family life.

**3.** As "Christian families," having at the center of your lives the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, sustained by the strength and grace of the Holy Spirit, and walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life," you want to be in Moroccan society "WITNESSES OF GOD'S MERCY," a mercy that becomes visible and tangible in the love that leads Jesus Christ to give his own life for us, opening through his

passion, death, and resurrection, the doors to achieve communion with God, which will be fully and definitively realized in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Being witnesses of God's mercy manifested in Christ Jesus is the challenge that the Christian families of the Archdiocese of Tangier have as their task and mission. Completely immersed in the Moroccan society of which you are a part, by word and even more by life, be credible signs of God's merciful love; may your words and actions show you as kind, cordial, close, participative, friendly, supportive...

**4.** But we know well that in our families we will live our Christian life well, nurturing it and bringing it to perfection only if we remain within the Church. Through baptism, each of us has been incorporated as living members into the Body of Christ, which is the Church; only firmly grafted onto this Body can we have life; only by feeling ourselves as Church and **ENGAGED IN AND WITH THE CHURCH** can we be credible Christian witnesses of "God's mercy."

The synodal work undertaken for months in the archdiocese to develop the **DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN** finds all its meaning here, allowing us, in communion with Pope Francis and the universal Church, to specify what the priorities, objectives, and mediations are that we want to promote in the Archdiocese of Tangier so that all: priests, members of consecrated life, and laypeople, can be here and now **"WITNESSES OF GOD'S MERCY AND ENGAGED WITH THE CHURCH."**

Dear brothers and sisters, it is with great joy that I share these words of encouragement and support with you. I wholeheartedly thank all the Christian families of the Archdiocese of Tangier for their daily commitment to living the Gospel in situations that are not always easy. I particularly thank all the families present at this Diocesan Day, bringing not only their presence but also their reflections. May God, rich in mercy, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you abundantly.

I do not want to end my words without expressing special gratitude to the members of the Diocesan Delegation of Family and Youth who, with so much affection and dedication, have prepared and made possible this Diocesan Family Day. To all, I wish a Day full of joy and spiritual fruits.

**+Fr. Emilio Rocha Grande, ofm**

**Archbishop of Tangier**