



SEEKING GOD TOGETHER COMPANION RESOURCES SEASON 7 – MARRIED & FAMILY LIFE

- 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 couples and 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)

Diocesan activities in support of marriage include Annual Celebrations of Marriage (with the presiding Bishop in the Cathedral) and at local parish/deanery level, e.g. anniversary Masses etc. Some examples of resources and course for marriage and family enrichment and support:

MARRIAGE SUPPORT

- **Listening skills training** <https://www.acornchristian.org/> *DVD 'Just Listen'* useful for all parish and school ministry with families, and for a group couples themselves
- <https://smartloving.org/marriage-kit> for marriage enrichment
- **The Marriage Course** <http://themarriagecourses.org/> popular marriage

enrichment course, accessible for parish or couples gathering in homes, DVD

- Encouragement For your Marriage website (USCCB)
<http://www.foryourmarriage.org/encouragement/>
- **Self-help** Catholic 'couple check-up', a resource for use by couples without the need for a facilitator <https://www.catholiccouplecheckup.com>
- **BOOK:** 'Partners on a Journey', by John Gottman, combines Catholic Theology with findings from scientific research to inspire and support married couples
<https://www.gottman.com/professionals/training/level-1/>
- **Sexuality and Conjugal love** <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/married-life/sexuality-conjugal-love/>
- **BOOK: The 5 love languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts**, Gary Chapman, helping meet each other's deep emotional need to feel loved. Northfield Publishing (2010) ISBN-13 978-0-8024-7315-8
- **BOOK: How to Survive Being Married to a Catholic** (booklet) by CSSR (October 31, 2009)

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT

- **Cana Week** (organised by Chemin Neuf Community) to strengthen and encourage married relationships, e.g. <https://www.chemin-neuf.org.uk/en/home/our-programmes/cana-couple-and-families/58b1bbf024564011018b8277/cana-week-summer-2018>
- **World Wide Marriage Encounter , England & Wales**, <https://wwme.org.uk/> for marriage enrichment experiences
- **Teams of Our Lady** <http://www.teamsgb.org.uk/> for couple to couple groups in support of marriage
- **Verbum Dei** organisation for consecrated married couples – formation and spirituality <http://uk.verbumdei.org/about-us/>
- **Focolare** open to all families, engaging in the mission of the Gospel; of particular interest to ecumenical and interfaith families. The Focolare Movement is an international movement, inspired by the gospel, working for unity in all spheres of life. <http://www.focolare.org/gb/about-us/>
- **BOOK: 'Couple Alive'** – Family Caring Trust book, enriching a couple relationship www.familycaring.org.uk

SUPPORT FOR MARRIAGES IN DIFFICULTY

- **Breakthrough programme** <https://smartloving.org/breakthrough/>
- <http://www.lauriepuhn.com/> '*Fight less, Love More*'
- **Fighting for your marriage'** by Howard Markman, Scott Stanley, and Susan

Blumberg (USA, Denver, 2010)

COUNSELLING

- <https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/how-we-help/relationship-counselling/>
- **Marriage MOT:** <https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/how-we-help/relationship-education/marriage-week-2016/>
- <http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk/nextprog.html> *retreats for couples in difficulty*

SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE THROUGH A CIVIL DIVORCE

- <http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/what-we-do/marriage/divorced-and-separated-catholics> for Revised Guide to the Annulment Process
- **Book: Growing through Divorce** Jim Smoke, Harvest House, ISBN 1-56507-322-3
- **Book, DVD, website: Restored Lives** helping recovery after relationship breakdown, DVD and workbook, & book, filled with compassion, empathy, wisdom <https://www.restoredlives.org/>
- **The Beginning Experience** following separation or divorce, example in Archdiocese of Westminster <https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/marriage-and-family-life/news/the-beginning-experience/>
- **For children** caught up in vulnerable situations of loss through marriage breakdown www.RainbowsGB.org.uk

SUPPORT WITH CONCEPTION AND NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

- <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
- 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/>

SUPPORT WITH PARENTING

These are friendly, informative and life-enriching experiences equipping parents with some skills for parenting, as well as building peer support and friendships.

Programmes can be run in parishes and schools, e.g.

- **Family Caring Trust programmes** <http://www.familycaring.co.uk/> Training for facilitators available. Includes Parenting and Sex, Parenting Teenagers, and Parent Assertiveness training.
- **Parenting course resources** <http://themarriagecourses.org/try-parenting/the-parenting-children-course> with DVD for self-run groups
- **Care for the Family** parenting <http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses/parenting-courses-time-out>

FOSTERING AND ADOPTION: POST ADOPTION AND AFTERCARE OF FAMILIES

- <https://www.cathchild.org.uk/pathways/> and www.adoptionuk.org for support for adoptive or fostering parents
- Diocesan example, Diocese of Leeds <http://www.catholic-care.org.uk/> offer post adoption care for families

ROLE OF GRANDPARENTS

www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.com helps grandparents to meet, pray, share faith and organise pilgrimages with their grandchildren

CHILD CARE: TODDLER GROUPS

- <http://www.1277.org.uk/resources> Networking, toddler groups as 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, e.g. 'TotSlot' produced by Care For the Family a Christian family <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/training/totslot>

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH A MEMBER WHO IDENTIFIES AS LGBT+

- **For sensitive support** of families and young people who identify as LGBT+ please contact lgbtcatholicswestminster@gmail.com or see <https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/lgbt-chaplaincy/>
- **Building a Bridge** by James Martin SJ, on developing pastoral support for LGBT+ people and their parents <https://www.amazon.com/Building-Bridge-Relationship-Compassion-Sensitivity/dp/0062694316>

AWARENESS AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES (some examples)

- **Domestic Abuse:** <http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/related-work/cedar> for helpline, links and parish resources <http://www.cedar.uk.net/>
- Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse Guide: <http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NBCW-Raising-Awareness-of-Domestic-Abuse.pdf> Guide by National Board of Catholic Women currently being updated (2018) in collaboration with CBCEW/Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN).
- Teenagers experiencing domestic abuse in relationships <http://www.breakthecycle.org/awareness-of-date-violence-issues-for-teenagers>

SUPPORT WITH PARENTS OR CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL/LEARNING DISABILITIES (some examples)

- **St Joseph's Pastoral Centre** <http://www.stjoseph.org.uk/> resources supporting parents or children with intellectual disability
- **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/>
- **Parish and school guide/resources,** see <http://www.disabilitiesandfaith.org/resources/guidebooks/Disability-Manual-Churches.pdf>

SUPPORT FOR ALL FAMILIES, INCLUDING FAMILIES LIVING IN POVERTY (some examples)

- **Catholic Children's Society** <https://www.cathchild.org.uk/mission-values/>
- **Society of St Vincent de Paul** – caring for those in need <http://svp.org.uk/>

- **Food bank** organisations information and how to get involved
<https://www.trusselltrust.org/what-we-do/>

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF PRISONERS AND EX-OFFENDERS (some examples)

- <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/>

ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS DYING AND THE PROCESS OF GRIEF (some examples)

- **Ministry of Consolation** in event of a death in the family (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
- **Art of Dying Well**, National Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales website <http://www.artofdyingwell.org/>
- **'Grief Is a Journey Finding Your Path Through Loss'** by Dr. Kenneth J. Doka 2017

FOR FAMILIES WHO HAVE A YOUNG ADULT AT RISK OF SUICIDE

- **Young Suicide:** Information and training, and support of young adults at risk of suicide, and their families <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

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

- **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

- **Retreats and Prayer guides** <http://www.retreats.org.uk/spiritualdirection.html>
- **Opportunities for faith-life conversations with other engaged and married couples, and across generations** about real life questions and connecting these with Scripture e.g. *'How did you know he or she was the one for you?'*
Resource: **"Counting our Blessings"** <http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/related-work/counting-our-blessings>
- **I am with You**, Scripture Reflections for Couples, based on the Sunday readings for years A, B and C (3 volumes) by **Two in One Flesh** Marriage Team ISBN978-0-957 1919-1-2 <http://www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk/>
- **BOOK: Creating Rituals**, A new way of healing for everyday life, Rev Deacon Jim Clarke, Paulist Press, ISBN 978-0-8091-4716-8
<https://www.amazon.com/Creating-Rituals-Healing-Everyday-Life/dp/0809147165>
- **BOOK: Faithful Families** Traci Smith, ISBN 978-0-827211-22-3 ideas for family every-day life, creating sacred moments at home. Useful gift for families encouraging ritual/prayer at home
- **Prayer Apps and resources for couples, individual spouses, and family members**
 - <http://www.pray-as-you-go.org/home/> daily prayer
 - <http://www.sacredspace.ie/> daily prayer
 - <http://www.theway.org.uk/> spirituality and life articles
 - <http://www.universalis.com/> daily readings and divine office
 - https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/uploads/files/our_work/lectio_divina/year_a_nov_feb.pdf
 - <http://www.soulshpherd.org/2012/07/lectio-divina-guides/>
 - <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Scripture/Lectio-Divina.pdf>
 - <http://wccm.org/> for routes into Christian meditation and contemplative prayer
 - <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/artists/1092> Bernadette Farrell music for spirituality
 - <http://www.margaretrizza.com/> inspirational music for prayer/contemplation
- **CAFOD resources** <http://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources>
- **Faithful Families** Traci Smith, ISBN 978-0-827211-22-3 ideas for family every-day life, creating sacred moments at home. Useful gift for newly-weds, and new young families, encouraging ritual/prayer at home, when infants and children come along.

ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS DYING, CHILD OR ADULT; PREPARING A FUNERAL

- **'Into your Hands'**: Planning a Catholic Funeral and Prayers 2006, Decani Books, ISBN 978-1-900314-04-6 (taken from the Order of Christian Funerals) to support families in planning funeral and prayers when someone has died <http://www.decanimusic.co.uk/product/into-your-hands/>
- **'In Sure and Certain Hope'**: Rites and Prayers from the Order of Christian Funerals, for the Use of Lay Leaders, Geoffrey Chapman, ISBN 0-255-66870-X <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Roman-Catholic-Liturgy-Committee-Christian/dp/B00I63N0JQ>

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, offering friendship, worship and celebration
<http://www.faithandlight.org.uk/>

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>
- **Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies**, with modules in Marriage & Family Life ministry <http://www.brs-ccrs.org.uk/>
- www.luc.edu/ips/liverpool for details of the **Pastoral Ministry Diploma and Certificate courses** available across the northern dioceses of England & Wales

