



FAMILY SUPPORT

CARITAS PLYMOUTH FOCUS SHEET No. 3

Caritas Plymouth is here to support and encourage parishes to reach out to those who need our help. This focus sheet is one of a series, covering topics of interest that parishes can use to reach out to those in need.

There can be many needs in a family. No two families are alike, but we all have the same goal; to nurture and bring up our children to feel loved, valued and in a position to eventually step out on their own and live independent, successful and happy lives. Also, to stay in touch with each other, so that there is always someone who cares and will look out for you. There are all sorts of reasons why a family might need help or support and as a church family often it can fall to our friendships to offer that helping hand. This could be on a very personal one to one basis or on a grander scale of offering toddler groups, resource networking or family fun events.

What can our parishes do?

Build a place of welcome. Everyone should feel welcome in our parishes, no matter what age. Get to know people's names and use them. It sounds simple enough, but there are still places where this just doesn't happen. Think of the model; Noticed, Known, Loved. Intergenerational communication and sharing of interests between all ages produces such benefits for all parties. The young are fascinated to find out about the past and the older generation thrive on the energy of the young. Is there something you can do to bring your congregation together, not just for Mass? Maybe hold a social event where all are invited and welcome, or initiate conversations to get to know the skills and talents of those who are in your community. A well-placed compliment can lead to all sorts of integration as well as building someone's self-esteem.

Keep up to date with the youth events that are happening around the diocese. All are welcome at these events and although some come with a charge this should not put anyone off attending. Those who organise the events are always happy to discuss solutions for financial support. You can be added to their email list here youth@prcdtr.org.uk or see notices on their page here <https://www.facebook.com/Diocese-of-Plymouth-Youth-Events-105255267686605>

You could set up a messy church group and use free resources from the Celebrate@Home's website <https://www.celebratetrust.org/celebratereathome> or Cafod <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/For-families> and there are plenty of free online resources that can be used to create a whole lot of fun. <https://www.catholicicing.com/catholic-crafts-for-kids-free/>

If you would like to learn more about the Caritas Plymouth project, please contact Tanya on 01364 645421 or email tanya.trevena@prcdtr.org.uk

Prayer

Lord, you have given the world the greatest gifts, by blessing us with children and relatives who share their love and support as caring and nurturing families. We pray for all of those who do not feel a part of a family or who are distanced from their relatives. May we as a church recognise the treasure you have placed in each and every one of us and may we be a fraternity that offers hope, friendship, companionship and someone to walk with through life's special journey.

We ask this in Jesus' Name
Amen



Psalm 133:1 How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!



What can I do?

Maybe you might like to consider becoming a volunteer for a service such as Safe Families. Safe Families goal is to help families that are isolated and struggling. They recognise that all children deserve to thrive, but there can be times where they need a little bit of help and so they work hard to train and support volunteers and connect them with isolated families, so they can build relationships that bring hope. They need volunteers to encourage families either by phone or visiting in person once a week (Family Friends), or perhaps by helping if you have resources that could be donated to a family (Resource Friends) If you would be interested in joining them or finding out more information you can contact susyputnam@safefamilies.uk or look at their website www.safefamilies.uk



What other support is out there?

There are 11 libraries around the city that all offer free membership to borrow books and resources, use of their computers and Wi-Fi and they even run activities including story time, board games, Lego club and craft sessions for adults and children. There is lots going on during the holidays too, to fill up those days when you are not sure what to do. Follow the link to find out more or pop into your local library. <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/libraries/childrenandyoungpeople>

For those families looking for free fun activities, including food. The council will be running its successful fit and fed program in our big parks this Summer and many churches and organisations will be putting on feast of fun activities too. Some sessions come with a need for booking, so follow the links to find out which events are closest to you;

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sportandleisure/fitandfed/fitandfedontour>

<https://transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk/initiatives/feast-of-fun>

If you are struggling or in need of a little support with parenting, then you can look for help from the Catholic Children's Society <https://www.ccsplymouth.org.uk/> or Young minds can help in supporting the teenage years <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/> You may also find extra advice here: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/adultsandchildrensocialcare/childrenfamilieschildcareandearlyyearstrainingandsupport/supportparentsandfamilies>

For anyone struggling to meet the financial or practical needs of a new baby you can send a message to babybasicsplymouth@gmail.com

Any family that has suffered a bereavement can seek support and advice from Rainbows who support the family, their schools and the community around them <https://rainbowsgb.org/> Jeremiah's Journey also give great advice and support <https://jeremiahsjourney.org.uk/>

Stuck for some ideas of how to spend some quality time together? Check out some of the free ideas here <https://www.mykidstime.com/things-to-do/101-things-to-do-with-kids-that-will-cost-nothing-but-time/>

Share with your kids all those favourite things you did when you were a kid. They will bring back happy memories and possibly lead to more as you create your own. Enjoy being together 😊

