

## UPF Bergamo, Italy: Individual and Social Value of Family - City Hall of Paladina

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"The Individual and Social Value of the Family" this was the theme of the awareness evening organized at the Civic Hall of the municipality of Paladina (BG) by UPF Italia (Universal Peace Federation).

The **mayor Gianmaria Brignoli** started the evening with his greetings to the public and expressing his appreciation for the UPF proposal that was favorably received by the municipal administration offering its patronage.

This was followed by **Carlo Zonato, president of UPF Italy**, who thanked those present and the mayor for the opportunity of this meeting. He declared that, for UPF, a non-governmental organization accredited to the United Nations with general consultative status and present in 190 countries around the world, family solidity and affectivity are among the founding values in the vision of peace that UPF itself promotes. The more harmonious, motivated, formed and supported the family dimension is, the more it contributes to forming people oriented to the good and to the greatest social harmony. In this perspective, the family represents a strategic value as an irreplaceable link between the maturation of heart and character of the individual person and the objective of greater social cohesion to foster the culture of peace.

The theme of the evening was then deepened by **Giuseppe Russo, member of the FFWP education department**. He expressed his concern for the various difficulties that the family is going through both on the material level but in a particular way for having lost, over time, the awareness of how important it is as an essential nucleus of affections and relationships. Through some statistical data he highlighted how family breakdown brings with it concrete problems on the social level. He then went on to develop a series of considerations to indicate how necessary it is to re-evaluate and support the family as a privileged place to mature the personal experience of life and growth of all its members from the point of view of maturity of heart and construction of one's own character.

The central point was the deepening of the four levels in the experience of love: filial, fraternal, conjugal, and parental love. These concrete and daily life experiences represent a fundamental path to develop the personal ability to love and be loved and achieve harmony and balance. An essential requirement is to be able to place at the center of the dimension and family relationships what he defined as "True Love", the desire to live for the good and joy of the other components. If the family is oriented, with the contribution of all, towards this perspective as a school of Love and Harmony, it will no longer be a utopia but becomes a concrete opportunity for self-formation, affective maturity and personal fulfilment.