



Catholic Schools Week 2025

Catholic Schools: Alive in Christ

19–25 January 2025

Wednesday: Life to the Full
in Our Families





Introduction

'In his adolescence and youth, Jesus' relationship with the Father was that of the beloved Son. Drawn to the Father, he grew up concerned for his affairs: "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk 2:49). Still, it must not be thought that Jesus was a withdrawn adolescent or a self-absorbed youth. His relationships were those of a young person who shared fully in the life of his family and his people.' (Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, 28)

Suggested Activities

- Explore examples of gospel values lived out in understanding the beauty of family. Write any of the words below on the board with spaces and ask students to guess the definitions, or write the definitions on the board and ask students to guess the words. A similar activity can also be done using Worksheet 1, included below (p. 4).
 - ◆ Humility: Seeing life as a gift.
 - ◆ Compassion: Having empathy for others.
 - ◆ Kindness: Demonstrating gentleness in actions.
 - ◆ Justice: Working towards fairness and equity.
 - ◆ Forgiveness: Reconciling with yourself and with others.
 - ◆ Integrity: Being honest and doing what you say.
 - ◆ Peace: Committing to peace-making.
 - ◆ Courage: Standing up for the truth.
- Interactive Discussions: Facilitate open discussions where students can share their thoughts on each of the values listed in the first activity. Use questions such as 'How do these values manifest in your daily life?' and 'Can you share a time when you demonstrated or witnessed one of these values?'
- Role-playing Scenarios: Create scenarios where students must decide how to act according to gospel values. For example, handling a conflict with a sibling (jobs in the house that need to be done to help with the housework; stop gaming after a reasonable time; time to complete homework).
- Use Worksheet 2, included below (p. 5).
- Conduct a brief prayer service or prayer moment as included below (p. 3).
- Use the PowerPoint presentation on the theme of family that accompanies this resource.



Prayer Moment

Prayer

Dear God, help us to play a positive role in our families. We know we won't get it right all the time, just as we know the other members of our families may fall short, as we all have human weaknesses. Nevertheless, help us to do our best in practical, useful ways. Help us to explore ways of bringing prayer into our family life. If this doesn't work out, help us at least to pray for the other members of our families. Amen.

Music for Reflection

Allow for some quiet time, then play one or more of the following songs.

'Bless the Corners of this House' by Skip Cleavinger and the University of Notre Dame Folk Choir:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6LJ7LcRdlvv3qoVIMzzVMb>

'We Are Family' by Sister Sledge:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5IKLwqBQG6KU6MP2zP8oNu>

'Family First' by Whitney Houston, Cissy Houston & Dianne Warwick and Family:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/2NChfZivH8n3vXHrEZjyLU>





Worksheet 1

Reflect on the following gospel values:

- Humility: Seeing life as a gift.
- Compassion: Having empathy for others.
- Kindness: Demonstrating gentleness in your actions.
- Justice: Working towards fairness and equity.
- Forgiveness: Reconciling with yourself and with others.
- Integrity: Being honest and doing what you say.
- Peace: Committing to peace-making.
- Courage: Standing up for the truth.

For each of these values, write a short description of how you could put them into practice in your family.

1. Humility:

2. Compassion:

3. Kindness:

4. Justice:

5. Forgiveness:

6. Integrity:

7. Peace:

8. Courage:



Worksheet 2

Read the following story and answer the questions that follow.

Having recently finished my studies, I had time to attend a two-day conference. I had to pay for the conference, but fortunately found a sponsor to fund it. When someone close to me was admitted into the hospital, I knew I couldn't attend the conference anymore because I had to go to the hospital on the day I would have gone to the conference. So, I lost my sponsorship and still had to pay for it.

My aunt had asked me to help her with her CV because she wanted to apply for a job. So, I followed her instructions and gave her the CV. The next night I got a call from her telling me that she needed me to apply for this job online with her CV, but also that she needed a cover letter. However, this time, I was in a rush on my way out. I quickly told her that I would help her first thing the following day because the job deadline wasn't until later. She wasn't too fond of the idea, but accepted it anyway as we hung up the phone.

Then, I stopped myself for a moment and thought, 'If I were in her position, wanting to apply for the job as soon as possible, how would I want to be treated?' I knew the answer because I am currently looking for a job. So, I put aside my plans to go out for the next hour and sat down to write her cover letter. When I called her to tell her I was finished, she was happily surprised, thinking I had already gone out. And I was happy to go out knowing that I had taken the step to put myself in the other's shoes, making myself think of someone other than me.

But we can never outdo God in generosity: only a few days later, my aunt gave me the same amount that I had spent for the conference. She had given me the money as a gesture of appreciation because I had helped her.

A few weeks later, my aunt actually got that full time job she had applied to.

(from Donata Ling, *Living City* magazine, December 2013)

1. In what way does family play a positive role in this story?

2. In what other situations can generosity be important in family life? Give practical examples.

3. How can you contribute to the well-being of your family?
