

# Getting started...

Raising Awareness of the Holiness of Homes as Places of Life, Love, Service, Teaching, Fellowship, Witness and Prayer



Marriage & Family Life Project Office  
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

## CHECK YOUR PACK

This multimedia resource pack has been prepared primarily for use by adults, in family or other intergenerational groups, within a variety of home, school, organisation and parish settings. Please start by checking the contents to make sure you have everything you need.

## YOU SHOULD FIND HERE:

- 1 A copy of **Introducing Home is a Holy Place**, a 24 page booklet describing the vision and goals of the project. This document is important background reading for group facilitators, pastors, catechists and those in ministry or leadership positions who will be using the pack to raise awareness of *Home is a Holy Place*.
- 2 A 25 minute **DVD** which introduces and illustrates the vision of *Home is a Holy Place* and can be viewed in its entirety or in sections. The Introduction provides a complete overview of *Home is a Holy Place* (7 mins). Sections 1, 2 & 3 each explore the three vision statements in more detail (5 or 6 mins each). The Reflection concludes the DVD with a series of images set to *Saints and Angels*, composed and performed by Victoria Banks (3 mins). The DVD can be viewed with or without subtitles. The complete script is available on the website.
- 3 **Six group conversation sheets** written in 'magazine style'. These can be used as take-home handouts as well as for animating extended conversations with groups. *Before You Begin* is aimed at leaders and invites a consideration of how we came to need this project. *What Does Home Mean To You?* provides material for an orientation session for groups. *How do you and your family show love for one another?*, *What are the challenges in your family relationships?* and *When are you most aware of God in your family experiences?* focus on the three *Home is a Holy Place* vision statements. *What next?* suggests some strategies for supporting the holiness of our homes in the future.
- 4 **Family – Adventure in Love** is a family-friendly overview of the Church's understanding of the mission of families.
- 5 **Prayer cards** in three different designs reflecting each of the three vision statements.
- 6 **Postcard** for sending feedback on the resource (or answers to any of the questions) to Bishop John Hine, Chair of the Bishops' Committee for Marriage and Family Life.
- 7 **Order form** for obtaining more copies of these and other materials.

*If you are missing any of these items please contact the person who supplied the pack to you. Electronic copies are available on the Home is a Holy Place website.*

## WAYS OF USING THIS PACK

This pack is a flexible resource and can be used in a variety of ways. Here are a few ideas:

- The group sheets and the DVD together can be used as the basis of a series of up to six meetings spread through the year or during a particular season of the Church's year eg Easter, Advent, Lent.
- The same materials can be used for a single meeting of varying length: 30-75 minutes depending on the time available. (Outlines to help with planning these sessions are available from the website.)
- The Introduction section of the DVD can be used on its own, within a time limited slot at a meeting or for the whole congregation before or after Sunday Mass.
- The group conversation sheets can be photocopied for wider distribution and sent home, perhaps with children after their Liturgy of the Word or after school or they can simply be given out after Mass.
- Prayer cards can be ordered in sufficient quantities to supply one to every parishioner.
- Snippets from *Introducing Home is a Holy Place* can be inserted into the parish newsletter.

The pack can be used with the whole parish or with specific groups such as:

- Parents of children preparing to receive the sacraments
- Couples preparing for marriage
- Churches Together groups
- Parent-Teacher groups
- Parish groups and /or ministry teams
- Seniors groups
- Parents of children entering or leaving school

The pack can also be placed in the parish library so that families can borrow it to use together at home.

*However you use this Resource Pack you will need to make sure that you have enough supplies of prayer cards and postcards. Feel free to photocopy the rest of the resources if you wish. (However, you may not make copies of the DVD which is governed by a limited copyright agreement.) If you are planning a meeting or series of meetings do please visit the website for supporting materials.*

## WORKING WITH GROUPS: WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

Experience already suggests that a range of responses to these materials will be encountered. We strongly advise that facilitators prepare by viewing and working with the materials themselves before initiating a group conversation. Facilitators will need to be open to exploring marital and family spirituality and able to listen and accept without judgement whatever may come up in conversation. Facilitators guidelines are available on the *Home is a Holy Place* website.

In testing the resource we have discovered that:

- Although the DVD covers a range of family experience, negative feedback can be expected from those who feel their particular family experiences are not reflected. The Working Group accepts this criticism wholeheartedly.
- At least one person in every group will have had some extremely hurtful family experiences. It's essential therefore for facilitators to be sensitive to this from the start, both in the words they use and in their actions. It's a good idea to have a box of tissues handy, plus some chocolates or sweets, as well as lists of help lines and local counselling services. See the website for a *Help When Life Hurts* handout. Consider using two facilitators so that one can give extra attention to individuals when needed.
- Conversations about married, family and home life can go in any direction so some steering will be essential at times to keep the group focussed, especially if time is short.

## TO DO LIST

- 1 Check the contents
- 2 Chase or download any missing items
- 3 View the DVD all the way through *twice*
- 4 Read *Introducing Home is a Holy Place*
- 5 Answer the questions for yourself and/or with your family and friends
- 6 Plan how best to use this pack with others in the parish, school or organisation
- 7 Download extra resources or planning guides from the website
- 8 Order any necessary additional materials ie prayer cards, postcards, Family – Adventure in Love
- 9 Contact the working group if you have any questions or concerns (please see below for contact details)

## DON'T FORGET

Visit the website for facilitators' guidelines, *Help When Life Hurts*, timed outlines for group meetings, prayers, feedback, ideas and more resources.

[www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk](http://www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk)

## FINALLY

The *Home is a Holy Place* working group are very interested to hear how this Resource Pack is received and would be delighted to have any comments or questions directed to them either by email at:

[workinggroup@homeisaholyplace.org.uk](mailto:workinggroup@homeisaholyplace.org.uk)

or by post at the Marriage and Family Life Project Office, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX



