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**THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY TOWARDS PROPER CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN  
RUBAGA DIVISION IN THE LIGHT OF FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

The family is the basic unit of the society made up of husband, wife, children and sometimes their relations. In Rubaga division, there are different types of families. These include; nuclear family, extended family, dual earner family, cohabitation family, and single parent family. In this basic unit of society, child development takes place. This refers to the nurturing or molding of the child physically, social-emotionally, and spiritually.

*Familiaris Consortio* the apostolic exhortation written by Pope John Paul II in 1981 in whose light this research was made, gives the ideal role of the family towards proper child development in the modern world. According to Pope John Paul II, the role that God calls the family to perform in history derives from what the family is (Cf. CF 17). That is why the catching statement from *Familiaris Consortio* for this research is “family, become what you are” (CF 17). This means that since the family is the community of life and love, the essence and role of the family is in the mission to guard, reveal and communicate love. This is manifested by ensuring the proper development of the child physically, social-emotionally and spiritually. In the concrete sense, the parents should breast feed the new born in the family, provide enough food for the children, take them to hospital when they are sick, take them to school for education, correct them with tenderness when they misbehave, engage them in house chores, sacrifice time to play and talk to them despite of the demanding jobs, teach them how to pray through daily family prayers. Above all, they should act as role models to the children in all spheres. According to Pope John Paul II when the above is fulfilled, the family is fulfilling its role in forming a community of persons through love, serving life, and sharing in the mission of the Church (Cf. CF 17-64).

On the other hand, whereas some families in Rubaga division have worked hard and managed to fulfill the teaching of *Familiaris Consortio* despite of the difficulties, the overwhelming situation in Rubaga division is that proper child development has often ignored. This is manifested in the malnourished children, parents abandoning their children by throwing them to the dustbins or toilets, mistreatment of children by starving them, or beating them up. Furthermore, in some families, communal prayers are never said, children are not taken to school, parents do not have time for the children instead they are taken up by their jobs, children even below 18 years are engaged in drug abusing and other immoral acts.

Due to this situation, the Church, media, schools and other stake holders have come in to help the family to realise its role. Unfortunately the problem still persists. Some of the causes such as death of the spouse, poverty and others might be inevitable. However others such as ignorance can be solved. The researcher therefore suggests that the Church leaders through their homilies, family workshops, conferences and others should sensitize the parents about their roles towards proper child development. Parents should guide the children on the proper use of technology and social media; they should balance between work and home responsibilities, should ensure daily prayers at home, should guide or direct their children on issues concerning morality. The government too should enforce laws concerning the rights of the children. This will enable one to realize that the family is indispensable in achieving proper child development as well as responsible future citizens.