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"Large families are a witness to faith"

Addressing the crowd after his general audience on February 15, Benedict XVI said that "large families are a witness to faith, and a source of wealth and hope for the entire country."

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"In today's social environment, families with many children are a witness to faith, courage and optimism, because without children there is no future."

The Pope addressed these words to representatives from the Italian National Association of Large Families who were attending his general audience this morning. The families present there cheered enthusiastically at these words

"I hope", Benedict XVI continued, "that adequate social and legislative measures will continue to be promoted to support and protect larger families, who are a source of wealth and hope for the entire country."

Benedict XVI also recalled the fact that yesterday marked the feast of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the patrons of Europe. "May their witness help you to be apostles of the Gospel, the leaven for authentic renewal in personal, family and social life."

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