



Moment Two: Families of Faith

Monday: Our Family at Home

Keywords:

FAMILY
FAITH
CELEBRATIONS
CUSTOMS
TRADITION
SACRAMENT
INITIATION
COMMITMENT

Our theme for Catholic Schools Week this year is **Families of Faith**. There are many different types of family in our world. Pope Francis says that our Catholic Church is a 'family of families' (*Amoris Laetitia*, 87).

Today we will consider three questions:

- What is a 'family'?
- What makes a family of faith?
- How can we live out our faith in our family life?

B

Brainstorm

What is a 'family'?

We come from many different types of family.

Pope Francis says, 'There is no stereotype of the ideal family but rather a challenging mosaic made up of different realities with all their joys, hopes and problems' (*AL* 57).

W

Watch: What is Family? www.worldmeeting2018.ie/en/resources

D

Discussion

In group of three, tell each other about the people in your family.

- Did you find that your families were all different?
- What was similar?
- If you were asked the question 'What is family?' what answer would you give? Write down your answer in your copy then discuss it with the class.



B

Brainstorm

What makes a family of faith?

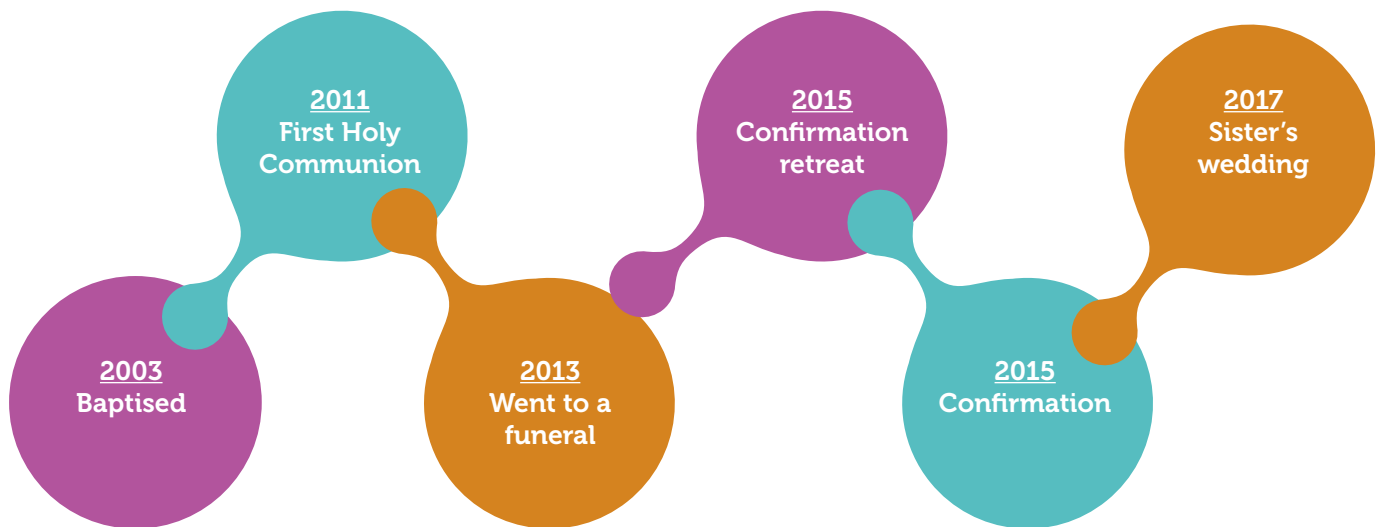
There are times when we celebrate special occasions as a family. Can you name some of them?

Just over a month ago we celebrated Christmas, the feast of the birth of Jesus. At the end of this week, on Friday, 2 February, the Church celebrates the feast day of the **Presentation of Jesus in the Temple**. Jesus grew up in the Jewish faith and, in the tradition of the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought him to the temple in Jerusalem forty days after his birth. At that time, it was the custom to bring the newborn child to the temple together with a sacrifice of thanksgiving in the form of two turtle doves or two young pigeons.

Like Jesus' family, our families also have religious customs that mark various stages in our lives.

- How do we celebrate the birth of a baby in the Christian tradition today?
- What other religious celebrations are family occasions?

Peter's Timeline of Sacramental Celebrations





A Activity

Draw a timeline of your own faith experience, similar to Peter's. Fill it with moments from your life.

Include:

- The sacraments you have celebrated
- A time when you felt God was close to you
- A time when you prayed
- A time when you saw or heard something that made you take time to stop and look or listen
- Anything else that has made you wonder about your faith

D Discussion

The sacraments of initiation are Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

In groups, read each of the following aloud and answer the questions.

Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism isn't just a celebration to mark the birth of a new baby; it is much more. It is a ceremony in which we are welcomed into the Christian community. When we are baptised we are called to live a life of hope and faith in the resurrection of Jesus. The symbols used in Baptism are very powerful: water, oil, a candle and a white garment. They symbolise new life as a Christian, lived in the light of Christ. This is not just a tradition; it is the first commitment we make to being a Christian.

- Do you know who your godparents are?
- Is anyone in the group a godparent?
- What do you have to promise when you became a godparent?
- Can you remember what each of the symbols of Baptism stand for?

Sacrament of Eucharist

At Mass, Jesus is present in the word that is read, in the people gathered, but he also becomes present in the Eucharist when the bread and wine are consecrated. When we receive Jesus in the Eucharist we should be transformed to be better people. Jesus taught us to love one another. Sometimes it is quite difficult to love other people, but when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist we believe that he will help us to live as he taught us.

- Where did you make your First Holy Communion?
- What do you remember about the day?
- What was your experience of your First Holy Communion as a moment of faith in your childhood?



Sacrament of Confirmation

We believe that when we are confirmed the Holy Spirit empowers us to live better lives. Through the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation we are fully 'initiated' as members of the Church.

Confirmation is not a traditional celebration to mark the end of primary school! It is the final stage of becoming a Christian. It marks a choice we make to live our lives as Christians. It is the beginning of a lifetime of trying to live as Jesus taught us.

- Where were you confirmed?
- What do you remember about the day?
- Can you think of a time when you made a choice to do the right thing? How do you think your faith may have influenced that choice?

A

Activity

Look up each of the following references:

Luke 22:19–20

Matthew 28:18–20

Acts 2:1–4

Matthew 26:26–8

Write down your thoughts on how each relates to the sacraments of initiation.

R

Reflective Exercise

How can we live out faith in family life?

(To be led by the teacher. Reflective instrumental music may be played quietly during this time.)

Jesus said: 'A new command I give you: Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' (Jn 13:34–5)

- What do you think Jesus meant by this command? Write down a sentence explaining your thoughts.

Pope Francis has called on all of us to live the best lives we can as families by learning to really love one another. In *Amoris Laetitia* he tells us that we need to develop a way of being patient with other members of our family so that when things don't go the way we would like we can accept that without getting angry or frustrated (91–2). Christian love is shown by the way we treat others, when we are actively at the service of other people.

- Can you think of a time when you have been impatient with others in your family?
- How do you help other members of your family?



Real love is being happy and not jealous when someone else does well or has something that makes them happy. Envy makes us unhappy, 'it shows that we are not concerned for the happiness of others, but only with our own wellbeing' (AL 95). Love is about being sensitive to others and how they are feeling and being careful about how we speak to them.

- Can you think of a time that you were jealous of your brother or sister?
- Do you think carefully before you speak, or do you often just say the first thing that comes into your head?

R

Reflective Exercise

If we can learn to forgive one another, to be glad for each other when good things happen, not to judge each other or say hurtful things, we will be much happier people in ourselves and the people around us will be much happier too. (*Pause, then read the text again.*)

- If you were to really live by this text for a week, what might you change about the way you behave at home? Decide on one thing you are going to do this week to be a better person at home and describe it below.

A large, blank sheet of lined paper with a red vertical margin line on the right side, intended for students to write their reflections.

H

Hymn

Play the video of the World Meeting of Families 2018 official hymn to end the class.