

UPF Buenos Aires, Argentina celebrates the International Day of Families 2018

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Buenos Aires, Argentina -- The cities of San Clemente and Haedo in Buenos Aires celebrated the International Day of Families (1) by recognizing couples who have been married for 25 years or more. This event, which has been held annually for the past seven years, is a UPF-Argentina initiative aimed to promote family values, strengthened by the heartwarming and enriching experiences of all couples.

Each married couple was presented with a framed diploma (2), the autobiography *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen* and other gifts. At the end of the program, the married couples cut a cake and shared a light meal with their relatives and guests. All participants received a gift that included quotes from different philosophical and faith traditions on the historical, spiritual, and social significance of families (3) and a copy of the Declaration of the 2018 International Day of Families by UPF Argentina (4).

The UN General Assembly decided that the International Day of Families was to be observed each year on May 15. This year's theme is: "*Families and inclusive societies*," associated with the Sustainable Development Goal 16, which promotes "*the importance of building peaceful, inclusive societies to achieve sustainable development*."

It was an amazing opportunity to strengthen the sacred bond acknowledged by religions and to consider family as a divine institution, which is currently being challenged by an individualistic, materialistic culture.

On May 27, six couples who have been married between 26 and 53 years were recognized at the Retirement Community Talas del Sur in San Clemente del Tuyú, Buenos Aires. The couples were: Mr. Hugo Eduardo Castellani and Mrs. Estela Lujana Reyna; Mr. Nicolás Czopko and Mrs. María Rosa Rodríguez; Mr. Juan Sorrentino and Mrs. María Ernesta Palagano; Mr. Carlos Eduardo Feraudo and Mrs. Teresa Zulema Díaz; Mr. Luis Javier Olivera and Mrs. Graciela Susana Rossi; and Mr. Javier Antonio Cicero and Mrs. Andrea Margonari. The session was concluded with a prayer by Father Carlos Melamed and a musical performance by Hugo Coria.

The event was held at the request of Peace Ambassador Marta Formichella, who was the emcee, along with the Retirement Community Talas del Sur. Furthermore, the event was supported by the following organizations: FFWPU-Argentina, WFWP-Argentina, Mujeres por un Mundo de Paz (Women for a Peaceful World), Art Workshop Talleres de Arte y Algo Más, Academy Salsa y Sentimiento, El Espejo del Alma, Lu Mar Construcciones, Toda la Costa, FM 106.9 Radio Malvinas, Radio Program Humanos al Aire Mentas Abiertas, Radio Program Esperanza de Vida, and Radio Program La Mañana Nuestra.

Representatives from Buenos Aires travelled to San Clemente for the occasion: Laura Correa, wife of FFWPU-Argentina's President, UPF Secretary-General Miguel Werner and his wife Alba Luz Tangarife, and members of the UPF Peace Council: Marité Herrera and her husband Luis Campos, Juan Maffioli and

his wife Gladys Gray, Eduardo Corales and his son Emiliano, and Sergio Castellón and Rosetta Conti, President of WFWP-Argentina. They presented diplomas and gifts to all participants.

On June 2, UPF-Argentina celebrated the International Day of Families at a Community Club in Haedo (Morón, Buenos Aires). The event was requested by Peace Ambassadors Margarita Duré and Horacio Castellón, and representative of the Community Club Cristian Martínez.

The event recognized couples who have been married for more than 25 years: Juan Carlos Heredia and Viviana Yfran; Mariano Acevedo and Reina Orieta; Luis Urso-Rosa and Lía Garay; Eduardo Miguel Venosta and Julia Lopardo; Carlos Alberto Buccaro and Graciela Firmapaz; Carlos Ernesto Ponce and María Rosa Díaz; Rubén Cardozo and Mirta Correa; Ramón González and Marisa Lastoria; and Ireneo Ruíz Díaz and Marcela González.

Sergio Castellón, member of the UPF Peace Council and member of the FFWPU Governing Board, spoke about the different roles in a marriage. "I know it is not easy, but it is possible," said María Pires, from the Family Department of the FFWPU, after the cake cutting, "We constantly learn and evolve (...) we develop our hearts, we give love (...) this is overwhelming, it is beautiful." The artistic performance was in charge of the singer Sandra Mamani.

This is the second year we have celebrated the International Day of Families in Haedo, organized by the Community Club in Haedo and UPF, and supported by FFWPU-Argentina and WFWP-Argentina.



QUOTES:

1) The International Day of Families, designated by the UN, is celebrated each year on May 15 to "raise awareness of the role of families in promoting early childhood education and lifelong learning opportunities for children and youth." This is an amazing opportunity to greet, recognize, and congratulate married couples, parents and families.

2) Content of the diploma:

"For promoting an example of commitment and values such as selflessness, empathy, mutual respect, dialogue, solidarity, patience, cooperation, and love. For recognizing family as the natural realm of growth and education of children, the school of coexistence, the basic unit of society, a divine institution, and the foundation of national and global peace."

3) Thoughts related to the historical, spiritual, and social significance of families:

"A society and a family are like a pile of stones. If you remove one stone, the pile will collapse." **The Talmud**

"When individual families have learned kindness, then the whole nation has learned kindness." **Confucius**

"The future of humanity passes through the family." **Pope John Paul II**

"No one can think that the weakening of the family as that natural society founded on marriage will prove beneficial to society as a whole." **Pope Francis**, "Amoris Laetitia"

"Families are the starting point for the building of peace." **Sun Myung Moon**

"The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State." **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN), Article 16**

4) Declaration of the 2018 International Day of Families by UPF Argentina (*)

On September 20, 1993, the UN General Assembly decided that the International Day of Families was to be observed each year on May 15 (Resolution 47/237). This year's theme is: "Families and inclusive societies," associated with the Sustainable Development Goal 16, which promotes "the importance of building peaceful, inclusive societies to achieve sustainable development." UPF Argentina celebrates this day and shares the following Declaration:

FIRST: UPF Argentina recognizes the family as the microcosm of the global community. Once the world finally arrives to an age in which sustainable peace and harmony can be enjoyed among peoples and cultures, this coexistence will be based on that basic unit, humanity's heritage. In other words, a functional family is essential to building a healthy society, and is a significant element for reconciliation and peace.

SECOND: Regardless of any conditions of race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, and religious belief, we are all members of a certain family. Family is universal. Even more important, family is the school of love and ethics. Through experiences in our families, we learn how to value all the other relationships in our society, which is our bigger human family, and with friends, neighbors, coworkers, colleagues, and strangers. Moreover, families can help dissolve old resentments that fuel civil, tribal and religious conflicts.

THIRD: A faithful marriage, and harmony among parents, form the backbone of families and becomes essential for the growth, education, and stability of children. Solid, healthy and loving families help protect society from violence and crime, drugs and corruptions; as well as the spread of infections such as HIV/AIDS. Even more important, family is the school of love and ethics and represents a substantial foundation for human development and social progress.

FOURTH: The family has successfully adapted to changes throughout history. It has survived revolutions and empires, and it has prevailed despite the economic and social turbulence in many societies. This is called adaptability; nonetheless, nowadays it is being threatened by a range of social, economic, cultural, political and ideological situations. This is the time to strengthen the family. To restore the family is a way of addressing the spread of social and civil problems that desolate this world.

FIFTH: Everlasting peace will not be settled just with the establishment of laws supported by the State and with the cooperation of social organizations. All of this has to be ensured as a basic human right, promoting awareness of human solidarity as a family, as brothers and sisters that share a moral and spiritual heritage. In short, as one universal family under the same God.

For this reason, UPF Argentina celebrates the International Day of Families, with 2018 marking the twenty-fourth anniversary of the International Day of Families.

Argentina, May 15, 2018

(*) In 1993, the UN General Assembly designated May 15 as the International Day of Families (resolution 47/237, September 20). In 1989, the General Assembly proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family (resolution 44/82) as a way to "raise awareness, increase understanding and promote policies that improve the position and well-being of the family."