



The Holy See

***GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN A COURSE ON MARRIAGE
ORGANIZED BY THE TRIBUNAL OF THE ROMAN ROTA***

*Paul VI Audience Hall
Wednesday, 5 November 2014*

[Multimedia]

I have not prepared a speech, I would like simply to greet you. In the Extraordinary Synod, the procedures, the processes were discussed, and there is a concern for streamlining the procedures for reasons of justice. Justice, so they may be just, and justice for the people who are waiting, as His Excellency the Dean has just said. Justice: how many people wait years for a ruling. And for this reason, even before the Synod, I constituted a Commission to help prepare various possibilities along this line: a line of justice, and also of charity, because there are so many people who need a word from the Church on their marital situation, for a 'yes' or a 'no', but that it be just. Some procedures are so long or so onerous that they do not facilitate them, and the people leave. For example, take the Interdiocesan Tribunal of Buenos Aires, I don't recall but I think, in the first instance, it has 15 dioceses; I believe the furthest is 240 km away.... One cannot, it is impossible to imagine simple, common people going to the Tribunal: they have to travel, they have to lose work days, also the bonus ... so many things.... They say: "God understands me, and thus I go ahead, with this weight on my soul". And Mother Church must do justice and say: "Yes, it's true, your marriage is annulled — No, your marriage is valid". But justice has to say it. This way they can move forward without this doubt, this darkness in their spirit.

It is important to hold these courses, and I sincerely thank the Dean for what he has been doing. And I also thank him because he himself presides over this Commission to find guidance for streamlining procedures. Always forward. It is the Mother Church who goes and seeks out her children so as to do justice. And we must also be very careful that the procedures are not in the context of business deals: and I'm not speaking about something out of the ordinary. There have even been public scandals. I had to dismiss a person from the Tribunal, some time ago, who said "10,000 dollars and I'll handle the two procedures for you, civil and ecclesiastic". Please, not this!

In the Synod a few proposals came up which discussed that they be gratis, we shall have to see.... But when spiritual and economic interests are handled together, this is not God's way! Mother Church is so generous, that justice may be given free of charge, as we were absolved by Jesus Christ freely. This is an important point: two separate issues.

Thank you for coming to this course: one has to study and has to go forward and always seek the *salus animarum*, which is not necessarily found outside of justice, but rather, with justice. Thank you very much, and I ask you to please pray for me. Thank you.