

## Bubbling with Life

In John's Gospel, you find the story of the Samaritan Woman. In the story, the woman makes her way to the well to get water for her daily chores. While at the well, she runs into Jesus. In the ensuing dialog, Jesus tells her he will give her "living water" that will bubble up within her.

In the Eucharist, Jesus gives you living water, too. Eucharist is about letting "real life" bubble up within you. All you have to do is ask. The following are some ways of getting to the well to meet Jesus, letting the living water of Eucharist flow through your everyday family life:

- **Share an enjoyable family meal** before or after Mass. Maybe your family likes pancakes on Sunday morning. Whatever your kids like to eat, if they know how to celebrate a meal, they are that much closer to understanding Eucharist. After all, the first Eucharist was a celebration of Jesus with his friends at a Passover meal. When your family gathers for a meal, it ought to be as much about friendship, love, and peace as it is about eating. From there, it is a short step to connecting with the friendship and peace of Christ and the life he wants to share with you.
- **Make gratitude a part of your personal life** by taking time to remember and name the gifts that God has given you: children, peace, friends. Most parents teach their children that gratitude is important when they remind them to write thank-you notes for gifts received. Or, when they ask, "Did you tell Jordan's mom 'thanks' for the ride?" Gratitude is good. In the Eucharist, gratitude is meant to well up in your heart, and overflow your cup with the life of Christ.
- **Make shared prayer a part of your family meal.** Give each family member a chance to thank God for the grace of the day. Connect your prayer to the family's everyday needs and worries, as well as joys. This keeps the prayer fresh, personal, timely, and sincere. This practice also helps set the tone for a meal that nurtures the spirit.
- **Take a lesson from the Master.** The Gospel of John describes how Jesus rose from the table and washed the dusty feet of the Apostles. He showed that Eucharist is related to service. Of course, you parents are old hands at washing feet. You know all about being "on call" twenty-four hours a day, being overwhelmed by household chores and tasks, chauffeuring the kids from one place to the next, putting yourself out to comfort others. What you don't always remember is that these actions are precisely what Christ is calling you to in your vocation of marriage and parenthood.
- **Try to take the hassles in stride.** When you embrace life, instead of fighting it, it becomes your salvation. At the same time, through your example, you are teaching your child or children how to serve with love. That's the key, really—the love. Giving of yourself—your time, your energy—is valuable because these things are given out of love. This is exactly what Jesus did at the Last Supper, and on Calvary. He gave his love to the fullest, literally pouring himself out for all people. This is what he offered to the Samaritan woman, and to Christians today in Eucharist. There's so much more to life than getting the laundry done.