

Family



Celebrating
Family Life

**A parish kit to celebrate the
5th World Meeting of Families
With Pope Benedict XVI**

Sunday 9th July, 2006

**P
A
S
S
I
N
G**

on the

Faith

A Resource from
the Bishops' Committee
for the Family and for Life



Passing

on the

Faith

In a nutshell

5th World Meeting of Families

July 9th 2006

What:

An international gathering of families with Pope Benedict XVI – initiated by Pope John Paul II in 1994 and held every three years.

Where:

- * In Valencia, Spain
- * Also celebrated in parishes throughout the world.

Theme:

The Transmission of Faith in the Family

Australian strategy:

- * Affirm families for their irreplaceable role in passing on the faith
- * Provide simple suggestions for everyday situations
- * Encourage further reflection on this vital topic
- * Pray for families
- * Build a sense of solidarity with the Universal Church

This kit contains:

- * A reproducible leaflet: 'Families: Passing on the Faith'
- * Bulletin clip material
- * Liturgy suggestions
- * Homily notes
- * Short DVD for reflection in liturgy

Thank you for celebrating the gift of family.

A Letter to Parish Personnel

Dear Friends,

On Sunday July 9, I urge you to join with the Church throughout Australia to celebrate 'The Transmission of the Faith in the Family'.

This day is part of a worldwide celebration of faith and family, culminating with the 5th World Meeting of the Holy Father with Families in Valencia, Spain, on the same date.

I enclose a kit of materials including:

- A leaflet which can be easily copied and handed out at mass;
- Bulletin clips;
- A 3 min DVD for reflection during the parish mass
- Homily and liturgy notes;

This material can also be downloaded from the website of the Bishops Committee for the Family & for Life (www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bc/familife).

I believe the issues facing families represent some of the most important challenges facing our Church and our society. I strongly encourage you to use the enclosed materials on July 9 as part of our world-wide celebration.

Thank you for your ongoing support for families,

In Christ,

Bishop Eugene Hurley
Chairman,
Bishops Committee for the Family and for Life



How to use this kit

The basics:

1. Photocopy the handout *Passing on the Faith* and distribute at Sunday Mass on 9th July (Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time).
2. Consult liturgy notes for this day.
3. Consider adding clipboard items in bulletin on that Sunday
4. Consider playing the short reflective/ motivational DVD during the Sunday liturgy. Possibilities: during homily, after Communion, at the end of Mass. It could also be played at other parish events.

Bulletin Clipboard:

Passing on the faith in the family

As we celebrate Mass today, hundreds of thousands of people are gathering around Pope Benedict XVI in Valencia in Spain for the 5th World Meeting of Families. The theme is "The Transmission of the Faith in the Family". Let's pray for all families that they may be ever more effective places where the faith is passed on.

The Transmission of the Faith in the Family

This is the theme of the 5th World Meeting of Families that is taking place in Valencia, Spain today. Let's join in solidarity with Pope Benedict XVI and all those attending by praying for all families. Take home the handout 'Passing on the Faith', available in the parish today.

The Transmission of the Faith in the Family

As we celebrate Mass today, hundreds of thousands of people are gathering around Pope Benedict XVI in Valencia in Spain for the 5th World Meeting of Families. The theme is "The Transmission of the Faith in the Family". Let's join in solidarity with all those attending by praying for all families. Take home the handout 'Passing on the Faith', available in the parish today

Notes for the Liturgy

Introduction

In our celebration today, we rejoice in God's two-fold gifts of faith and family. Most of us received our faith through our families. And it is in our families that we most live out our faith.

Penitential Rite

We come to the Father through Jesus, so as members of his body, the Church, we pray:

Lord, you show your love in the caring of our family members. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, you make us members of your faith family. Christ have mercy.

Lord, you call us to share your love and your message of forgiveness with those closest to us. Lord, have mercy.

Prayers of the Faithful

Introduction: As adopted children of the Father, with confidence let us express our deepest needs.

Intercessions:

- We pray for Pope Benedict XVI as he gathers with families from around the world in Valencia today. May he continue to provide wise and loving leadership.
- We pray that government and community leaders may provide justice for all families, especially those with special needs.
- We pray for those who experience hurt in their families, that they may be comforted and not lose heart.
- We pray that we may find ways to show our appreciation of our family members and that we may recognise the presence of Jesus in our relationships.
- We pray for all families – may they be places where the faith can be shared and encouraged.
- We pray for those who are facing illness and severe stress – especially among members of our parish families.
- We pray for the faithful departed, especially those of our parish family.

Conclusion:

God of love, you gave us families in which we can grow up to experience love and mature in faith. May we learn to support our family members so that we can continue to grow in faith. Amen.

Introduction to the Lord's Prayer

Jesus called his Father 'Abba'. In the same intimate way, let us pray to the Father of all families using his words:

Final Blessing

May your relationships with your families be marked by appreciation and love. Amen.

May your faith in Jesus be your source of strength in times of weakness. Amen.

And may the blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you and your families forever. Amen.

Homily Ideas

(9th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

1st Reading: Ez 2:2-5

2nd Reading: 2 Cor 12:7-10

Gospel: Mk 6:1-6

Today is the conclusion of 5th World Meeting of Families in Valencia, Spain

At this moment, hundreds of thousands of people are gathering around Pope Benedict XVI in Valencia in Spain for the 5th World Meeting of Families. It is a bit like World Youth Day, but for families. These meetings were first called by Pope John Paul II and occur every three years in a different continent. There is a Pilgrimage Group from Australia attending at the moment, led by Bishop Eugene Hurley, of Port Pirie Diocese, who is Chairman of the Bishops Committee for the Family and for Life. (You may wish to refer to a couple or family sent as delegates from your Diocese to this meeting and who would be part of this Pilgrimage Group).

Passing on the faith in the family

Each World Meeting has a different theme. This time it is 'The Transmission of the Faith in the Family'. This theme of passing on the faith is of great importance to all of us. Today's first reading from Ezekiel, reminds us that God is a God of love who yearns to bring back his people to know him. He constantly looks for ways of passing on this message through the generations, no matter how hard of heart his people seem. To believe in a loving God, most children need to experience love - to grow up in a climate of deep personal caring from parents and family members.

We can judge ourselves too harshly

Most parents are very concerned about the faith practice of their children, or, more often, the lack of it. It is so easy for parents to blame themselves or to blame others for things being different to when we were young. Yet, what is most amazing is the enormous effort and love and prayer that the parents puts into rearing their children. Parents are tireless in their care for their children and only God can know the extent of the personal sacrifices involved.

And we can overlook the 'prophets' in our midst

In today's first reading, Ezekiel tells us that God is going to send a prophet to his people. Further on in the passage, he warns that they will not accept the prophet because he will be one of them. And the Gospel shows us how true this was. It also gives us insight into how we see our family. It contains one of the most quoted lines in the Gospels: "A prophet is only despised in his own country and among his own relations and in his own house".

We would all like to think that if Jesus were to come into our parish today and work miracles, we wouldn't reject him. However, what if he came from our own personal family? Are we able to find the good in the most difficult person in the family? Sometimes the difficult person in the family is the one who changes us most.

Family: the 'extraordinary in the ordinary'

Generally, people tend to think of their own family as just an 'ordinary' family. We can take each other for granted and overlook the gifts and goodness of those closest to us. There are myriads of little caring acts that take place in families day in



and day out. Family is the place where, despite all the divisions and upsets of life, we have our best chance of being accepted – of being taken back. Family life is the 'extraordinary in the ordinary'. As Mother Teresa said, "We don't have to do great things with love, we only have to do small things with great love". Family is also the place where, far more than anywhere else, in their private prayer, people are likely to pray earnestly and by name for each of us. That's why we call the Christian family the 'Domestic Church'. It's the place where our faith, our love, and our values are passed on.

Let's do something about it...

In this Mass, let's ask the Spirit to fill us with an appreciation for the amazing love and commitment and caring of our parents, our children, our family members. Let us give thanks to God for family members who have helped us on our faith journey and let us pray particularly for those family members who are struggling to find their way in their faith. You could take home the handout on the theme of 'Passing on the Faith' and talk about it with others or pass it on to family members. We could start today by affirming and thanking our family members – whether it be in the sign of peace at this Mass or in a telephone call or a little note after we go home. Let's pray for each other and give thanks to God for each other.

... and remember that in Christ all things are possible

And above all, let's not keep dwelling on our weaknesses. As St Paul reminds us in today's epistle, "when I am weak I am strong". One of Paul's great insights that he passes on to us in this passage was that Christ works through our weaknesses. It is precisely when we think we have failed, that the Lord can work especially through us. Whatever this thorn in Paul's side was, he felt a failure at not being able to overcome it. Then he realized that the Lord's grace was enough and the Lord's power worked especially through Paul's weakness.

... in solidarity with the Universal Church

So let's unite ourselves in this parish, in this corner of the globe, with Pope Benedict XVI and with those meeting today in Valencia. Together with the rest of the Church throughout the world let's put our efforts to pass on the faith in our families in the Lord's hands. Let us praise him, praise each other and let's allow him to work through us and to bring the Lord into each others' lives. And let's pray that we don't overlook the 'prophets' in our own families.