



**Message from the President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops  
National Family and Life Week  
(7-14 May 2023)**

Dear Catholic families,

On behalf of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), and with the Standing Committee for Family and Life, I warmly extend an invitation to families, parishes, dioceses and faith communities to celebrate together **National Family and Life Week, from 7 May to 14 May 2023**.

Last summer, at the 10<sup>th</sup> World Meeting of Families, Pope Francis proclaimed a special call to families worldwide. He said, *“Dear families, become missionaries in the ways of the world! Do not walk alone! ... Announce with joy the beauty of being family! ... Be families with big hearts! Be the welcoming face of the Church!”*.

Inspired by Pope Francis’s enthusiastic message, the 2023 celebration of the National Week for Life and the Family has for its theme Jesus’ words **“Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34)**. This annual Week of prayer, reflection, and action dedicated to family and life is meant to be a springboard for greater attention to the pastoral care for persons in our local faith communities. Guided by the action-oriented words of the Gospel of John, the CCCB invites all of the baptized faithful to witness to the Church’s accompaniment of families. Together, let us recognize the challenges that affect families today and discover concrete and creative ways to support and accompany one another in tenderness, joy, and love as a family of families.

The CCCB Standing Committee for Family and Life, in tandem with its corresponding Office, have developed a Pastoral Toolkit around this year’s theme, highlighting a different focus for each day. The Catholic faithful are invited to explore the daily prayer intentions, activities for the family, a social media campaign based on related saints, as well as pastoral initiatives that support families through all stages of life. Dioceses, parishes, and Catholic groups are invited to implement the toolkit when developing local pastoral initiatives for National Family and Life Week, hoping that the provided resources will be an inspiration for pastoral planning throughout the year.

May the joy of the Risen Christ continue to be a transformative source of love, renewal, strength and mercy for families across our country.

Sincerely yours,

+ Raymond Poisson

Bishop of Saint-Jérôme-Mont-Laurier  
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

29 March 2023