

APRIL 2012 - SACBC FAMILY LIFE DESK NEWS.

From the Coordinator's Desk.

(This is an extract from MARFAM's April monthly e-newsletter.)

Information about all recognised national family organisations is listed on www.marfam.org.za/blog. Contact them for their news. A slot on www.sacbc.org.za will in future also provide this news.

The family theme for **2012 is DAY BY DAY WITH GOD AND FAMILY** is incorporated into the Family Life Desk's activities in particular into parish family ministry. The reflections published on the website are extracts from the 100 reflections booklet **DAY BY DAY WITH GOD AND FAMILY** and the selected ones are also translated into local languages as before.

The family calendar/year planner and parish family ministry workshops in particular will promote these for developing family spirituality, relationship enrichment and for creating awareness of family issues at parish level.



1. (15 in the booklet.) APRIL THEME. GOD AND FAMILIES.

Family spirituality and prayer are important throughout the whole year but as Holy Week and Easter usually fall in April spirituality has become the special family theme for the month. Family prayer, particularly the rosary, was promoted through the campaign "The Family that prays together stays together." Spirituality is more than saying prayers which could sometimes become empty words.

Everyone has spirituality, an awareness of God's presence in some way in their lives. Recognising God's presence then within family relationships and sharing on this with one another is a very special gift for strengthening families.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them. Matthew 18:19.

JANUARY	: New Beginnings	JULY	: Grandparents
FEBRUARY	: Car for the Sick	AUGUST	: Gender Matters
MARCH	: Human Rights and Family Rights. Culture	SEPTEMBER	: Marriage and
APRIL	: God and Families Vocation	OCTOBER	: Mission and
MAY	: Family, Life and Parenting	NOVEMBER	: Loss
JUNE	: Youth Matters	DECEMBER	: Family, a Gift.

March was taken up with meetings, parish visits to promote the concept of Parish Family Ministry, the theme HUMAN RIGHTS ARE FAMILY RIGHTS and materials for use in families as this must be seen as one of the most important aspect of family ministry. Also included this month was participation in the anti-abortion Culture of Life Mass and march on 24th March during which the organisers handed over a petition to an official at the Constitutional Court.

PARISH FAMILY MINISTRY

Various dioceses have family offices or coordinators and their programmes vary from place to place as to how they are structured and what activities are run. The SACBC Family Life Desk Parish Family Ministry programme is a comprehensive one with a specific focus and content which potentially addresses all areas of marriage and family life. In order to run it effectively as a parish project training and ongoing formation is offered and resource material e.g. calendar is provided.

The three components address:

1. The parish as a community of families through events, celebrations, programmes, prayer.

2. Developing family spirituality through encouraging Family Hour, family prayer and relationship building activities.
3. Addressing particular identified needs in a variety of ways, e.g. referrals or counselling. Support from the parish priest, PPC and a team of volunteers to coordinate the activities is important.

PFM FORMATION

- **DEEPENING WORKSHOP 13-15 APRIL KOINONIA, JOHANNESBURG.** Intended for those already involved.
- **PARISH FAMILY MINISTRY INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP 3-5 AUGUST, GAUTENG.**
- **PFM workshops elsewhere in the country are being planned.** Contact me for details.

MAY – A MONTH FOR FAMILY AND LIFE approved by SA Catholic Bishops Conference and to be commemorated throughout the region in each diocese, parish and home as well as by sodalities and any other bodies as appropriate. The theme is **PARENTING IS FOR LIFE**. Notices have been sent out within the network and a general leaflet and prayer are published on www.marfam.org.za/blog. What will your parish do? Formation : running parenting workshops, family retreat? Social and community elements, e.g. picnic or concert? Will it be the start of an ongoing project e.g. men mentoring boys?

“Moments with Mom” and “Dates with Dad” are other ideas and I will happily share your suggestions.

- **1st May /6th May – Workers’ Day/Sunday. Feast of St Joseph the Worker.**
- **12TH MAY CONFERENCE FOR LEADERS OF FAMILY MOVEMENTS AND DIOCESAN FAMILY COORDINATORS.** Coordinators of the recognised national family movements and organisations and diocesan family coordinators are invited to participate, share and network with one another around the theme **PARENTING AND THE ROLE OF MEN** as well as share on their common concerns in their particular ministry to families.
- **13th May – Mothers’ Day. Possible theme: Parenting is for Moms and Dads.** Celebrate in the home, the parish, or in larger groups. Visit www.marfam.org.za/blog or contact MARFAM info@marfam.org.za
- **15th May - UN INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR FAMILIES** each year. Theme for 2012 concerns work-life balance. Visit www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/IDF.html for more information
- **7th WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2012, Milan Italy 30 May to 3 June.** Visit www.family2012.com

for all information, leaflet, poster, prayer and catechesis on chosen topics around the theme “The

Family: Work and Celebration”. The Holy Father writes, “The upcoming World Meeting of Families affords a privileged opportunity to rethink work and celebration in the perspective of a family that is united and open to life, thoroughly integrated in society and in the Church, attentive to the quality of relationship in addition to the economy of the family nucleus itself.”



A small team of delegates from our region is booked to go and enjoy the information, interaction, fellowship, networking and of course the sight-seeing in Milan and, I believe, a visit to and performance at the worldfamous La Scala opera house.