



## Marriage & Family Life E-Bulletin No 37 November 2009

Marriage & Family Life Project Office,  
Department of Christian Responsibility & Citizenship,  
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

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### Diary Dates 2009-2010

#### Passing on the Faith: Home-School-Parish Conversation

Dec 11<sup>th</sup> 2009. Hothorpe Hall,  
Leics. [More information](#)

#### Friends of FAMILIAS gathering

May 18<sup>th</sup> 2010. Further details to  
follow

#### Exploring Family Spirituality.

An online short course looking at  
the many ways families are  
especially close to God at home.  
Commences January 2010. [Read  
more:](#)

#### Revisiting the Domestic Church

An international conference on  
the Household of God and Local  
households will take place at the

### Passing on the Faith: a Home-School-Parish conversation



What does it mean to pass on faith in God within a family? What are the respective roles and responsibilities (and rights!) of homes, schools and parishes? How can parents and grandparents best be supported in their vocation? The Passing on the Faith Working Group is planning to bring together, perhaps for the first time in England and Wales, diocesan advisers for parish catechesis, primary schools advisers and family ministry coordinators. The aim is to start a home-school-parish conversation about how faith in God is transmitted from one generation to the next, to explore the partnerships involved in this critical work and to identify how best these partnerships can be strengthened and supported in the future. If you hold a diocesan position of responsibility for one of these areas and have not yet received your invitation to take part, or would like to take up a spare place if available, please contact [Elizabeth Davies](#). Date: December 11<sup>th</sup>. Venue: Hothorpe Hall, Leicestershire. [Further details here.](#)

### Vacancy: Mental Health Project Worker

Since 2006 the Bishops' Conference has been developing resources for the pastoral care of those affected by mental ill-health, through both the *Everybody's Welcome* and the *Day For Life* national projects. We now have funding to appoint a part-time Mental Health Project Worker for two years to develop this work further. The successful applicant will encourage, inspire and increase the availability of local spiritual and pastoral support, in accordance with the teachings and ethos of the Catholic Church, for individuals and families affected by mental health problems, across the Catholic community in England and Wales, through

- identifying and promoting existing good practices
- devising a small grants programme
- developing and sustaining networks

Further details and to download an application pack [click here](#).  
Alternatively, email [recruit@cbcew.org.uk](mailto:recruit@cbcew.org.uk) or telephone 020 7901 4816.

Closing date is midday on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>  
January 2010.



### US Bishops Publish National Pastoral on Marriage

*Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan*  
has just been published by the US

Catholic University of Leuven on March 10-13 2010. [For speakers and further information click here.](#)

## Project Resources available:

[Home is a Holy Place: DVD, Prayer Cards, Large Print Prayer Cards](#)

**What is Life Like?** leaflets to support welcoming families in challenging circumstances. £2 a set or free [online](#).



## Catholic Tradition Alive at Home

Catholic Tradition Alive at Home are a series of 13 A5 wipe-clean recipe cards produced in the Diocese of Plymouth to help families practice their faith together at home, building on time-honoured Catholic traditions. The cards range from 'Making the Sign of the Cross' to 'Blessing a Home' to 'Remembrance - Especially in November' to 'Making a Prayer Corner'. Each card offers something of the rationale behind each tradition, referencing scripture in some cases. Simple family prayers are offered as well as some 'top tips' to help families share these traditions within their busy family lives. [Read more...](#)

## The Wonder of 'God With Us'

It is no chance thing that Christ's first public miracle takes place at

Bishops in the latest phase of their National Pastoral Initiative on Marriage. It concludes: *A marriage that is truly in Christ, a marriage upon which his school of gratitude and openness has left its mark of joy and warmth, is a sign of the Kingdom that is coming. It is a blessing to the couple, to their children and to everyone who knows them. It offers a sign of hope and a loving witness to human dignity in a world where hope often seems absent and human dignity is often degraded. It is a sign of the Kingdom because the love of Christ moves the married couple to ever greater heights of love.* [Read the full text.](#)

## Diocesan News Round-Up

Since the last e-bulletin was published in June, a great deal has been happening around the countries to support marriage and family life. These are *just some* of the events that have come to our attention. [Clifton Diocese has appointed a Marriage and Family Life Coordinator.](#) Bishop Declan said: "I am delighted that Anne-Marie Sparrow has agreed to take up the position of Marriage and Family Life Coordinator for our diocese. This is an important need identified in our pastoral guidelines '[Called to be a People of Hope](#)'. "The family is at the very centre of both the Church and society. Family life needs all the support that we can give." A **Celebration of Marriage and Family Life** took place in [East Anglia on July 11th](#). On Saturday 31st October, Bishop Brain celebrated a [Mass in St John's Cathedral, Salford](#) for couples celebrating 50 years or more of marriage. Leeds diocese published a [marriage and family life newsletter](#) in June and are busy recruiting for a [group facilitation course](#) in March 2010; Portsmouth diocese published a [marriage and family life newsletter](#) in July and have just appointed a new project worker – further news to follow. [Home is a Holy Place](#) was launched in the [diocese of Lancaster on September 13<sup>th</sup>](#) at Brettargh Holt near Kendal. Plymouth diocese published a [third marriage and family life newsletter](#) in September.

## It's still Me, Lord

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) has recently released "It's still ME, Lord", a film exploring dementia and spirituality. The new DVD seeks to draw and build on good practice in developing awareness of the spiritual and pastoral needs of people with dementia and their carers and families. The film will serve as a useful resource for staff in care settings, religious orders, clergy and parish communities, hospital chaplains, as well as for families and Eucharistic Ministers. [Read more](#)



## Faith and Family Summer School

Ten diocesan workers from around England and Wales who are currently being sponsored to undertake post-graduate studies in Leadership for Family Ministry and Faith Formation completed their second summer intensive in Cambridge last August. They were joined by MA Pastoral Theology students from the Cambridge Theological Federation as well as a number of diocesan marriage and family life coordinators. *"The pastoral care of marriage and family life is becoming increasingly*

a wedding. It is not chance that the occasion is expressed through the close relationship of mother and son, nor is it chance that the wonder of "God with us" is proclaimed in the mundane and ordinary things of life. This is everyone's experience: so in these experiences everyone has a chance to hear God and "**do whatever he tells you.**" (Jn2:5).

[Rt Rev Terence Brain. Homily. October 31<sup>st</sup> 2009](#)

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*complex, requiring that leaders have a breadth of knowledge and skills as well as a strategic and sensitive overview. We are delighted that some of the funds raised are being invested in the education of committed individuals who will go on to become a major long-term resource for the care of marriage and family life in England and Wales,"* said Bishop John Hine. [Read more...](#)

### **Sex and Relationships Education**

The Catholic Education Service has issued a statement on the issue of parental rights in response to government proposals regarding sex and relationships education: *Whilst disappointed that legal encumbrances mean that a blanket right of withdrawal can no longer apply, we are pleased that the Government has recognised that the right of withdrawal in formative years is most critical and is therefore providing for the ability of parents to opt-out of SRE up to the age of 15.* [Read the full statement...](#)

### **Celebrating Family with St Thérèse**

The recent visit of the relics of St Thérèse was an excellent opportunity to meditate on her life from a family perspective. Here is part of a short reflection offered by Veronica Murphy in Liverpool on September 24<sup>th</sup>:

*I like to think that if Thérèse were living in England and Wales today she would feel at home with our Bishops' Conference project to deepen awareness within the Christian community of marital and family spirituality. I think she would be attracted by its title: Celebrating Family: Blessed, Broken, Living Love and be able to identify with it. She knew many blessings through her family relationships but she also experienced the pain of brokenness: her mother's death from cancer when Thérèse was just four years old deeply affected her as did her elder sister's departure for the Carmel a few years later. I think she would be especially attracted by the images associated with 'living love'. Her life centred on the daily challenge to **live love** - through the many ordinary, everyday, often seemingly meaningless acts of service which face us all – these became her much followed Little Way.*

*It's been a while since the 'monthly' MFL ebulletin made an appearance. We apologise for the delay but hope this issue will mark the return of 'normal service'!*