



SEEKING GOD TOGETHER COMPANION RESOURCES SEASON 2 – BIRTH TO STARTING SCHOOL

- Accompanying/supporting the family's relational life as a place where God dwells
- Parish and school welcoming, accompanying, serving, particularly those on the margins
- Building community as the Body of Christ

Across the dioceses of England & Wales the Catholic Church has a network of **Co-ordinators for Marriage and Family Life Ministry**

<http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/diocesan-work/diocesan-family-ministry> And
<http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/FAMILIAS-Membership-Leaflet-2017-1.pdf>

Parish Family Groups support and care for all families – including all generations is a priority. The Family Group Movement seeks to create a true sense of community in fulfilment of Jesus Christ's command for love, friendship, and companionship in the lives of his disciples, and as experienced by the early Christian communities. E.g. Create family groups, and signpost new families to a family group

<http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/related-work/parish-family-groups>
<https://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Family-Group-Movement-Parish-Toolkit.pdf> (free toolkit for developing family groups in a parish)

PARENTING PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

These are friendly and informative experiences, e.g:

- Family Caring Trust <http://www.familycaring.co.uk/>
- Parenting course resources <http://themarriagecourses.org/try-parenting/the-parenting-children-course>
- Care for the Family parenting <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses/parenting-courses-time-out>

SUPPORT FOR ADOPTIVE OR FOSTERING PARENTS

- <https://www.cathchild.org.uk/pathways/> and www.adoptionuk.org for support for adoptive or fostering parents e.g. in Diocese of Leeds <http://www.catholic-care.org.uk/> offer post adoption care for families.
- <https://www.adoptionuk.org/> Northern Ireland: <http://www.adoptionandfostering.hscni.net/> e.g. 6-day programme for parents 'A Piece of Cake'

Supportive real-life stories from other parents

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/family-life/parent-support>

RELATIONAL SUPPORT FOR PARENTS (some examples):

- **Listening skills** training via <http://www.acornchristian.org/> for training books/DVDs, and events)
- **Partners on a journey**, John Gottman, combines Catholic theology with findings from research to inspire and support married couples
- **For your marriage (USCCB) website:** <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/encouragement/>
- **Catholic couple check-up** <https://www.catholiccouplecheckup.com>
- **Caná Week (Chemin Neuf Community)** to strengthen and encourage married relationship <http://www.chemin-neuf.org.uk/en/home/our-programmes/cana-couple-and-families>
- **World Wide Marriage Encounter (UK)** <http://www.wme.org.uk>
- **Teams of our Lady** <http://www.teamsgb.org.uk>
- **Couple Alive** – Family Caring Trust www.familycaring.org.uk
- **Marriage MOT and counselling, Marriage Care** <http://www.marriagecare.org.uk/how-we-help/relationship-counselling>
- **Support to help recovery following relationship breakdown** <https://www.restoredlives.org/>
- **For children caught up in vulnerable situations of loss** through marriage breakdown www.RainbowsGB.org.uk

SUPPORTING ROLE OF GRANDPARENTS

www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.com

SUPPORT FOR CHURCH-BASED TODDLER GROUPS

Toddler groups are foundational spaces for growth, to help support new parents in the all-important early bonding and attachment with their new-borns, and

infant/toddler children

- Training available for leaders e.g. 'TotSlot' produced by Care For the Family a Christian family <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/training/totslot>
- See **Good Practice Guide** for setting up a parish-based toddler group, at <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/faith-in-the-family/playtime/running-a-toddler-group/thinking-of-starting-a-toddler-group>
- **Strategy for Toddler Groups** www.1277.org.uk (Website being renewed in 2018-19)
- **Raising awareness of 'Strong Start for All Children**, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conception to Age Two, the first 1001 Critical Days.
- **Toddler Group Project research** insights for a Catholic setting <http://www.going4growth.com/growth-in-faith-and-worship/early-years/church-based-toddler-groups>
- **1277 Facebook page for networking/resources** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1277makethemcount/>
- **Playtime** offer wealth of resources, including stories and songs, and an annual conference resourcing Toddler Groups <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/faith-in-the-family/playtime>
- **For Dads:** www.wholetthedadsout.org.uk for ideas to include dads -e.g partnerships with toddler groups and nursery/pre-school inviting dads to be involved. Book: *Inside Fatherhood* , Bible Reading Fellowship, 2018, Dad's tell their stories <https://www.brffonline.org.uk/9780857465696/> . And *Soul Man* developed for dads in the Armed Forces <https://www.wholetthedadsout.org.uk/running-group/soul-man-discussion-groups>
- Range of ideas and material for **growing in faith** which can be used/ adapted for use in a Catholic setting <http://www.going4growth.com/home>. See Liturgy section for a **Rite of Commissioning a Toddler Group Leader**, which could be adapted for Catholic setting)
- **For welcome and inclusion of young families**, and range of ideas that can be adapted for use in a Catholic context, e.g. celebrating intergenerational events, using drama, craft, and songs <http://www.messychurch.org.uk/>

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS OR CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

- St Joseph's Pastoral Centre <http://www.stjoseph.org.uk/>
- L'Arche <https://www.larche.org.uk/> communities offering families support and love, and offering home to a family member with learning disabilities
- Faith and Light: Supporting all families with members with learning disabilities, offering friendship, worship and celebration <http://www.faithandlight.org.uk/>

SUPPORT FOR ALL FAMILIES, INCLUDING FAMILIES LIVING IN POVERTY & IN CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

- **Catholic Children's Society** <https://www.cathchild.org.uk/mission-values/>
- **Diocesan example: 'Brunch Time' in school holidays:** parish provides breakfast and a packed lunch, or hot meal and snack for local pre-school and school children during the periods when they are not receiving school meals, as well as art, craft, music and dance activities. Parent/grandparent/carer have tea/coffee/toast E.g. St Joseph and St Alban, Liscard, Wallasey www.stjosephandstalban.com and email cc.donn@talktalk.net for information
- **Domestic Abuse** <http://www.cedar.uk.net/> for resources to help Catholic community grow in awareness of the issues surrounding domestic abuse *Updated Guide 2018: Catholics Experiencing Domestic Abuse*, National Board of Catholic Women, in collaboration with CBCEW/Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN)

Support For Families of Prisoners and Ex-Offenders

- <https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/> an independent Catholic prison charity serving families of prisoners, ex-offenders and prisoners, across England & Wales
- Bishops Conference Prison Chaplains' Adviser <http://www.cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/Departments/Christian-Responsibility-and-Citizenship/Prison-Ministry>
- <https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/>

Support for Families Living with Mental Health Problems

<http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/related-work/mental-health-project> - for parish mental health first-aid training. See the range of resources and links at www.catholicmentalhealthproject.org.uk

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS FOR CONCEPTION AND IN PLANNING A FAMILY

- <http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/what-we-do/marriage/family-planning-naturally>
- The Natural Family Planning Teachers' Association www.nfpta.org.uk

- NHS Family Planning Association information about Natural Family Planning www.fpa.org.uk/contraception-help/natural-family-planning
- Planning a Family Naturally www.catholicfamily.org.uk/what-we-do/marriage/family-planning-naturally and www.natural-family-planning.info
- The Billings Method: www.woomb.org/ www.thebillingsovulationmethod.org
- The Creighton Model: www.creightonmodel.com
- Naprotechnology: www.naprotechnology.com
- Websites with more detailed information and/or lists of teachers: Fertility UK www.fertilityuk.org and <http://lifefertilitycare.co.uk/>
- Couple to Couple League, supporting natural family planning <http://www.cclgb.org.uk/>
- Diocesan example: Hallam Caring Services <https://hallam-diocese.com/hallam-caring-services/family-focus/>

Accompanying a developing family spirituality, rituals and traditions at home, parish and school nurturing relationship with God in Christ through scripture, teaching, liturgy, sacraments

Many dioceses have programmes of family catechesis, for parents and young children promoting and supporting the role of parents in **passing on faith**, parents and children growing in knowledge and practice together, e.g. crawling and toddler stage, finding stories, puzzles, games, friezes, play figures and creative art material to introduce them to God's Word in scripture and initiate those first responses, a diocesan resource available from <http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/formation-shop>

SUPPORTING PARENTS IN BAPTISM PREPARATION

- Using family catechesis, diocesan example <http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/Marriage-and-Family-Life>
<http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/Sacraments-of-Initiation>
- **Using the Sunday Lectionary** including with young children www.wednesdayword.org.uk
- **Blessing of homes** e.g. <https://www.catholicireland.net/the-little-book-of-christian-rituals-in-the-home/>
- **Blessings for all occasions** The Veritas Book of Blessings for All Occasions ISBN-13: 978-1847305176 <https://www.veritasbooksonline.com/books/prayer->

[books/prayers-of-the-church/the-veritas-book-of-blessings-for-all-occasions.html](http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/related-work/counting-our-blessings-books/prayers-of-the-church/the-veritas-book-of-blessings-for-all-occasions.html)

- **Using 'real questions of life' and scripture for conversations with parents/grandparents** e.g. Counting our Blessings CBCEW resource: <http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/related-work/counting-our-blessings>
- **Scripture and liturgical 'story telling'** – with training and resources. <https://www.godlyplay.uk/> **for toddlers upwards**
- **Peer support inspiring parents in raising children in faith** Care for the Family *Kitchen Table Project* www.kitchentable.org.uk
- **Faithful Families, Creating Sacred Moments at Home**, 2017 <http://faithful-families.blogspot.co.uk/>
- **Children's Spirituality, What it is and why it matters**, 2013, Dr.Rebecca Nye – resource mixing theory and good practice, childhood as a natural source of spirituality. Church House Publishing, ISBN 978 0 7151 4027 7

MINISTRY OF CONSOLATION

In event of a death in the family (a baby, child, or adult) see examples in Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, or Archdiocese of Liverpool for resources and support, contact via email:spirituality@diocesehn.org.uk

- **'Miscarriage and Early Baby Loss'** by Breda Theakston, Redemptorist Publications (2018)
- **Baby hospice** end of life care for sick babies and their families <http://www.zoes-place.org.uk/>

LITURGICAL & PRAYER RESOURCES

- **Commissioning for a Toddler Group leader**, adapt from Going4Growth <http://www.going4growth.com/growth-in-faith-and-worship/early-years/church-based-toddler-groups>
- **Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children** <http://liturgyoffice.org/News/eucharistic-prayers-for-masses-with-children/>
- **Guidelines for celebrating Liturgy of the Word with Children**
- Information and ministry leaflets for celebrating a Liturgy of the Word with Children <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/SOS/LOWC.pdf>
<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/LOWC/>
- **Creating sacred moments at home:** Faithful Families, Traci Smith (Chalice Press, 2017) ISBN 978-0-827211-22-3
- **Liturgical resources from the Order of Christian Funerals, for death of a baby or child** (including miscarriage, still birth, neo-natal death, death of an infant or

child) <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/OCF/index.shtml>

- **Learning sign language, for liturgical or catechetical use**
- <https://www.british-sign.co.uk/learn-online-british-sign-language-course/>

Examples of Books/online support for parents' own spirituality:

- 'Patterns not Padlocks', Angela Ashwin (Eagle, 2000)
- 'The Smile of Love', Joyce Huggett (Kevin Mayhew 2003)
- 'Out of the Ordinary', Joyce Rupp (Green Press, 2010)

Online resources/Apps for developing spirituality as a parent

- <https://www.pray-as-you-go.org/home/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/Prayasyougo>
- <http://faithful-families.blogspot.co.uk/>

CSAS (Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service) are responsible for driving and supporting improvements in practice; primary role of co-ordination, advice and support in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

<https://www.csas.uk.net/>

Caritas Social Action Network

<http://www.caritascare.org.uk/> for the many organisations and networks supporting pastoral care and formation of families

COURSES PROMOTING CHURCH TEACHING ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY AND THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE FAMILY (some examples):

- **Maryvale Institute course** – forming catechists to teach on marriage & family life
<https://www.maryvale.ac.uk/catechesis-on-marriage-and-family.html>
- **Chaplaincy courses** for pastoral care of families, via schools, hospitals/healthcare, prisons and other specific groups, e.g. Travellers' community at St Mary's University <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/home.aspx>
- <http://www.brs-ccrs.org.uk/> **Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies**, with modules in Marriage & Family Life ministry