



# First Monday email

January 2016

## Love and Kindness

Fr Stephen Wang writes:

Parents have a natural love and affection for their children. They feel protective for them. They want the best for them.

But in practice this task of daily loving takes a lot of wisdom and effort.

If you put love at the very centre of your family life, it will be a foundation for everything else that happens. Love your children without reserve, no matter how inadequate you feel. You can make your home a place of love and acceptance for all who visit there. And in this way your children will grow up to be loving people themselves. Your own love will always be insufficient. So ask God to fill you with his love, and to give you all the extra love you need for your children. You are not alone. God loves you and your children even more than you do, and he never ceases to help you.

**Others say:**

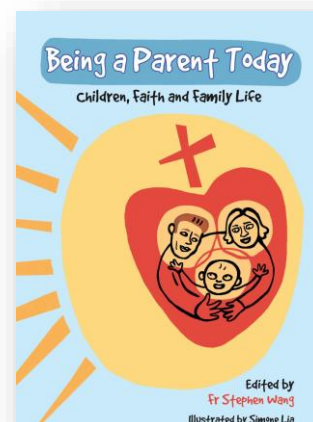
- 'Children need to know that they are loved. We should show them we love them! Be physical: hugs,

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You are receiving this email because you have signed up to the Ten Ten Theatre mailing list.

The text on the left is taken from the booklet which was given as a free gift to all parents who attended one of our sessions in schools. In the booklet, Fr. Stephen Wang gathers the thoughts of parents and others on "Being a Parent Today: Children, Faith and Family Life."



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affection, sitting close together, etc. Tell them you love them, often. Speak about them to others with pride, when they can hear you – not to show off, but to show how much you value and appreciate them.’

- ‘I try not to dwell on the negatives with the children, but to praise the positives. To encourage them constantly – about what they have done, and about what they could do. Even if you have to tell them off and be strict with them, you need to make it clear that you are doing this because of your love for them!’

- ‘We encourage everyone to show love in everyday life: By good manners (‘please’, ‘thank you’, ‘sorry’). By remembering and celebrating birthdays and achievements. By living lives of generosity and service, quietly and humbly. We encourage the children to value everyone: young, old, rich, poor, friend, and stranger. And we hope they can see the good in everyone, and make excuses for the weaknesses of others.’

- ‘It’s much better if conversations in the home are filled with kindness. Avoid gossip, negativity, cynicism, criticism of others. Words affect thoughts, and thoughts affect actions. So if your daily conversations are unkind, your children will become unkind people. Sad but true!’

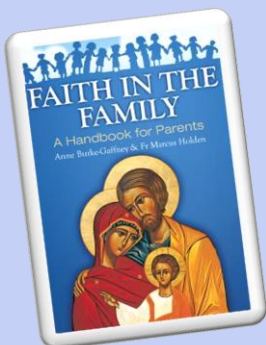
- ‘True love requires sacrifice. It’s easy to become selfish, even as a parent – constantly seeking your own time and enjoyment and pleasure, when you could be caring for your children. But we also need to make sure we have some space for ourselves,



and if someone is on the brink with tiredness or stress, they really should ask someone for advice and help.’

- ‘Babies and very young children benefit greatly if they grow up with the security of having one primary carer looking after them most of the time, usually their mother or father, instead of being left with different people at different times of the day or the week . Sometimes a parent raising children alone will need to work, or a couple will find that for whatever reason it is important that they are both working. If that is the case for you, then of course you will want to find the best childcare possible for the times that you are at work.’

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## CTS Book of the Month

### **FAITH IN THE FAMILY**

Faith in the Family is a handbook for parents, helping them transmit key aspects of the faith to their children.

This book will help parents to live and pass on the Catholic Faith within their families in a lively and practical way, and give them the confidence to answer the numerous and often challenging faith-related questions that children ask.

**£4.95**

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• ‘If you have the possibility of staying at home with your child for the first few years, I’d say at least be open to this. And when you make the decision about whether to go to work or to stay at home, make sure that you are doing it for the best reasons. The priority of every parent should be what is best for the children and family, held together with other considerations such as the well-being of the parents, their happiness, their careers, etc. I know from experience how easy it is to be a bit muddled about my motivations.’

• ‘Yes, it is often mothers rather than fathers who face this dilemma of whether to go back to work or whether to stay at home. I don’t think this is sexism, it is simply the reality that mothers are more likely to be at home with a new baby, because of pregnancy and giving birth and nursing. For many mothers, returning to work is just a necessity – they have no choice. But if you are faced with the choice, be

honest with yourself. If you think it’s best to go back to work, for whatever reasons, and you are clear that your child will receive all the care they need elsewhere, then be at peace about that. But if there is the possibility of staying at home, and you believe that your child would truly benefit from your love and care at this time, be careful not to go back to work for the wrong reasons, or because of what other people might think if you “give up work” for the moment . There can be all sorts of subtle pressures on us!’

• ‘Feelings come and go. Sometimes you may feel pretty empty as a parent. Sometimes you may feel a complete failure. What matters is your faithfulness over time: that you are trying to be as loving as possible to your children, day by day, even in your weakness. Your children will recognise this faithfulness and perseverance; it will give them the security and love they need. You give them so much just by being there. If you do everything you can for

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Ten Ten Theatre is a professional theatre company working in schools, churches, prisons, care homes, within communities and in theatres throughout the UK. It is part of Ten Ten, a national Catholic educational charity.

We are a family-run independent organisation based in North London.

Mass is celebrated for the intentions of the children and parents we meet in schools on the First Monday of every month.



To make a donation to The Ten Ten Charitable Trust, please [click here](#).