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BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE  
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

# BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 0777

Lunedì 12.10.2015

## Synod15 – Testimonianza di Uditori nella 6a Congregazione generale (10 ottobre 2015)

### Testimonianza della Signora Penelope Bajaj

### Testimonianza del Signor Ishwarlal Bajaj

*Sabato scorso 10 ottobre, nel corso della Congregazione generale del mattino, hanno portato la loro testimonianza i Signori Penelope e Ishwarlal Bajaj, presenti al Sinodo come Uditori. Si tratta di una coppia della diocesi di Mumbai (India), lei cristiana e lui di religione indu.*

*Riportiamo di seguito il testo della loro testimonianza:*

### Testimonianza della Signora Penelope Bajaj

I am married a little over 38 years. In Jan 2016 it will be 39 years complete. Wow! I can't believe it myself. I owe it to God's Grace only and He is the third person that holds us together.

Though we are an inter-faith, inter-community couple, My husband a Hindu and I Catholic but with our educational and social backgrounds being very similar, we managed to have a great harmony in our relationship along with the many trials and sufferings we have experienced.

The success of an Inter-faith marriage between two peoples has to be such, that the catholic spouse should not be asked to give up his or her faith. My husband understood this before taking the decision of marrying me. In return I gave him the option to follow his own faith.

This religious freedom made the path of our marriage smooth and successful.

Then came the birth of our two children who accompanied me to church and attended regular Sunday School, but were not baptized.

It was my husband's desire that both our children should be allowed the freedom of choosing their own religion

and I accepted it with a very large lump in my throat.

We have to thank the many mentors who helped us in our family.

The differences of religion were never a deterrent to us, for little magic words like compromise, humility and sorry helped us to lose our ego and live for the other.

Would we make the same choices today? Sure. No other way!

Is there someone out here who Knows - how a perfect marriage take place. We are still learning and understanding our marriage every day.

If not for my husband's tolerance and love of Christianity and my love and understanding of where he comes from, we would never been able to celebrate our life and inter-community differences.

Thank you Your Holiness Pope Francis and this distinguished Assembly for inspiring us to share our personal memoirs of our life with You.

### **Testimonianza del Signor Ishwarlal Bajaj**

I was born in a Hindu family with highly educated parents with my mother being a doctor of medicine and my father an engineer.

My parents made the decision of sending me to a Protestant school where from an early age I assimilated Christian values and elements of the faith which was novel but yet deep and inspiring.

I met my wife Penelope, a devout and committed Catholic whose mother was a principal of a school whose father was a doctor of medicine too and an officer in the Indian Army.

We both decided to get married 38 years ago with not much of an opposition from our families. I realized there were differences in religion, and since my wife was keen in following the Catholic faith, I was happy to allow her - her religious freedom.

After a while, I began attending the Holy Eucharist and was full of admiration at its contents. I felt at ease with the homily and the celebration being in a language - English I was familiar with. I then began attending a theology course, entitled "Wellsprings", which my wife Penelope organized and conducted for the laity of the Archdiocese of Mumbai. Through my attendance of the programme for seven years I assimilated the teachings of Jesus Christ and got into a deep understanding and love of Scripture. I questioned, I pondered and finally decided to get baptized on our silver wedding anniversary thirteen years ago.

My Baptism elevated our marriage to a higher spiritual level with a much better understanding of our relationship with one another. This motivated and encouraged my son and daughter who themselves decided at the age of 28 and 32 to embrace the Catholic faith, thus completing the fabric of a unified Catholic family.

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