



## 2025 MARFAM FAMILY YEAR PLANNER for MARFAM 30 Theme: JUBILEE 2025 IN OUR WORLD, A FAMILY OF FAMILIES



### OVERVIEW AND EXPLANATIONS OF MONTHLY THEMES.

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Pope Francis: LS=Laudato Si. AL=Amoris Laetitia FT=Fratelli Tutti. LD=Laudate Deum. DN=Dilexit Nos. Jub25= Jubilee 2025.

**OVERVIEW of YEAR THEME:** Now it is 2025. 2024 has left us many memories action, successes and joys as well as disappointments, corruption and crime but with gratitude to God and a great need for hope for the future. The 2025 Jubilee Year will allow us and our families to participate as Pilgrims of Hope in our relationships with God, one another and with creation. These themes are incorporated into the monthly calendar themes which are related to the various areas of family life and liturgical seasons and readings. Particular issues e.g. gender-based violence which persists, are addressed from a family perspective as they impact on all members. War still affects us all directly or indirectly. Weather and climate too are relevant and can all be considered negatively or from the perspective of hope, a present and a future view. The family focus combined with a vision of integral ecology, Becoming Eco-Friendly Families and becoming Pilgrims of Hope are built into THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY by way of quotations from Pope Francis. Marriage and family - *Amoris Laetitia - The Joy of Love*. Integral ecology - *Laudato Si, Care of our Common Home + Laudato Deum, Fratelli Tutti* on social friendship *Dilexit nos* – the Sacred Heart of Jesus and *Spes non Confundit* - Jubilee 2025. The **THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY**, using the SEE-JUDGE-ACT approach are aimed at families, individuals and groups for reflection and faith sharing ideally using the synodal dialogue methodology. They are produced monthly and distributed by email to various persons and groups and published daily on [www.marfam.org.za](http://www.marfam.org.za). They are emailed to subscribers on request and posted on social media and by whatsapp. Send requests to receive a personal email to [info@marfam.org.za](mailto:info@marfam.org.za) or whatsapp to +27 82 5521275.

**CARE FOR CREATION with LAUDATO SI and LS ACTION PLATFORM** with its 7 goals and sectors, e.g. the family sector, are included. **RESOURCES:** Weekly e-newsletters, various booklets on particular family topics and for liturgical seasons, workshops and programmes are offered on request on CARING FOR PARISH FAMILIES, in general or specific themes. Monthly calendar themes can be used in parishes in general evangelization, family ministry, J&P & catechetics +

**A WORD ABOUT MARFAM 30+.** Founded in late 1994 during the 1<sup>st</sup> UN International Year of the Family we shared a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the UN International Year of the Family +30 and the theme FAMILIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE. A family focus is applied widely to families of all kinds, responding to societal changes resulting in the growing diversity of family forms of marriage, parenting, sexuality and orientation. Pope Francis strongly promotes love, family life, and recognises all people and families everywhere, of Christian and of other religions. His broad emphasis on integral ecology is also taken up in MARFAM resources, programmes, Radio Veritas, parish visits and retreats for promoting and building family spirituality at home.

**JANUARY. Family Beginnings.** In the beginning, before the world, the sun, moon, stars, animals, plants and humankind were created there was only God, as Trinity, a community of love. God had a passion to create, to share and to love, and so every created thing came into being. This desire for creation and co-creation was implanted into every creature and through their reproductive ability our world continues to evolve. Humankind, as stewards of creation, take responsibility for care of all the families of creation. This month we can reflect on family beginnings everywhere. How well have we cared for creation? How can we respond to the impact of our harmful

behaviour on the earth and to its creatures? Can we resolve to begin again, to love and renewal in every area of our lives? In the context of the Jubilee of Hope how can we as families be signs of hope to all of creation with the help of the Laudato Si Action Platform family sector.

**Pope Francis:** *As never before our common destiny begs us to seek a new beginning. Let ours be a time remembered for awakening a new reverence for life, a firm resolve to achieve sustainability, quickening of the struggle for justice and peace and the joyful celebration of life. LS207 Earth Charter. May the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the door of our salvation.*

**FEBRUARY. Love gives Families life.** God, the creator, is a lover and God's love, as Trinity, is life-giving, creating life, sustaining and renewing creation. Our task and gift as human beings and life-givers is co-creation with God, from conception to natural death, nurturing relationships and caring for children. By its nature, of total and lifelong commitment, marriage is the ideal love relationship. Love of nature and creation sustain life in its various forms. The human and divine love of the Sacred Heart are love experiences for reflection. **Pope Francis:** *Love always gives life. The couple in giving themselves to one another, not just themselves, but also the reality of children, a living reflection of their love. AL165. Openness to life and responsible parenthood is the design that the Creator has implanted in the hearts and bodies of men and women, a mission that the Lord has entrusted to spouses and to their love. Jub25. Loving human relationships are mirrored and carried forward in care for creation. Caring for trees and rhinos and yet rejecting unborn human life and the needs of the destitute and poor is not fully lifegiving. Every creature is the object of the Father's tenderness.. LS 77.*

**MARCH. Human Rights are Family Rights. Lenten, Holy Week and Easter.** The right to life should be paramount and in some form it is present in most Constitutions: the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the Church's Charter of Family Rights. Human life, as individuals, but also as family units, is precious from the first moment of existence until natural death. Rights extend to safety and protection from harm for all. Concern for animal and plant life is a growing biodiversity issue. We understand "Extinction means forever". A "culture of life" approach focuses on the perspective of justice, also of love and positive relationships, as everything is connected. This focus on the common good, life and love which are very vulnerable can be taken up during Lent for reflection and action. **Pope Francis:** *Families and homes go together. We insist on the rights of the family and not only of individuals. Families have the right to count on an adequate family policy from public authorities. LS 44. The rights of some to free enterprise and market freedom cannot supersede the rights of peoples and the dignity of the poor, or respect for the natural environment, for to make something our own, it is only to administer it for the good of all. FT 122*

**APRIL. God is Family. Eastertide.** God, as Trinity is family, the perfect community of love. Every human family, as individuals and a unit, is an image of God, called to mirror the relationship of the Trinity. St Francis in his Canticle of the Creatures praises God: "We praise you Lord for all your creatures, brother sun, sister moon, brother fire, sister water, mother earth and all creation. To you O Lord do they belong, you created them and they bear your likeness." How has that image of the Trinity been disfigured, as fire, water and wind are today

such destructive forces? Humankind is especially gifted with a power of understanding, to love but to hurt and to forgive, because of love.

**Pope Francis:** *The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fulness of God already attained by the risen Christ. All creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival which is God. LS83. In the family, called a domestic church individuals enter upon an ecclesial experience of communion among persons which reflects, through grace, the mystery of the Holy Trinity. AL86*

**MAY. Parents form Families.** Whether it is a study of biology, human physiology or spirituality, the gift of co-creation everywhere in nature, should be recognized as one of God's greatest gifts. Male and female in nature, a man and woman, ideally in a loving committed relationship, continue God's creation and its sustenance and nurturance. **Laudato Si week** and Christian Unity week between Ascension and Pentecost can incorporate a co-creation theme. All parents have the task of forming and educating their offspring to prepare them for adulthood. The ideal of the love of their father and mother for each other is important for children. Effective parenting is amongst the most complex relationships today, recognizing good and dysfunctionality in family relationships. **Pope Francis:** *The gift of a new child entrusted by God to a father and a mother, begins with acceptance, continues with lifelong protection and has as its final goal the joy of eternal life. God allows parents to choose the name by which he himself will call their child for all eternity. AL166. Only if we devote time to our children, speaking of important things with simplicity and concern and finding healthy ways for them to spend their time will we be able to shield them from harm, prepare them to confront the risk of aggression, abuse and drug addiction. AL 260.*

**JUNE. Children belong in Families.** Birth, childhood and growth into adolescence are the most vibrant stages in all of creation, human, animal and plant. Growth and regrowth too can often be stressful and conflictual. Ideally in a family first of all the young need conscious protection, love, care and support, to monitor and direct their youthful energy towards full and responsible maturity. **Pope Francis:** *It is true that the difficulties youth experience in their own family can lead them to ask whether it is worthwhile to start a new family, to be faithful and to be generous. I say that it is worth your every effort to invest in the family, there you will find the best incentives to mature and the greatest joys to experience and share. Letter to youth*

**JULY. Grandparents are families' roots.** Old age is increasingly recognized with respect in many cultures and families where they are guarded by their offspring and the wider community, in animal and also in human society. Grandparents belong in families and are its historical memory. Not all are elderly, many are active in their own lives, while many others play a great role in the lives of their children, practically and spiritually, Pope Francis has made the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in July a special day of celebration of Grandparents and the Elderly, but the whole month can be dedicated to their needs, conscious that violence towards the elderly is too common. **Pope Francis:** *Very often it is grandparents who ensure that the most important values are passed down to their grandchildren and many people testify that they owe their initiation into the Christian life to their grandparents. AL 192. May they experience gratitude and the children encouragement*

**AUGUST. Sexuality, a Family Gift.** God looked on his creation and was found it to be good. Through the sexual reproductive capability in almost every life form ongoing creation continues. Because of the special attributes of humans, including free will, human sexuality is a special gift and blessing in its most profound expression in marriage. This ideal is often poorly presented and understood as sex and sexuality are still often taboo subjects or seen mainly from a problematic perspective. The consequences of sin have resulted in gender-based violence, pornography and abuse. Gender-related changes and the presence of LGBTIQ+ persons is a social reality today which is not always accepted. Complementary and equality of men and women is of growing importance in every society. **Pope Francis:** *In assessing the environmental impact of any project, little attention*

*is paid to studying reproductive patterns and some species face extinction. LS35. Each person, regardless of sexual orientation ought to be respected in his or her dignity and treated with consideration. Every sign of unjust discrimination must be avoided, particularly any form of aggression and violence. AL 250*

**SEPTEMBER. Our World of Families and Season of Creation.** A newer insight in Church thinking is Care of creation. We, the various forms of the human family, with different religions, political ideologies and experiences of wealth and poverty are the greatest threat to our world's security and stability today. Every other family in creation will suffer because of our actions. Is this the heritage we want to leave to our children? How can this harmful attitude be redeemed during this Season of Creation from 1 September to 4 October in harmony with other Christian churches and the various resources including Jubilee 2025. **Pope Francis:** *Culture is more than what we have inherited from the past; it is also, a living dynamic and participatory present reality, which cannot be excluded as we rethink the relationship between human beings and the environment. LS143.*

**OCTOBER. Family on Mission.** Every family of any kind, human, plant or animal has a role to play to sustain our world, as a family of families. As the human family, we have the power to deliberately choose our sense of mission. During 2025 we accept our mission to journey as Pilgrims of Hope. We cannot afford selfish greed, or hurtful violence, but are called to adopt God's mission of love, love of creation, all its creatures and the poor. St Francis, the patron saint of ecology is our inspiration on our mission. **Pope Francis:** *The family is an agent of pastoral activity through the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, their witness, solidarity with the poor, openness to diversity of people, protection of creation, moral and material solidarity with other families and commitment to the common good. AL 290*

**NOVEMBER. Family Losses and Endings.** Losses big and small are inevitable in daily life. Birth, growth, decline and death are the natural cycle of every element of creation, inanimate and those with greater consciousness. It may be a painless letting go, or a cataclysmic event or a source of renewal of the land. Extinction is a serious concern for the animal and plant kingdoms where in general numbers are decreasing while human numbers increase. For us created with special capabilities and gifts to love and hurt and forgive, this time of the year is a special gift to remember life and death and their Creator as well as ultimate resurrection and reunion with our loved ones. **Pope Francis:** *If we accept death we can prepare ourselves for it. The better we live on this earth, the greater the happiness we will be able to share with our loved ones in heaven. AL 258. For human beings to destroy the biological diversity of God's creation, these are sins against the natural world, ourselves and against God. LS8.*

**DECEMBER. Family, still Hope for the Future.** What does it mean to be a family of families and hope for the future? How has our journey as Pilgrims of Hope enriched our lives as families as well as individuals? Each family is unique with our own special relationships, our love, joys and anxieties. We thank our Creator for the inbuilt sense of family, of belonging to one another and to our God. This family-mindedness can be a reason for our hope. St Francis and Pope Francis speak of all creatures paying homage to their Creator but we acknowledge that we humans alone can address the challenges to fulfill the hope for a future filled with peace and joy. **Pope Francis:** *A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH from Laudato Si. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Blessed Trinity, community of infinite love. You are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love that we may protect all life and beauty. Fill us with humility, peace and joy that we may live as brothers and sisters harming no one. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Praise be to you! Amen*