

Faith *and* **Family**

OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP



THE FAMILY – A SCHOOL OF LOVE

ST. BRENDAN'S PARISH FAMILY

MUIRHOUSE

OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP

The theme “**Our Roots Run Deep**” is found in many poems and in many books, both fact and fiction. Tracing family roots, Ancestry as we call it, is now a popular pastime. We can say that love needs deep roots. That connection with our sense of family in terms of faith and Church, is rooted in the Sacrament of Baptism. Do you remember the day(s) that you took your child/children to the church for Baptism? What are your memories? Think back, either on your own or with other members of your family!



Why did you ask for Baptism for your child? You **did** ask for it! Unlike other ways of caring for your child, it is not a legal requirement. Here is a little reminder of the questions and answers you exchanged with the priest from the Rite of Baptism.

Priest: What do you ask of God’s Church for your little boy/girl

Parents: Baptism.

Priest: You have asked to have [your child]..... baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

Parents: We do

So, why did you want the Sacrament of Baptism for your child anyway? This is a very important question! Sit with it for a while. Turn it over in your mind for a few days or a week. In fact, take as long as you need to answer the question. It was a wonderful act of parental love on your part. Now take a few moments to thank God for the gift of faith that prompted this request for your child.



Almighty God, giver of life, You have called us by name and pledged to each of us Your faithful love. I pray for my child (name). When the Spirit came down upon Jesus at His Baptism in the Jordan, You revealed Him as Your own Beloved Son. Keep me, Your child, born of water and the Spirit, faithful to my calling as a Christian parent. Renew in me the promises of my own baptism, and the commitment I made at my child's Baptism. Bring about Your plans for our family as You have promised, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The decision to have your baby baptised will no doubt have come after serious thought. Baptism does not end once the Service is over and family and friends come together to celebrate this special part of your family life. Nor is Baptism something which concerns the child alone: **you are involved!** Bringing your child to the baptismal font in St. Brendan's or in your parish at the time, if elsewhere, is a solemn and formal but also beautiful expression of a commitment to raise your child in the Christian faith. On that very matter recall for a minute these important words spoken by the priest that day:

Priest: By water and the Holy Spirit [he/she]..... is to receive the gift of new life from God, who is love. **On your part**, you must make it your constant care to bring him/her up in the practice of the faith.

A member of the family, e.g. Father or Godfather, then lights the child's Baptism candle from the Paschal Candle and the Priest says:

Priest: Receive the Light of Christ

Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. This child [of yours]....., has been enlightened by Christ. He/she is to walk always as a child of the light. May he/she keep the flame of faith alive in his/her heart. When the Lord comes, may he/she go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.



The prayers used in the Sacrament of Baptism quoted above states that **“this candle is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly”**. How do you do that? There is no single word answer to this question but rather a combined approach in the unique circumstances of your home. The list provided in this booklet might provide a few examples that will be helpful. It is not a full list and you will discover many of your own ideas as you speak with your child in your own life at home. In doing so you are “a School of Love”.

SOME IDEAS FOR SHARING FAITH IN YOUR HOME

1. Starting early is always worthwhile! (As with most aspects of parenting).
2. Say prayers with your child particularly before bed-time
3. Put up a crucifix in a prominent place for display in your home
4. Introduce (in a very natural way) targeted conversation about faith matters, about God, and the things of God.
5. Bring your children to family gatherings here in the parish.
6. Organise parent-child activities that help you to talk about faith and promote faith. As a parish we will provide you with ideas for doing that. Please use them.
7. Begin new family traditions based on the seasons celebrated in the Church calendar for example Lent, Easter, Pentecost.
8. When you go on holiday visit the shrines of our country and other places in the world.
9. Make going to Mass a priority, even while traveling away from home.
10. Teach charity to your children, by what you say and do.
11. Demonstrate love in and around your own home for your spouse, those you live with, your children, your neighbours, and the world.
12. Talk freely about the presence of God in the joys and sorrows of our life together as a family.
13. Show hospitality always and welcome others into your home.
14. Participate - perhaps - in a lay ministry and/or activity of St Brendan's parish as you feel the Holy Spirit is leading you over a sustained period.
15. Allow your children to see and experience you in private prayer.
Encourage your children to pray daily on their own, for example, the Morning and/or Night Prayer or Grace before Meals.

Children first learn to love by loving their parents. If they see and hear their parents turn to God to thank him for the good things in their life and to seek his guidance and comfort in difficult moments, this behaviour is taken on board. On the other hand, when Sunday Mass and times of prayer are ignored or described as an interruption to more pleasant activities and interests, it quickly becomes clear to the child that these commitments can be put off or ignored all together without any loss.. Giving time to matters of faith either never becomes or stops being a welcome and valued part of family living.

Take a look please at the data from this recent piece of research.



Of parents who report that their **faith is extremely important** in their daily lives, **67 % of teenagers** report that faith is extremely in their daily lives.

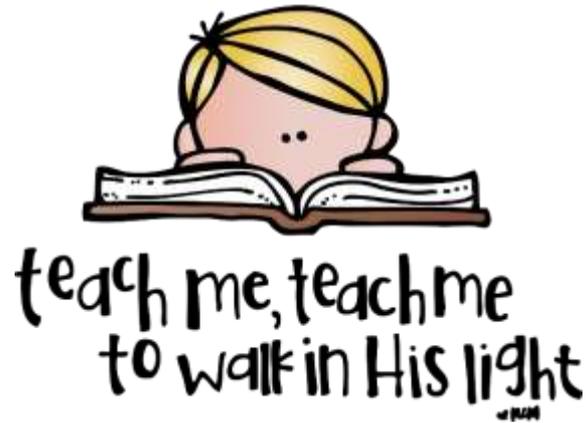
Of parents for whom **faith is somewhat important** in their daily lives, only **8% of teenagers** report that faith is extremely important in their lives.

Of parents for whom **faith is not at all important**, only **2% of their teens** report that faith is extremely important in their lives.

As Christians we believe that every child has a **divine origin** and an **eternal destiny**.



OUR CHURCH TEACHES



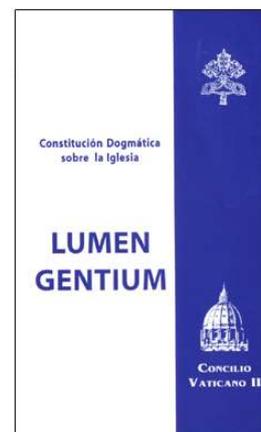
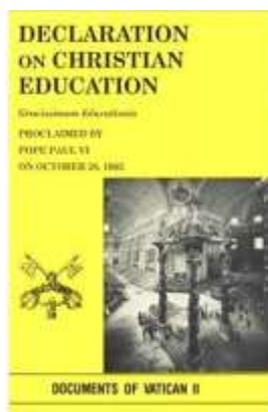
There are several major themes that form the heart of the Church's teaching regarding faith, parents and their children.

Above all the Catholic Church has consistently emphasised the importance of parents above all others in the education of their children. Yet, the unique role of the parent-educator doesn't mean that others aren't available to help you as a parent. Priests, teachers, leaders in the Children's Liturgy team, grandparents, godparents and indeed every parishioner collaborate and accompany parents in the religious formation of their children. The first principle of Catholic Christian Education, is that every person has "***an inalienable right [one that can't be challenged or ignored] to an education that is in keeping with their ultimate goal, their ability, and their culture and tradition***".

This **connection between rights and duties** is made particularly clear in the Declaration on Christian Education (*Gravissimum Educationis* - in English, *The Most Serious Form of Education*) which was issued by Pope Paul VI in 1965 and

since then almost forty church documents have in some way underlined and emphasised this basic theme: Education begins in the family home with parents. Let us take a closer look at the Declaration on Christian Education. It states:

1. Since parents have given children their physical life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate them. Therefore, parents must be recognised as the first and the most important educators.
2. This role in education is so important that it is very hard to compensate for it where it is found to be lacking.
3. Parents are the ones who must create a family atmosphere which is made dynamic by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is nourished. The family is the first school of the social virtues that every society needs.



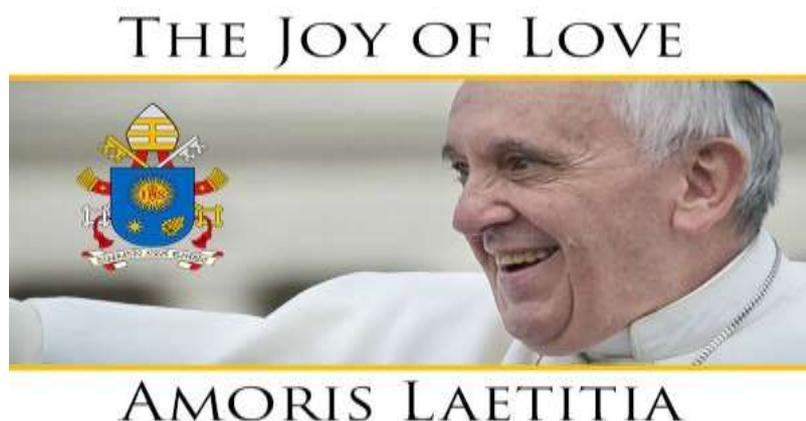
Another of the documents of the Second Vatican Council, called *Lumen Gentium* (in English Light of the Nations), describes the family as **the 'Domestic Church'** because it is the first place where young, baptised Christians learn about their faith. In St. Brendan's we prefer to use the name "The School of Love." The **fundamental aim of the Catholic Church** is to put people 'not only

in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ'. The person that is going to introduce a child to Jesus has to be someone they trust and love; someone who is in their lives for the long run; someone who lives the faith; someone who can share their own journey, joys, and struggles; someone they can turn to at any time - in other words, their parents. Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children, and the family is the first and foremost place where children learn to love and reverence God.

Therefore, every Christian home should be a **“School of Love” and we have taken this name to use for our booklet.**

Pope Francis' has written a letter of encouragement to all people, whether or not Roman Catholics. He has called this Apostolic exhortation “The Joy of Love” (in Latin: *Amoris Laetitia*). He offers all readers some practical words of advice and sensitivity:

“No family drops down from heaven perfectly formed; families need constantly to grow and mature in the ability to love ... All of us are called to keep moving towards something greater than ourselves and our families, and every family must feel this constant impulse. Let us make this journey as families, let us keep walking together. May we never lose heart because of our limitations, or ever stop seeking that fullness of love and communion which God holds out before us.”



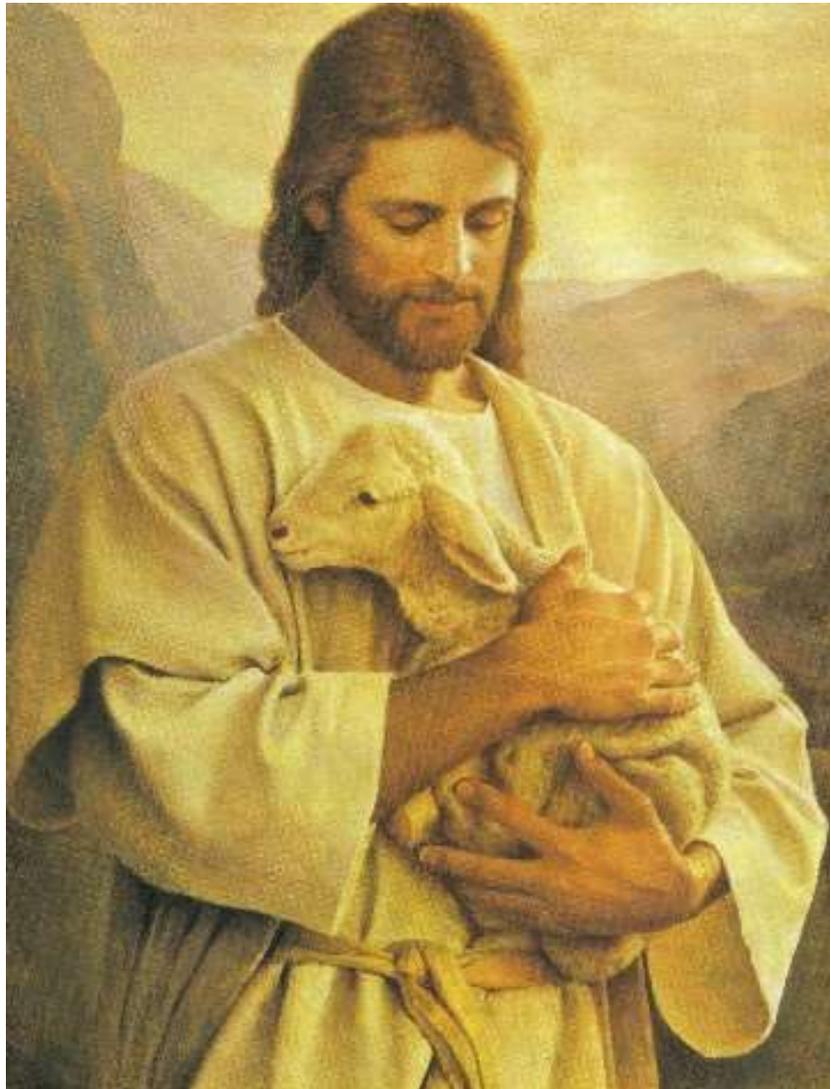


A MATTER FOR EVERYONE!

As a Church it is our responsibility to support families. The parish of St. Brendan's must help each family in our care to see their home as 'a School of Love', where the faith is modelled and children are brought up to live a Christian way of life. Without doubt children are the greatest gifts that God can entrust to a family. Quite a responsibility! For this reason, it is a **shared responsibility** and **accompaniment** coupled with listening to and loving the families must be a priority **for all people who are faithfully and fearlessly engaged in the religious education of our children** but also for **every parishioner** no matter where they are on their life's journey. It is in the ordinary routines of daily life that parents are constantly forming their children by what they say and do. Children learn naturally from their parents. Parents teach their children how to read, behave, talk; children learn from their parents simply by being around them. Prayer and faith matters should also be a very natural part of that whole experience of family life. It is a great blessing and grace for **the whole parish family of St Brendan's in Muirhouse** to support parents in their own faith journey and watch them teach their children. It brings great joy to this worshipping community when we watch families pray together and see them participate in the pastoral events that are organised in our parish hall and day trips to other places like the beach at St Andrew's in Fife.



PARENTS WHO ARE SHEPHERDS AFTER THE HEART OF JESUS CHRIST



This beautiful image of Jesus the Good Shepherd is so instructive for us. The Good Shepherd goes before the sheep to show the way and is infinitely patient with them. He protects them and carries the lambs in his arms. We pray that the parents of this community will fulfil their responsibility to shepherd their children in the way of Jesus Christ. To be a shepherd after the heart of Jesus Christ will be the goal of those who care for the sheep.



Children's Liturgy Room

Altar Servers Room





A SCHOOL OF LOVE IN YOUR HOME

ST. BRENDAN'S PARISH FAMILY



MAY/JUNE

<p>WEEK BEGINNING SUN 17th MAY 6th SUNDAY OF EASTER</p>	<p>WEEK BEGINNING SUN 24th MAY 7th SUNDAY OF EASTER</p>	<p>WEEK BEGINNING SUN 31st MAY PENTECOST SUNDAY</p>	<p>WEEK BEGINNING SUN 7th JUNE THE MOST HOLY TRINITY</p>	<p>WEEK BEGINNING SUN 14th JUNE CORPUS CHRISTI The Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus</p>	<p>WEEK BEGINNING SUN 21st JUNE 12th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</p>
<p>May is the month of Mary the Mother of God. Say a Hail Mary together for all those who are sick. Think of family, friends and neighbours and all those in our local hospitals. (Wishaw General Hospital and Netherton Court Care Home) Talk about Thursday's Feast Day – The Ascension. Listen into our streamed Mass</p>	<p>Jesus prayed to his Father in heaven, May they be one, as we are one. John 17:11 Talk to your child about the importance of unity and being one family. Jesus had told the disciples that they are God's friends and to let the whole world know that God wants everyone to care about other people.</p>	<p>The Liturgical Colour of Pentecost is Red because on this day the Holy Spirit appeared as flames of fire. What can we do to highlight this today...a red Tshirt/hair bow etc Pentecost is also the BirthDay of The Church. How about baking a cake and putting red icing on top or a red ribbon or candle</p>	<p>The Trinity is difficult for children (and adults) to understand because it is beyond our human thinking. Use objects e.g. traffic lights, an egg, a tricycle to provide examples of how something can be 3 at the same time as 1. Of course, this can be an oversimplification of God. Try to emphasise relationship between the 3 parts.</p>	<p>Try to explain that the Feast of Corpus Christi is a remembrance of the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Perhaps you could arrange to have a special tea/dinner to celebrate. During the meal share with your child the importance of Holy Communion in the life of the Church.</p>	<p>One of the messages from today's readings is that telling people about Jesus it is not just a task for priests. Everyone is called to show their faith. Light a candle as a sign of this. On Wed of this week the Church celebrates the BirthDay of John the Baptist. The Church celebrates only 3 birthdays. Who are the other two? Give a prize for the right answer!</p>

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SOME HELPFUL INFORMATION

Ascension Thursday

“The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had instructed them. Jesus approached and said to them, ‘All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, **I am with you always, until the end of the age.**” Matthew 28:16-20

The Feast of the Ascension comes 40 days after the Resurrection celebrating Christ’s ascension into heaven.

The Story of Pentecost

“When Pentecost day came round, they had all met together, when suddenly there came from heaven a sound of a strong wind which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and **there appeared to them tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them.** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and began to speak different languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech”. **(Acts of the Apostles Ch 2: 1-4)**

The word Pentecost is from the Greek language and it’s literally a translation of the word “fifty” or “fiftieth” day. This feast is celebrated 50 days after Easter Sunday.