

COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP WITHIN THE FAMILY

ACI Dublin South Meeting

25-02-'14. 7.30 – 9.00pm

Introduction

Jo welcomed us to the meeting.

To accommodate those of us who were not present at the January meeting and jog the memories of those of us who were, we briefly introduced ourselves to the gathering.

Moment of Silent Pause

Before proceeding to address the theme of the day we had a silent pause to get ourselves in the spirit, relaxed and open to listening, followed by a moment of listening to a musical recording of the prayer of St. Columba, 'I stand Alone and Listen'.

Theme of the Meeting.

Referring to the Report on what came from the group in the January meeting, Jo explained that all suggested agenda items had been put together under three umbrella Themes:

- ❖ **FEB:** Communication and Relationship within the Family
- ❖ **MAR:** Communication and Relationships of Family with Wider Circle of Society
- ❖ **APR:** Communication and Relationship of family with the various categories of disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and groups.

Reverting to the January Flipchart list of all that had come under Communication and Relationship within the Family, we then formed discussion groups to address FOUR questions.

Q.1. WHAT PROMOTES GOOD COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIPS IN FAMILY LIFE ?

Q.2. WHAT ARE HINDRANCES TO GOOD COMMUNICATION IN FAMILY LIFE ?

Q.3. WHAT ACTION DO WE RECOMMEND WE TAKE ?

Q.4. WHAT ACTION DO WE RECOMMEND TO THE BISHOPS SYNOD ?

Feedback and Communal Reflection on what surfaced in Groups

We listened as the groups reported on one question at a time.

Q.1. WHAT PROMOTES GOOD COMMUNICATION and RELATIONSHIPS IN FAMILY LIFE ?

- ✚ Relationship between couple/parents, having time together for sharing, celebration, discussion.
- ✚ Keeping the channels of communication open so as to create a climate that promotes discussion in which mutual listening is priority

- # Keeping the channels open between child and parent, communicating interests, joys, facilitating trustful confiding in parents in the event of suffering at the hands of peers or adults - physical or psychological abuse, school or internet bullying, personal failures etc.
- # Binding the family together by prioritising the family meal for mutual sharing, discussion and celebration together
- # In open discussion, we discover ourselves and other persons.

Q.2. WHAT HINDERS GOOD COMMUNICATION and RELATIONSHIPS IN FAMILY LIFE?

- # Keeping the channels of communication between spouses closed or semi-closed.
- # Failing or refusing to listen blocks Unity through Forgiveness.
Arguing, – ‘that’s not what I meant’...’But you said....’ instead of discussing
- # It can happen that the closer we are physically, the more critical of others and the more entrenched in our fixed judgments.
- # Parent/child discussion has been traditionally anathema. The child did not ‘answer back’.

Q.3. WHAT ACTION DO WE RECOMMEND WE TAKE?

- # Model the behaviour we want to see
- # Promote and support on-going exchange between parents of families since family is the place of experiencing love, Faith formation, on-going education.
- # Get involved in Education for good communication at family, parish and community level.
- # Find ways to live above the demands of modern technology and the market economy to keep human dignity, human development, human life, family as priority rather than market values and its demands.

Q. 4. WHAT ACTION DO WE RECOMMEND TO THE BISHOPS SYNOD?

- # Openness, not secretiveness as demonstrated most recently in non disclosure of Synod Survey responses.
- # Listen to the people of God
- # Parish to be involved in faith formation (Sunday school idea)

Final Assessment of the evening

- General agreement in valuing the fact that diverging opinions were listened to and entertained, leaving us free to speak openly.

NEXT Meeting Last Tuesday in March on Communication and Relationships of Family within Wider Circle of Society

NOTE

The following issues, which emerged briefly on the floor and in one group respectively, will be included under the themes of the March/ April meetings:

In terms of support for family within the wider community, promote Eucharist as community celebration of Life with Jesus among us, table fellowship, celebration of the Word in receiving and responding, two-way communication rather than confined to listening only.

Same sex marriage seen from the perspective of the dignity of the human person and from the moral perspective.

Divorce seen from the perspective of a partner who may be suffering in a marriage that is beyond endurance, and from the perspective of Church teaching on marriage.