



Marriage & Family Life E-Bulletin No 9 June 2006

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

www.celebratingfamily.org.uk

www.everybodyswelcome.org.uk

www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk

www.passingonthefaith.org.uk

www.listening2004.org.uk

Project dates

October 20-22 2006

Releasing Formidable Energy.
Symposium on Marital & Family
Spirituality. Ushaw College, nr
Durham. [Booking now open.](#)

October 19-21st 2007.

International Symposium on

Releasing Formidable Energy

is both the title and the aim of the International Symposium on Marital and Family Spirituality taking place on October 20th, 21st and 22nd 2006 at Ushaw College, nr Durham. This symposium is **the single most important national event in the Celebrating Family initiative**; the outcomes will determine the direction of the second, most crucial, stage, Home is a Holy Place. **Places are limited** so please book now. You can do so by downloading the brochure, booking form and draft timetable at [Home is a Holy Place](#).

Introducing Dr Thomas Knieps-Port le Roi

Thomas is our third speaker at the symposium and will be looking at how marital and family spirituality converge and diverge. Currently the holder of the INTAMS Chair for the Study of Marriage & Spirituality at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, Thomas was one of a team from INTAMS (International Academy for the Study of Marital Spirituality) who contributed to the Listening 2004 process. From 1995 until October 2005 Thomas was Senior Researcher at INTAMS and Editor of the INTAMS review. His English language articles include Marriage and the Church: Theological Reflections on an Underrated Relationship in Adrian Thatcher's *Celebrating Christian Marriage* (T&T Clark, 2002) and Sacramental Marriage and Holy Orders: Towards an Ecclesial Ministry for Married People in *Marriage and the Catholic Church* edited by Salzman, Kelly and O'Keefe. (Crossroad, 2005).

Top Tip for June 2006 – Visitors Especially Welcome

Top Tips are designed to be 'labour-light' ways for parishes to get involved in Everybody's Welcome. This month, with the summer holiday approaching we are inviting parishes to make visitors especially welcome. This kind of a welcome can change lives, as we heard when we asked for stories of welcoming parishes. *"As a person with little spiritual life, my only reason for going to Mass was to accompany a friend who had come to stay for the weekend. The experience was amazing: from the greeting at the door and the Canon's welcome to visitors from a variety of places (which he named), I felt an extraordinary welcome and throughout Mass there was a feeling of being in a family and surrounded by love strong enough to make me feel greatly moved and tearful."* [Read more....](#)

Domestic Church: a Must Read

"Where Two or Three are Gathered by Florence Caffrey Bourg is the first really serious look at domestic church and its implications that I have come across," writes Michael Quinn of the Family Caring Trust. "It

Passing on the Faith. Details to follow.

Other Dates

[The Changing Face of Britain: A CARJ seminar. June 21st](#)

Contact: Maureen Corsi, CARJ,
9 Henry Road, London N4
Email: maureen@carj.co.uk

[Day For Life: July 2nd 2007.](#)

Theme: Disability. Website:
www.dayforlife.org

[Oct.06](#) – the biggest gathering ever of Catholics aged 18-30. October 15/16. Birmingham Indoor Arena. www.oct06.org.uk

Contact:

Elizabeth Davies, Marriage & Family Life Project Officer, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX
Tel/Fax: 01902 621594 Email: Elizabeth.Davies@cbcew.org.uk

Diana Russell, Volunteer Administrative Support. Marriage & Family Life Project Office, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX
Tel: 020 7901 4823 (Thursdays only) Email: Diana.Russell@cbcew.org.uk

Liz Taite, Administrator
Dept for Christian Responsibility & Citizenship, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX
Tel: 020 7901 4828
Fax: 020 7901 4821
Email: Liz.Taite@cbcew.org.uk

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is extremely well grounded, written by a mother of four children who knows the reality of modern family living yet is also a professor of theology familiar with the detail of Church documents. I think it is a gentle, positive, encouraging book for hassled families, but it also points to inconsistencies such as the assumption that only a particular kind of family is a domestic church. This book will radically change the understanding of domestic church and I recommend it highly as a matter of urgency. In fact I think anyone talking about family life in the church is going to be embarrassed if they are not aware of the ideas in this book!" Bourg, Florence Caffrey. *Where two or three are gathered: Christian families as domestic churches*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2004

Secular Lives, Sacred Hearts?

Rev Dr Alan Billings, Director of the Centre for Ethics and Religion at Lancaster University talked to [Churches Together for Families](#) at their AGM last month. A sociologist of religion as well as vicar of a rural parish, Billings reviewed some of his research into the significance of the church in a secular world. Why, when religious practice has decreased so significantly, do people still approach the church for weddings, baptism and funerals? Billings discovered that parents valued baptism for many reasons, including a rite of passage (often as the first sacrament of the couple if unmarried) and an opportunity to clarify parental expectations of each other and their future. Billings also reported that liturgy remains an increasingly important Church asset in supporting individuals as they navigate the very worst and the very best of times. Billings' book, *Secular Lives, Sacred Hearts: the Church in a Time of no Religion*, explores these themes in more detail.

Did you know that

92% of young people will experience bereavement before the age of 16? Or that 1 in 3 children will have experienced parental separation by the same age? High numbers of these youngsters have never spoken with anyone about their experiences, according to the Joseph Rowntree Trust. Fortunately there is a growing movement working through schools and parishes to foster the emotional healing of these children. Rainbows already has 500 centres in schools across Great Britain, providing accredited training and materials to support bereaved children aged from 3 to 18 years, but is looking to expand their services. To enquire about setting up a centre locally or to learn more about the mission of Rainbows contact Sr Philippa Kohlbecker, National Director philrainbows@gb.aol.com or visit the Rainbows website: www.rainbows.org.uk

Pastoral Support for Mental Health

The needs of the mentally ill and their carers were discussed at the Making Everybody Welcome conference at High Leigh last January. There seemed to be little Catholic community support currently available to families in this situation. A small working group has met to explore the needs and resources available. They would like to hear from any group or person currently working to support individuals or families dealing with mental ill-health issues. Please contact Elizabeth Davies if you can help.