



## Marriage & Family Life E-Bulletin No 6 March 2006

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

[National Marriage Week in  
Hexham & Newcastle](#)

[Hallam Everybody's Welcome  
Training dates](#)

Bishop Edwin Regan's Lenten  
Pastoral Letter [Welcoming  
Families](#) (Click homilies)

### Project dates

**October 20-22 2006**  
Symposium on Marital & Family  
Spirituality. Ushaw College, nr

### Everybody's Welcome in East Anglia

Bishop Michael Evans has launched Everybody's Welcome in **East Anglia** this month with a [pastoral letter](#) on baptism and welcome, writing: "We are God's family together, and we share the responsibility to welcome everybody, and to love and care for one another. Supporting marriage and family life, and further developing family-friendly and child-friendly parishes, are a vital part of this. I ask each parish to continue to explore how this can be better achieved in practice."

### Top Tip for March 2006 – Speak to Someone New

Top Tips are designed to be 'labour-light' ways for parishes to get involved in Everybody's Welcome. This month we suggest inviting everyone at Mass to speak to someone they don't know or haven't spoken to before. This top tip came from a parish who does it regularly.. It can be difficult to approach a stranger but also rewarding as Mary found when she tried this out. "I thought I'd talk to a lady who always comes to church alone. Afterwards she thanked me and said no-one had ever approached her like that before at Mass. I felt very humble. I really did very little but it obviously meant a lot to her." [Read more](#) (including ideas for initiating a conversation with a stranger)....

### Everybody's Welcome in Clifton

In **Clifton**, Bishop Declan Lang made a similar request in his [Lenten Pastoral Letter](#): "Throughout the diocese this Lent I would like us to ask how do we ensure that our parishes are welcoming and hospitable. Thank God, there is a spirit of friendship in our communities but how can we better this?... What ever the need of people, hopefully within our communities they will find the healing presence of God."

### Pope invites families to join him in Valencia

Pope Benedict XVI will preside at the Fifth World Meeting of Families to be held in Valencia, Spain from July 1<sup>st</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> 2006. Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor and Bishop John Hine will be leading a contingent of families from England and Wales. "The theme of this World Meeting of Families, 'the transmission of faith in the family' fits in perfectly with our own Bishops' three year strategy for following up the concerns expressed during *Listening 2004*" commented Bishop Hine. "The final phase of Celebrating Family in 2008 will be developing resources for parents and grandparents to support them in Passing on the Faith. The World Meeting of Families could not have come at a better time for us. I look forward very much to sharing this experience with, I hope, families from every diocese in England and Wales." [Read more...](#)

### Everybody's Welcome in Plymouth

In **Plymouth** a new resource has just been co-produced by the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Department of Formation to help parishes respond to Listening 2004. *You are Welcome at church* is a

Durham. **Booking not yet open.**

## Other Dates

**Caritas' Annual Spring Conference. April 4-5 2006.**  
**Corpus Christi College**  
**Cambridge. [Booking form](#)**

### [Rediscovering Fatherhood](#)

**June 16-18 2006.** A weekend residential conference to explore issues of fatherhood in the context of theology, sociology, spirituality and personal experience.

[5<sup>th</sup> World Meeting of Families.](#)  
[July 1-9, 2006, Valencia](#)

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Powerpoint training pack to help parishes become ever more welcoming. As Bishop Christopher Budd writes in the preface: "If what we teach and proclaim about the centrality of marriage and family is true, both in the Church community as well as the wider society, we should be wearing ourselves out trying to turn it into good practice in our own communities. This pack invites all of us to reflect on where we are and why we should seek new ways of making our communities ever more welcoming."

## Inter-faith Marriage

Interfaith marriage was the focus of a seminar on February 8<sup>th</sup> jointly hosted by the Committee for Other Faiths, Marriage Care and the Marriage and Family Life Project Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The day seminar during National Marriage Week was a first attempt by the Conference to address the complex issues of inter-faith marriage across departments. Among the recommendations after a day of presentations on the experience of inter-faith marriage and family life were: more seminary and continuing ministerial formation for priests who are usually in the front line of pastoral care and support, but also for lay people; stronger networks of peer support for families affected; appropriate resources for marriage preparation both for the couples and their families. [Read a report](#) of the day on the [Diocese of Leeds family life ministry](#) website.

## Everybody's Welcome in Portsmouth

Being welcoming, inclusive parishes is a key theme of the diocesan Pastoral Plan and so fits well with Everybody's Welcome. A leaflet listing [Tips for Becoming a More Welcoming Parish](#) has been developed with the suggestion that parishes pick just one or two ideas. A series of [training days](#) around the diocese begins this month to support the Keeping in Touch programme. [Just Listen](#), a video training course from the Acorn Christian Foundation is available on loan to parishes.

## [www.everybodyswelcome.org.uk](http://www.everybodyswelcome.org.uk)

Don't forget that you can download plenty of [free resources](#) on the Everybody's Welcome website including the Ministry of Welcome training resource, the Keeping in Touch (KIT) pack, and Everybody's Welcome: Helping Your Parish to Become More Family Friendly. The site also hosts further [resources developed by parishes](#) and dioceses as well as [stories of parishes](#) that are already welcoming, family-sensitive and friendly. You can find [diocesan contacts and news](#). Why not create a link from your own website?

## Everybody's Welcome in Hexham & Newcastle

A [series of 18 meetings](#) across the diocese begins on April 25<sup>th</sup> organised by the diocesan team working on Everybody's Welcome. Marriage and Family Life coordinators Peter and Pauline Lavery are working with the Diocesan Education Service to offer parishes these opportunities to explore how they can become increasingly family-friendly and welcoming.

***"Family Life is a full-time job which is not so much about parents and children living under one roof as about their hearts beating together in harmony and love."*** Bishop Mark Jabale. [Pastoral letter](#) on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord 2006