



# Seeds of Faith

Supporting families

January/February 2019



## Family Life

Do you remember the story about Jesus and Zacchaeus—you can find it in Luke 19:1-10. Zacchaeus really wanted to see Jesus but he was

such a small man that he couldn't see over the crowd. He wasn't a popular man either. He was a tax collector and had a name for taking more money from people than he should. So there wasn't much point Zacchaeus politely asking people to let him through to the front of the crowd. He felt that nobody would listen to him or make space for him—so he climbed a tree. When Jesus sees Zacchaeus he calls him down and shocks everybody by saying "Zacchaeus I'm coming to your house today!" So often in the gospels we find Jesus sharing meals with people, just like he does with Zacchaeus. Jesus is showing people that they matter, that he cares, that God loves them, whatever the mix up or mess of their lives.

Zacchaeus' response to Jesus is that he will pay back anyone he has overcharged and give money to the poor. Jesus' love helps Zacchaeus to be the good man God created him to be.

Meals matter—sitting with people, sharing food, talking, laughing together, feeling at home together.

This is echoed in every meal we share as a family and every Eucharist we celebrate together. It is no accident that Jesus chose the context of a meal to put himself into our hands—this is my body, this is my blood, do this in memory of me.



## Praying as a family

What is the best book you ever read or the best story you ever heard? Were you able to imagine what was happening in the story? Did you have a picture in your mind of the main characters, the place, a sense of the atmosphere?

Your imagination is a gift from God and the Holy Spirit can work through your imagination to bring the scriptures to life. When people came to Saint Ignatius to learn about prayer he encouraged them to use their imagination and all their senses to hear, see, touch, taste and smell what was happening in the scriptures. You could try this with the story of the Last Supper

- Settle yourself to pray and slowly read through the story of the Last Supper (Luke 22:7-23) a few times
- Imagine that you are present in the upper room
- Look around at the room—what is it like?
- Who else is present? Look at their faces, at their clothes.
- Settle down at the table with the others. What is on the table—what can you see and smell
- What can you touch—the fabric of cushions, the wood of the table, the cups and plates
- Listen to the voices. Who is speaking, what is being said?
- Watch Jesus as he lifts first the wine and then the bread
- Listen to what he says
- What is the reaction of those around the table
- Become aware of your own reaction
- Allow yourself to respond, to speak to Jesus—what do you want to say to him? Speak from your heart.
- Come from your imagination back to the reality of the room you are in and just think about how this piece of scripture has spoken to you
- Say a prayer of thanks to God for the gift of his Holy Word.
- Next time you go to receive Holy Communion at mass, think about this piece of scripture and your prayer experience of the Last Supper.

## Gospels for January and February

It can be fun to imagine yourself among the people in these gospel stories, or listening or watching from behind a tree to notice what is happening and the impression Jesus makes on people he meets.

06/01 Matt 2:1-12—The Epiphany—the wise men recognise Jesus as someone very special

13/01 Luke 3:15—16, 21—22 The Baptism of Jesus

20/01 John 2:1—11 The marriage at Cana

27/01 Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21 Jesus begins to teach and preach

03/02 Luke 4:21-30 Jesus provokes a hostile reaction

10/02 Luke 5:1-11 Jesus calls his first disciples

17/02 Luke 6:17, 20–26 The beatitudes

24/02 Luke 6:27—38 Jesus teaches





### Sacred Space

In your sacred space this month you might like to put things that will remind you of the importance of food and meals—perhaps a plate, a cup, pictures of your favourite meals, photographs of special meals you have shared in your family. And because Lent starts this month you might like to put your Trócaire box there too as a reminder of the challenge we live with as Christians to share what we have with those who have less.

### Spirit of God

Thank you for all the ways you weave throughout our days  
Help us to see the wonder—a meal shared, a hurt healed, a kiss given—and in recognising your presence in family life, come to a deeper understanding of your presence in scripture, the sacraments and daily life.



### Stepping Stones on the Journey of Faith

The Eucharist is at the very heart of who we are and what we believe as Catholics. There is no more powerful sign of the depth of God's love for us than that Jesus, the Son of God would give his body and blood, his very life for us

- We believe that in the Eucharist Jesus gives himself to us in his body and blood which we receive in Holy Communion.
- When we share a birthday cake we really feel we are part of the party. When we share the Body of Christ we become one with Jesus—AND with all who share the Body of Christ with us.
- Every time we share in the Eucharist and receive the body of Christ we are invited to allow ourselves to be transformed, to gradually become more and more like Jesus.
- The Eucharist is the celebration and the work of the whole faith community—not simply the priest. Remember that Jesus and the disciples gathered together in the upper room. No one person can make a celebration on his or her own. So we are invited to be fully and actively involved—by listening thoughtfully, responding strongly, singing, praying, reflecting.
- When we gather for the Eucharist we are celebrating the fact that we are called together as a community. We are invited to receive Holy Communion and to build a holy communion with each other.
- The Eucharist gives us an opportunity for thanksgiving—to thank God for all the blessings in our lives, all the ways that God is present and active in our days.
- Jesus gives himself to us so that we—his disciples—can share his love, hope, peace and justice with others in our communities.

Don't you love it when someone makes you something lovely to eat? Well here's a simple recipe which you could make—and share! - with a little help from an adult:

#### Basic white bread/pizza dough

750g strong white flour  
2 teaspoons of salt  
One 7g sachet of easy yeast  
2 tablespoons of olive oil  
450ml of warm water

Mix all flour, salt and yeast, then add the olive oil and water. Mix together well and then put the dough on a lightly floured surface. Knead the dough for about 5 minutes—stretching it out, rolling it back up, turning it over. Then put it in a bowl and cover with clingfilm that has been lightly oiled with olive oil. Leave to rise for at least an hour.

Knead the dough again for a minute. You could make one or two loaves, lots of small rolls or funny shapes or make the dough into pizza shapes and add your toppings. For pizza bake on a lightly oiled tray at 220/gas 7 for 10-12 mins. Get an adult to help with the oven! A loaf will take longer but should sound hollow when the bottom of the loaf is tapped. Share & enjoy!

