ARCHBISHOP'S SPEECH AT THE NATIONAL FAMILY CONFERENCE ON 15TH MAY 2015 AT KENYATTA CONFERENCE CENTRE

Your Excellency the First Lady Margaret Kenyatta
The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Services
The Principal Secretary
The Church leaders present,
Invited Guests,
The organizers,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Family – Hope of the Nation

One of the great strengths that Christianity brings to a nation is its emphasis upon strong families. Right at the beginning of the bible story, Adam and Eve are told to be fruitful and multiply. Children are precious to God and their care is the greatest responsibility a man and a woman share.

For Christians, marriage is the cornerstone of the family and it is a gift of God that cannot be redefined and twisted out of shape by governments. It is the coming together of a man and a woman in a lifelong and faithful relationship in which they become one, physically and spiritually.

The bearing and rearing of children is one of the God-given purposes of marriage and as we bring our lives into line with the will of our Creator, we can expect that there will be blessing as a result, blessing for our families and therefore for our nation.

How does a commitment to the biblical and Christian pattern of family life bless a nation?

Firstly, it reduces stress. It is a common complaint in modern life that we are too stressed and the worst stresses come through broken and insecure relationships. Marriage, as opposed to casual or cohabiting relationships, expresses a deep commitment which is not dependent upon feelings or convenience. It is a mutual expression of the self-sacrificing love that we see above all in Jesus Christ who laid down his life for us upon the cross. When this is the pattern for marriage, children grow up with a deep awareness of being loved that shapes their own lives and gives them a strong sense of personal security to cope with the pressures of adult life.

Secondly, the family is a commitment to the future. To have children is a great sacrifice of time, money and energy, but we do have children and we go to great lengths to educate them, teach them self-discipline and develop their
gifts because we believe that our society has a future. Let us be warned by the example of these once great nations which are now in serious decline because they have denigrated marriage and the family. Each generation either invests for future generations or lives off the social capital of past generations. Societies that give up on the family are living off the past while societies that encourage strong families are investing in the future.

All this can be summed in one word...love. Man and wife come together in a relationship of love that lasts for a lifetime and they have children who are drawn into that love in a way that shapes their character for a lifetime. Education has its part to play, but we cannot leave our children’s development to the State. If we want to see a Kenya of highly skilled and patriotic citizens where graft, tribalism and incompetence are a thing of the past, we must do all we can to support and defend marriage and enable those marriages to be fruitful in the care of children. Families truly are the hope of the nation.

As I conclude, allow me to wish all the participants and organizers of this conference success and God’s Blessings.

The Most Rev. Dr Eliud Wabukala
Archbishop of Anglican Church of Kenya
& The Bishop of All Saints Diocese