**Association of Moral Theologians of India (AMTI)**

**31st Annual Conference (Online)**

16, 23 and 30 November 2021

**FIVE YEARS OF *AMORIS LAETITIA***

**Developments in Moral Theology and Challenges in Pastoral Practices**

The 31st annual conference and meeting of the Association of Moral Theologians of India (AMTI) was held online on 16, 23 and 30 November 2021 from 6.00 to 8.00 pm. The conference attended by around 90 members of the Association drew attention to the contribution of *Amoris Laetitia* towards the developments in moral theology and the pastoral challenges it raises. Augustine Kallely, the secretary of AMTI extended a warm welcome to the guest speakers and members of the conference. Monsignor Philippe Bordeyne, the President of John Paul II Pontifical Theological Institute for Marriage and Family Sciences, Rome, inaugurated the three day conference. Shaji George Kochuthara, in his Presidential address, emphasized the new vision and the explorative themes brought about by *AL*. The conference highlighted three important themes, namely, Understanding Five Years of *AL,* The Logic of Pastoral Mercy, and Contextual Responses.

On the first day, Joeyanna D’Souza evaluated the worldwide and Indian reception of *Amoris Laetitia*. She concluded that the post-synodal apostolic exhortation has made a significant impact on the theological and pastoral streams of the Church. Paulachan Kochappilly investigated into the developments brought about by *AL* in the theology of marriage, family and sexuality. He argued that *AL* has revived a relational understanding of marriage and family replacing a juridical thrust, and that it has projected mercy as the path for the pastoral care of the family. Judith Hahn, in light of her research into the contribution of AL towards the developments in canon law and pastoral practices, emphasized the need of distinguishing between the issues which should be truly dealt with legally and non-legally. In her view, certain issues like the reception of the Holy Communion by the divorced and remarried might be better addressed from the doctrinal, moral, liturgical, and pastoral perspectives.

On the second day, Michael Peters presented how the concepts of accompaniment, discernment and integration found in AL can be used as the keys for a pastor of families. Linda Hogan explored into the understanding of conscience in AL and its implications for the family and the Church. She argued that AL presents conscience in the paradigm of the person and this way of understanding together with its thrust on mercy is very significant for all families especially the non-normative ones. Mathew Illathuparambil evaluated the response of the Indian Church towards “irregular” situations in India in light of *AL.* In his view, an in-depth investigation into the theological themes of AL is crucial for a deeper and more meaningful reception of AL in the Indian context.

On the third day, Astrid Lobo Gajiwala focused on the insights that *AL* provides for interreligious marriages which are on the rise in India. Ann Mary Madavanakkad and Jovit Maria highlighted the ways to empower women in their vocation to the family in a patriarchal context. William Eronimoose investigated in to the response of the Church in the Indian context towards sexual minorities. He proposed a methodology of *Mater-Magistra* in line with *AL* to address the vulnerabilities of sexual minorities.

The conference also remembered with gratitude the valuable contributions of late *Bishop Jacob Mar Barnabas* and *Jeevaraj Lourdhu* towards the development of theological ethics in India.