

A Journey in **LOVE**

*A developmental programme
for children in the primary years*



Overview for parents

Early Years: The wonder of being special and unique.

AIM: To explore the wonder of being special and unique.

Year 1: We meet God's love in our family.

AIM: To focus on families and specially growing up in a loving, secure and stable home.

Year 2: We meet God's love in the community.

AIM: To describe how we are growing and developing in diverse communities that are God-given.

Year 3: How we live in love.

AIM: To describe and give reasons for how we grow in love in caring and happy friendships where we are secure and safe.

Year 4: God loves us in our differences.

AIM: To make links and connections to show that we are all different. To celebrate these differences as we appreciate that God's love accepts us as we are now and as we change.

Year 5: God loves us in our changing and developing.

AIM: Show a knowledge and understanding of how we grow in awareness of the physical and emotional changes that accompany puberty – sensitivity, mood swings, anger, boredom etc. and grow further in recognising God's presence in our daily lives.

Year 6: The wonder of God's love in creating new life.

AIM: To develop a secure understanding of what stable, caring relationships are and the different kinds there may be. Focusing on Catholic teaching, children will also know and understand about the conception of a child within marriage.

*What does love look like?
It has the hands to help others.
It has the feet to hasten to the poor and
needy. It has eyes to see misery and want.
It has the ears to hear the sighs and
sorrows of others.
That is what love looks like.*

St. Augustine

JOURNEY IN LOVE AND DFE GUIDANCE

From September 2020, guidance from the Department for Education for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education becomes mandatory for all Schools, including Catholic Schools.

This initiative has been welcomed by the Catholic Education Service (CES), who state clearly that, Catholic schools are also required to deliver RSE in accordance with the teaching of the Church. RSE is part of the mission of Catholic schools to educate the whole person. It should be carried out as part of the holistic education, which seeks to form as well as inform young people in preparation for adult life. A Journey in Love offers opportunities to teach DFE guidance on Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education in age-appropriate ways.

The Catholic Education Service accentuates that any teaching about love and sexual relationships in a Catholic school must be rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching about what it is to be truly human in Christ, what it means to live well in relationship with others and be presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue.

A Journey in **LOVE**

Learning to love encompasses a range of relationships not just sexual ones, because human beings flourish through various and different relationships with other people. God's gift of friendship is a way of loving, and while sexual loving presupposes friendship, friendship does not require full sexual involvement.

Cardinal Basil Hume

Journey of Life

Birth is the beginning of this journey,
And death is not the end; but the destination.
It is a journey that takes us
From youth to age,
From innocence to awareness,
From ignorance to knowledge,
From foolishness to wisdom,
From weakness to strength and often back again,
From offence to forgiveness,
From pain to compassion,
From fear to faith,
From defeat to victory and from victory to defeat,
Until, looking backward or ahead,
We see that victory does not lie
At some high point along the way,
But in having made the journey,
Stage by stage.

Adapted from an old Hebrew prayer.

"Our schools need to be places where everyone feels valued for their innate dignity."

Pope Francis

Sample pages of the book follow



A Journey in LOVE

YEAR ONE

1

We meet God’s love in our family

AIM To focus on families and specially growing up in a loving, secure and stable home.

KEY WORDS unique, friend, respect, secure, God, love, care, commitment, stable, important, different, special, signs, healthy, safe, boundaries, kindness, teasing, bullying, positive, negative, wrong, unacceptable, truth, lies, head, eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, tongue, throat, neck, shoulders, arms, breasts, nipple, waist, elbows, penis, vagina, vulva, bottom, anus, legs, knees, ankles, feet, toes.

SKILLS listening, observing, relating, speaking, respecting, praying, reflecting, understanding, recognising, supporting, celebrating, deciding.

■ Social and Emotional

Learning intention To recognise signs that I am loved in my family.

Introduction and content

Aristotle said that “the family is the first school of the child.” Creating a happy family is both a great blessing and a demanding challenge. Relationships can never be taken for granted. At the heart of our Christian understanding of life is the belief that we are called to live with others and for others and it is by the love that we have for one another, everyone will know that we are disciples of Jesus. Pope Francis offers the following advice: *‘In order to have a healthy family, three words are to be used: please, thank you, sorry! These words form the language of people who live not just for themselves, but for one another.’* – John Byrne, OSA

The experience of family life for children growing up is important because they share the ‘give and take’ of love, security and stability.

A Journey in **LOVE**

1

Discuss the characteristics of positive and negative relationships, the different types of teasing and bullying which are wrong and unacceptable, how to recognise when people are being unkind and the difference between truth and lies.

Discuss the best way to respond to difficult/uncomfortable situations, including knowing who to go to if worried or in need of help, including outside agencies where appropriate.

Some characteristics of a healthy and secure family are:

- Spending time together, love, security, stability, mutual commitment, protection and care for children and other family members, supporting one another through both happy and difficult times.

"The family is where the parents become their children's first teachers in the faith. The family's strength lies in its capacity to love and to teach love."

- Pope Francis

1 Questions to consider

- 1) How is love shown in your family?
- 2) Why are the words 'please', 'thank you' and 'sorry' important to create a happy family?
- 3) How does saying 'please' show care and consideration for members of your family?
- 4) How does saying 'thank you' show love for each other?
- 5) How does saying 'sorry' show respect, build bridges, keep us safe and help us to build a happy family and mend broken friendships?
- 6) Why is teasing and bullying wrong and unacceptable within families and friendships?
- 7) Why should we always tell the truth?

2 Possible activities

- 1) Draw your family showing some of the ways they show you love and kindness.
- 2) Encourage children to retell situations when their families kept them safe and protected.
- 3) Create a collage of pictures showing the happy, exciting, enjoyable things you do as a family.
- 4) Design a card to cheer up someone who is sad or upset.
- 5) Compose a prayer together thanking God for all the signs of his love and care for each person especially in your families.
- 6) Work in small adult led groups and share scenarios of someone being teased or bullied. How could the characters in the scenarios change their behaviour for the better? Encourage role-play activities.

A Journey in **LOVE**

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3 Pause and reflect

Gathering music

The Holy Trinity is the family of God: God is revealed as a Father, Son and Spirit.

We praise God as we make the Sign of the Cross.

“In the name of the Father,
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen”

Light a candle to remind us that Jesus is with us and loves us.

Place cards and drawings around it.

Each one shares some signs of love experienced.

Pray together the ‘prayer of thanksgiving’ composed.

.....

4 Sing

‘Sing a simple song unto the Lord’

[Celebration Hymnal for Everyone, No. 644]

1

*We shall never know
all the good
that a simple smile
can do.*

Mother Teresa



*“There is no such thing as the perfect family.
Only by the daily exercise of forgiveness can
the family grow.”*

Pope Francis

1

■ Physical

Learning intention To recognise how I am cared for and kept safe in my family.

Introduction and content

Pope Francis teaches that truly Christian families are known by their fidelity, their patience, their openness to life, and their respect for the elderly... the secret to this is the presence of Jesus in the family. Let us therefore propose to all people, with respect and courage, the beauty of marriage and the family illuminated by the Gospel! And in order to do this let us approach with care and affection those families who are struggling, forced to leave their homeland, broken, homeless or unemployed, or suffering for any reason; let us approach married couples in crisis or separated. Let us be close to everyone through the proclamation of this Gospel of the family, the beauty of the family.

We recognise that all families no matter how they are made up are different and that members of our families are individual people. We must also understand how to respect each other's differences and celebrate how individuals are similar in some ways and different in many ways from one another.

Characteristics of keeping safe

- Knowing how to maintain personal hygiene, keep healthy and stay safe.
 - Being treated with respect, showing respect to others, setting appropriate boundaries, realising that each person's body is their own, privacy and its implications for both pupils and adults, safe contact, awareness of the difference between appropriate or unsafe or other contact.
 - Knowing the difference between good and bad secrets and simple rules for resisting pressure when feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, and seeking and giving permission in relationships.
 - Knowing about rules and age restrictions that keep us safe and the people whose responsibility it is to keep us safe e.g. parents/carers/teachers/extended family members/police/ life guards etc
- Knowing the basic rules of keeping safe online when using digital devices.

*"Protect your families.
Be sanctuaries of respect
for life."*

Pope Francis

A Journey in LOVE

1 Questions to consider

- 1) Who is in my family?
- 2) How do families show love and care for one another?
- 3) What are some of the characteristics of a happy family?
- 4) How do we act with adults that are not in our family or those we do not know?
- 5) In what ways are we made in the image and likeness of God?
- 6) How does your family help you to keep healthy? Include physical, mental and spiritual health. Include taking care not to spread diseases e.g. washing hands, coughs and sneezes etc.

2 Possible activities

- 1) Paint and draw your family tree.
- 2) Draw each member of your family, including yourself and even your pets. Cut them out, write their names on their backs and hang them to make a mobile.
- 3) Create a set of responses for children to use with people when they feel unsafe.
- 4) Draw around your hand and on each finger; write ways you have grown and changed.
- 5) Identify, name draw and label each part of the body and say what part of the body is associated with each sense. Include vocabulary, as agreed with parents/carers during parental consultation, for external genitalia (e.g. penis, breasts, nipple, vagina, bottom, anus).
- 6) Create a collage showing all the ways we can stay fit and healthy. Include all elements of discussion above e.g. physical activity, dental health, healthy eating, positive relationships etc.
- 7) Why do you think our families set rules and regulations/ boundaries for their children to follow e.g. staying safe at home e.g. not using certain electrical appliances, not playing with matches, fire etc. setting bed times, restricting TV and digital use, how to cross the road safely and stay safe on the beach/swimming pool etc.
Create posters showing some of these ideas on staying safe.

3 Pause and reflect

Gathering music

The Trinity is a celebration of love. Love begins in the Father; it is revealed to us in Jesus; it is poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

We first encounter this love in our Baptism; we grow in it through the Mass, Holy Communion, through good lives and through prayer.

We ask God to keep us safe in His love as we make the Sign of the Cross.

“In the name of the Father,
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen”

Assemble on the carpet.

Light a candle to welcome the presence of Jesus and arrange family pictures around it.

Prayer for all families:

Loving Father, thank you for my mum,
dad, brothers, sisters
and all who love and care for me.
You love me so much that you have my
name carved on the palm of your hand,
Amen.

(Isaiah 49:16)

4 Sing

‘Sing a simple song unto the Lord.’

[Celebration Hymnal for Everyone, No. 644]

1

A Journey in **LOVE**

1

■ Spiritual

Learning intention To celebrate ways that God loves and cares for us.

Introduction and content

God loves and cares for us in a variety of ways:

He gave us life, parents, brother(s), sister(s), family, friends, school, teachers, priest(s), and a beautiful world.

In the story of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4-6) we hear how great is God's love and care for us: Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and loses one of them, what does he do? He leaves the other ninety-nine sheep in the pasture and goes looking for the one that got lost until he finds it. When he finds it, he is so happy that he puts it on his shoulders and carries it back home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says to them, "I am so happy, I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate."

*"Great love can change small things into great ones,
and it is only love which lends value to our actions."*

St. Faustina Kowalska

1 Questions to consider

- 1) What ways have we grown in love and security in our families?
- 2) How have we shown love to our families this year?
- 3) How do we know that we are loved and cared for by God?
- 4) In the story of the Lost Sheep how does God show he loves and cares for each and all of us, in our families and school community?
- 5) How shall we thank God for his unconditional love?

2 Possible activities

- 1) Create a set of family rules to show how we can live in peace and harmony. (Include the words please, thank you and sorry).
- 2) Compose a 'Litany of Thanksgiving' to God' for his constant love, care, protection and keeping us safe.

3 Pause and reflect

Gathering music

The Cross is a reminder of the depth of God's immense love and care for each person and each family. With thanksgiving for such a wondrous gift we make the Sign of the Cross. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen"

Assemble in a circle around a focus with a candle and a cross.

When all are quiet, light the candle to welcome 'Jesus the Light of the World'.

Pray each 'litany of thanksgiving' and at the end of each all say:

"Bless (Name) and her/his family."

4 Closing hymn

'Sing a simple song unto the Lord.'

[Celebration Hymnal for Everyone, No. 644]

*" 'Please',
'Thank you',
and 'Sorry'
are words that open up the road
to a good family life."*

Pope Francis

"To maintain a joyful family requires much from both the parents and the children. Each member of the family has to become, in a special way, the servant of the others."

St John Paul II



*"The human family
is the greatest treasure of any country.
Let us all work to protect and strengthen this,
the cornerstone of society."*

Pope Francis

2 Activities/supported discussions

- 1) Discuss the physical changes that take place during puberty. Discuss how it is normal for children to go through these changes at different times.
- 2) Recognise that sexual development is a natural part of human growth and that physical changes from child to adult means the ability and potential to become a mother and father. The purpose of the menstrual cycle is to prepare the female body for reproduction. There are two important stages to be completely aware of and prepared for: menstruation and ovulation.
- 3) Discuss how, as well as physical changes, emotions may change and/or become more intense as they grow and move through puberty. Discuss how these changes can positively and negatively affect physical, emotional & mental health.
- 4) As our bodies change there is pressure from outside including social media to look and feel a certain way. This can include images in the media that do not always reflect reality.

How can we deal with these external pressures and who can we talk to if we are unsure or do not understand the changes that are happening?

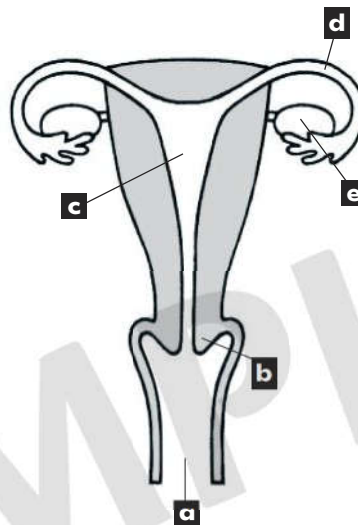
Menstruation

(From the Latin for 'month')

- 1) The menstrual cycle is controlled by hormones released from the pituitary gland. Most menstrual cycles last for about 28 days.
- 2) The first day of the period marks the start of the cycle and is counted as day one.
- 3) If the uterus does not receive a fertilised ovum, the lining of the uterus breaks down and is shed over the next number of days. This is called menstruation.
- 4) The lining of the uterus begins to thicken and an ovum begins to develop.

Ovulation

- 5) On approximately the 14th day of the cycle an ovum is released into the fallopian tube. This is called ovulation.
- 6) The ovum travels towards the uterus.
- 7) The lining of the uterus continues to thicken and gets full of blood in case a fertilised ovum arrives.
- 8) If the ovum is not fertilised it will dissolve and a period will occur.
- 9) Then the cycle starts again.



- a. Vagina
- b. Cervix
- c. Womb (Uterus)
- d. Fallopian tube
- e. Ovary

5

3 Pause and reflect

Reflective music

Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
we first encounter your love in our Baptism;
we grow in it through the Mass, Holy
Communion, through good lives and
through prayer.

Strengthen us on our Christian journey as
we make the Sign of the Cross.

“In the name of the Father,
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen”

We light a candle to welcome the presence
of Jesus among us and listen to a short
extract from:

Psalm 139:13-18

You created every part of me;
you put me together in my mother’s womb.
When my bones were being formed,
carefully put together in my mother’s
womb, when I was growing there in secret,
you knew that I was there.
You saw me before I was born.

Ponder: What does this text mean to me?
What does this text mean to us?

4 Prayer

Loving Father and Creator of all, we thank
you for the beauty, dignity and gift of
human life. Help us to respect and treasure
its sacredness from the moment of
conception until its natural end. Amen

5 Sing

‘Take my hands.’

[Celebration Hymnal for Everyone, No. 676]

*“I alone cannot change
the world, but I can cast a stone
across the water to create
many ripples.”*

St Teresa of Kolkata

*“One smile can start a
friendship. One word can end a
fight. One look can save a
relationship. One person can
change your whole life.”*

Unknown



Physical

6

Learning intention Explain how human life is conceived.

Introduction and content

Love proclaims its presence by signs; the deepest, most intimate and wonderful of the human signs of love is the mutual giving of self in sexual intercourse. Sexual intercourse is a body language through which the couple express a variety of emotions. They affirm each other as persons as they signal to each other that they are the most important person in each other's life. They confirm each other's sexual identity. The natural outcome (all conditions being fulfilled) of sexual intercourse is the conception of new life. As co-creators with God, the parents bestow life on a new human being; that being needs love and will, in time, express love itself, will go on to make love and so another new human being will join the human race

1 Questions to consider

- 1) What are the key building blocks of a loving relationship?
- 2) How does conception take place?

2 Possible activities

- 1) Look at the illustrations of the organs of the human body including the male and female reproductive organs and explain how human life is conceived? ▷

Voice box

Heart

Lungs

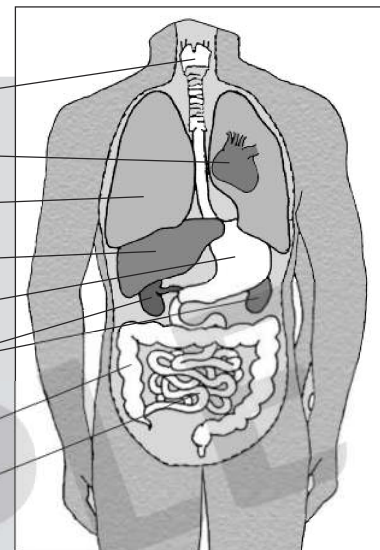
Liver

Stomach

Kidneys

Large intestine

Small intestine



Male and female reproductive organs

Sperm duct

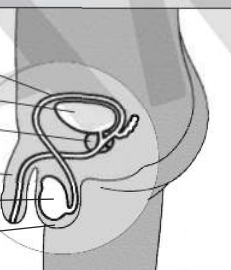
Bladder

Prostate gland

Penis

Testicle

Scrotum



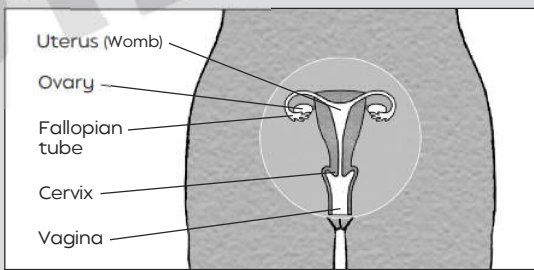
Uterus (Womb)

Ovary

Fallopian tube

Cervix

Vagina



A Journey in LOVE

6

Possible activities continued

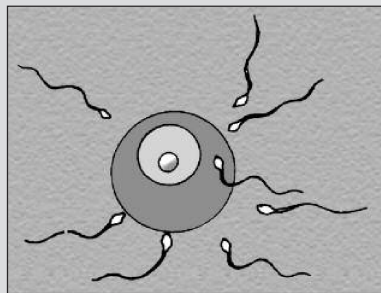
Sexual intercourse between husband and wife is a joyful expression of their love for each other.

It is an act of intimate self-giving, made by two people who want to give everything of themselves to the person they love and respect.

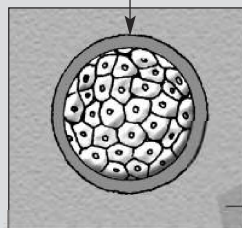
When a couple make love the husband's penis becomes stiff and is placed inside his wife's vagina. Millions of sperm cells are released when the man ejaculates at the peak moment of his sexual arousal. Each sperm cell has a long tail that it uses to swim through the cervix, into the uterus, and eventually into his wife's fallopian tubes.

Relationships in Moral Education, p.23

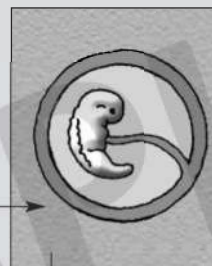
2) Understand how a child grows within the mother's womb.



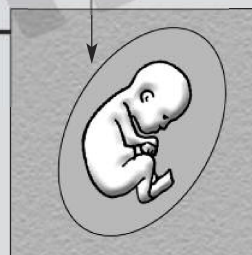
Although a hundred sperm cells may reach the egg cell only one sperm can enter the egg to fertilise it.



After a few days, the cell divides repeatedly to form a ball of cells.



After 8 weeks, the baby has eyes but no eyelids. It starts making its first tiny movements, but its mother cannot feel them yet.



After 16 weeks, the baby begins to swallow and pass urine. It has fingers and toenails. At this stage its skin is bright red and transparent.

A Journey in LOVE

6

Possible activities continued



After 24 weeks, the baby can hear voices and other sounds from outside its mother. It has some hair and eyebrows and eyelashes. Its skin is very wrinkled.

After 28 weeks, the baby's kicks are quite strong and can be felt by putting a hand on the mother's tummy.



After 36 weeks, the baby has taken up its final position in the uterus. Its lungs are getting ready to take their first breath. The baby continues to get fatter. Sometime after 36 weeks, the baby's head is now positioned ready for birth. The baby could arrive any time between 38th and 42nd week of pregnancy.

