



Marriage & Family Life E-Bulletin No 41 June 2010

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

Family Walk for God. Sunday 4th
July. Ullswater. [Contact Andrew
Fava](#)

Grandparents Pilgrimage July
24th Walsingham.

Diocese of Westminster Dept of
Pastoral Affairs **Annual
Theology of the Body Lecture** –
Tues 14th September 2010
Speaker: Brian J. Gail. [Further
details](#)

**Households of God – a
Celebrating Family Conference
/Study Day.** September 25th
2010. Easingwold. Keynote
Speaker: David M. Thomas.
[Further details.](#)

**National Residential Meeting
for Diocesan Coordinators of
Family Life Ministry.** October
18-20, 2010. Ushaw College.



My Family My Priesthood

As promised in the last MFL e-Bulletin a fuller report of the annual Friends of FAMILIAS event is now available. Breda Theakston, Chair of FAMILIAS reports: "Six priests from different dioceses, cultures, continents and religious backgrounds, shared their reflections on the role their early family experience played in their vocation and how family sustains them now. Even though they came from very different families, and some had more difficult early experiences than others, a common theme came through in their accounts: that of having experienced at some point a feeling of being unconditionally loved. What did we learn about family and the vocation to priesthood? The day for me was best summed up by Fr Paul Williment, married to Sylvia, father, grandfather, who said that if anything, the very different stories told revealed in a fresh way the truth that the 'Holy Spirit blows where it will'. In the priests' words I heard of the amazing power that already exists in the world around us and that constantly speaks to us of God if we just stop to listen." [Read more...](#)

Partners in a Shared Task: Diocesan Pilot



Following a successful national conversation about home, school and parish roles in December 2009, the *Passing on the Faith* Working Group are now collaborating with the dioceses of Liverpool, Middlesbrough and Plymouth to develop and pilot materials to assist dioceses to identify and explore the complementary roles, rights and responsibilities of homes, schools and parishes. On July 5th 2010 a meeting of the home-school-parish leadership teams from the pilot dioceses will take place at Liverpool Archdiocese Conference Centre, to introduce the pilot scheme, consider how it might unfold within each diocese according to local gifts, wisdom, experience and priorities, and to identify the national support required in order for pilots to flourish and the outcomes to be shared more widely. [Read more...](#)

Grants Available

The **Mental Health Project** of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has just opened a small grants programme, in order to increase spiritual and pastoral support in our Catholic communities, at a local level, i.e. in parishes, schools, hospitals, universities, prisons or organizations, for those with mental health needs, their families and their carers. The Mental Health Fund has been created from the proceeds of two Day For Life collections given by parishioners in 2008 and 2009. The Fund is making available a range of several small grants totalling £70,000. There is no minimum grant limit and it is anticipated that the majority of grants will range from a few hundred pounds to a maximum of £8,000, although two projects will be

Project Resources available:

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

What is Life Like? A series of leaflets to support and welcome families experiencing challenging circumstances. £2 a set or free [online](#).

"As parents, teachers, priests, parish catechists or youth workers ... Our roles in the settings of home, parish, school and other centres are complementary yet distinct. We are partners in a shared task. We help the young to grow and develop but we do so in different ways. We need to be clear about our different roles if we are to perform them with confidence. At times we have false expectations of what we can do and we make unrealistic demands of others."

Gallagher, J., 1986.
Guidelines. Living and Sharing Our Faith: A National Project of Catechesis and Religious Education.

Review of fathers' involvement in children's lives The Children's Society is undertaking a review of fathers' involvement in children's lives and the ways in which this can affect children's well-being. The Society would welcome contributions from all interested individuals and organisations by Friday 6th August 2010. [Further details](#)

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funded up to a total of £15,000 if suitable. However, smaller projects are encouraged. Please see www.catholicchurch.org.uk/mentalhealth for further details and application forms. Closing date for applications is Oct 1, 2010. Contact Mental Health Project Worker: Gail Sainsbury for any other information about the project. E-mail: gail.sainsbury@cbcew.org.uk, Tel: 07581 205314

Four small grants of up to £1000 each are available to develop ecumenical work with families as a result of the winding up of **Churches Together For Families**. Please contact the Project Office for further details. Applicants will be asked to briefly demonstrate how their projects will benefit families and enhance ecumenical working. For example the project could involve an ecumenical event involving participants and organisers of more than one denomination or be a resource which is acceptable to a variety of church settings. Closing date is September 1st 2010.

Celebrating Marriage in Portsmouth

Katja Babei, Advisor for Marriage and Family Life in the Diocese of Portsmouth reports: "Our Significant Anniversaries Celebration Mass took place on Saturday (June 12th), and was a great success. It was filmed by Meridian News and can be seen online at <http://www.itv.com/meridian-west/years-of-wedded-bliss29864>" Bishop Crispian celebrated the Mass in Basingstoke and in his homily reminded couples of the critical witness they offer to the love of Christ: "In the Church, you are not simply married for yourselves; you are married for all of us and for all who live around you. You give us all the opportunity to see and experience – made flesh in yourselves – the love that the Lord has for each of us and for all his people. You show us what it means to lay down life for friends. You are witnesses to the Gospel so that when I – or any other preacher – want to talk about Christ's love for us, all we have to do is to point to you and say "there you are; look at that." [Read more...](#) For photos [click here](#).

Catholic Marriage Preparation Survey 2010



The Catholic Marriage Preparation Survey has been live for six months now. Can you help us reach more providers and couples? Here are two snippets from this month's feedback:

"I feel it is challenging to give marriage preparation to people who are not practising and who have really done very little reflection on how the sacrament is a strength in their lives. We need to rethink much of our 'religious' education and demonstrate how it relates to our lives. Our

faith is still very spiritual and intellectual. We need more personal development of the total person rather than more intellectual input..." (Provider response)

"We are a couple who have been married before and widowed and found the course entirely inappropriate - no allowance was made that we are a mature couple who have known each other for decades. We have not decided to marry lightly and feel we are well prepared to be married. We were told we HAD to complete the course or we wouldn't be allowed to be married in the church we both wanted to." (Couple response)

Can you please help us by placing a link to the survey on your parish website – [get logos and html text here](#)