

# Mothers are women too!

27 January 2022

## Prioritizing Maternal Health in the New Millennium

MaterCare International - the 11<sup>th</sup> Biennal Rome Conference - the 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference

Istituto Maria SS Bambina

Via Paolo VI 21

Rome, Italy

To register, to send free communications (posters) please email: [info@matercare.org](mailto:info@matercare.org)

On behalf of MaterCare International (MCI), we look forward to welcoming you to Italy's cultural and national capital, Rome, for our 13<sup>th</sup> international conference, postponed to 2022 due to the COVID pandemic. Our conference venue Istituto Maria SS Bambina overlooks St Peter's Basilica and Square (see photo), and offers a safe, hospitable, retreat-like environment with good conference facilities and the best view in Rome !

For the first time ever, our biennial conference precedes and dovetails with International Federation of Catholic Medical Association's (FIAMC) XXVI International Congress, themed "Medicine: Reparative or transformative ? The mission of the Christian physicians," and held in the neighbouring Augustinianum conference centre (Via Paolo VI,25) (see photo).

The opening words of our conference theme , "Mothers Are Women Too," is a quote from Dr Walley highlighting that, from the global perspective, caring for mothers is underprioritised in women's health, especially in the developing world.

Motherhood is the most complete expression of the special vocation of women, and it possesses redemptive value. Thus, mothers deserve to be at the centre of our acknowledgement of womanhood, rather than sidestepped as by the prevailing prochoice ideology. In his Millennium letter, Pope St John Paul II wrote: "*The Father chose a woman for a unique mission in the history of salvation: that of being the Mother of the long-awaited Saviour. The Virgin Mother responded with complete openness*".

As co-creators of new life, all mothers have a share in the mystery of the Incarnation, through the faithful acceptance of their own pregnancies and birthing experiences. Mothers also merit being at the forefront of our conversation about women because of the suffering they endure to beget and bring up their children.

In 2020, during Holy Mass on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, Pope Francis said: "*From her, a woman, salvation came forth and thus there is no salvation without a woman. In her, God was united to us, and if we want to unite ourselves to him, we must take the same path: through Mary, woman and mother*".

Appropriately, MCI's conference is preceded by a half-day spiritual retreat on motherhood, the "Welcome" session and reception on the afternoon and evening of the September 12<sup>th</sup>. The conference programme includes important aspects of the current medical, psychological, ethical and spiritual problems affecting motherhood, and integrates the four essential domains of a Catholic physician, known as the '4C's'. They are conviction, professional competence, community orientation, and individual compassion.

Eight sessions spread over 2 days will cover the following: the clinical, ethical and spiritual implications of COVID-19 for mothers, their children and health care workers; an evidence-based update on the medical, sociological, environmental and economic risks of hormonal contraceptives; morally licit antenatal screening and therapy; reflections on inspiring Catholic health-care workers; a focus on the purpose and outreach of MaterCare training and practicing as a Catholic doctor; and dealing with major controversies as a Catholic doctor should.

Our speakers are experts in their field and will be extensively involved in all aspects of the programme, including panel discussions. Free communications are invited. We hope that you can join us in the Eternal City for a professionally and spiritually enriching, multidisciplinary meeting.

Finally, you are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the unique duo of back-to-back MCI and FIAMC 2022 meetings, and spend a fruitful 5 days in Rome in mid-September. Accommodation is available in the Istituto Maria SS Bambina for the duration of both meetings. Laptop, projector and the screen will be available for lecturers. The language of the Conference is English.

Prof Bogdan Chazan

A/Prof Elvis Šeman

*Simon Walley*

P.S. A shared FIAMC/MCI audience with Pope Francis has been requested.



[Mothers are women too - The value of motherhoodDownload](#)