

# Restorative Practice @ Home



Feb 2012

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No one puts their feet on the floor each morning with the intention to cause harm to others...  
writes Vic & Liz O'Callaghan

Feb 2012



## This Month...

- Th 2 Presentation of Jesus  
Fri 3 Sts Blaise & Ansgar  
Su 11 **Ordinary Time 5  
Suffering**  
    Tu 6 St Paul Miki & Companions  
    We 8 St Josephine Bakhita  
    Fr 10 St Scholastica  
Sa 11 Our Lady of Lourdes  
Su 12 **Ordinary Time 6  
Jesus heals a man**  
    Tu 14 Sts Cyril & Methodius  
    St Valentine  
Su 19 **Ordinary Time 7  
Jesus heals a paralysed  
man**  
    Tu 21 St Peter Damian  
    **Shrove Tuesday**  
We 22 **Ash Wednesday**  
Th 23 St Polycarp  
Su 26 **Lent 1  
God's Promise**

“It’s not fair.” “I didn’t  
do it.” “It’s always the  
same, I get the blame .”  
“No one listens  
to me!”



Any of these comments  
sound familiar?

# Restorative Practice @ Home

Vic & Liz O'Callaghan

No one puts their feet on the floor each morning with the intention to cause harm to others. Sometimes things go wrong. Sometimes they go wrong regularly. This can happen anywhere, but it can often happen at home, and it is hard to talk about it. What can we do?

We all have instinctive, learned and preferred ways of handling challenges in our families. And some of the time, these ways of responding **do** work, but at other times it can be the beginning of a small catastrophe.



Developmentally the child's journey begins centered on the 'I'. 'I' am then joined by Mum and Dad, extended family and siblings or an age cohort. From this beginning circle, grows a sense of community. This community might be a home community, pre-school or school community. These communities begin a journey of learning.



*Restorative Practices helps teachers, students and parents build, maintain and restore relationships for learning and for life.*

It builds **confidence, self-esteem** and **resilience**, and provides opportunities for **empathy** through the lens of the Restorative way of being.

## Restorative Practice cont.

In these communities we all have the right to be treated fairly, to be listened to, for people to work with us, for people to understand our emotions and for us to understand their emotion, guided by the use of appropriate questions that are non-judgmental.

***Does this sound like magic, a fantasy land? No! This is a real environment where safety, respect and learning are at the forefront of all action and decision making.***

So, what happens when my kids are pre-schoolers who keep fighting over toys or who are rough with other children and do not listen to me when I tell them to stop a certain behaviour?

Early learners are frequently not gifted listeners. Hard to accept, but it is a fact. They want and they want it now! This is natural.



Print version

## What can we do?

As tough as it may be, try to establish a safe and calm environment. Ensure tempers are settled (it is difficult to repair harm when there is heat rising around an issue).

### 1. Ask "What happened?" or "what is happening?"

Listen to all involved and allow for differing versions of the story.

### 2. Chat quietly about desired behaviour.

Let all parties express a view and allow them to each own the desired behaviour.

### 3. Stop the undesirable behaviour...

... and replace it with the desired behaviour. Explicitly teach the desired behaviour and model it.

### 4. Practise the desired behaviour...

...and affirm it! Catch them doing the right thing and celebrate as appropriate.

*"I like the way you are using a friendly voice."*

*"I like the way you are using safe hands."*

*"I like the way you are taking turns."*

We all appreciate affirmation.... don't we?

## What about unsafe behaviour, bullying behaviour and disruptive behaviour?

These are **all** unacceptable. They require clear and appropriate consequences that are delivered in a timely manner by a calm and understanding adult.



Print version

### What happens if this does not work?

A calm adult needs to assess the emotional condition of the child. Does he/she need more time, sleep, food or space?

Over-tired, over-stimulated children may benefit from:

- Quiet instrumental music.
- Withdrawal from electronic stimuli.
- A calm, safe place.
- A favorite book or story.
- A good night's sleep.
- A good cuddle.



## The Restorative Practices Journey

Children will begin gradually to manage their relationships and their behaviour effectively and more often. There is growing capacity, but mistakes still occur and we must remember that children are still learners in life. Here we can begin to ask questions.

A good place to start is to use the following three questions:

What happened?

Who has been hurt?

How can we fix it?

Remember while we are  
**CHALLENGING THE  
BEHAVIOUR**, we are always  
**LOVING OUR CHILD!**

# About the Authors



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## Restorative Practices

**The most profound learning occurs when there is a healthy relationship between teacher and student.**

Restorative Practices assists teachers, students and parents to build, maintain and restore relationships.

For more information about Restorative Practice Workshops, please visit the website.

[www.restorativepractices.org.au](http://www.restorativepractices.org.au)

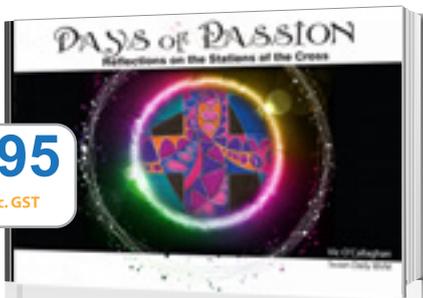
Print version

# NEW RELEASE!

Two new reflection books for Lent and Advent  
Vic O'Callaghan | Susan Daily IBVM

## Days of Passion

*In this place many dramas have been enacted, so the torture and public murder of an innocent man should not have made a dint on the wheel of history. But the death of a certain Galilean cracked the rim. In theatrical terms, the story has everything; hero, villains, conflict, betrayal, denial, anguish, death and more...*



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Assoc. Prof. Anne Benjamin ACU

## The Jesse Tree

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*"I Loved the vision of the communion of Saints. We need to know that they are part of the whole continuum."*  
Fr Chuck Gallagher SJ,

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- Preparing for the seasons of Advent and Lent
- Christmas Gifts
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# Family Unity

Francine & Byron Pirola

Some of the most persistent and hateful disagreements happen between family members. Regardless of who started it or who behaved worse, reconciliation is the responsibility of everyone in the family. Whether you're the one who has been hurt, the one who did the hurting, or someone who loves both the people locked in the dispute, the work of family unity requires everyone's effort.

## Lenten Grace

One of the best ways to prepare for Easter is to put our relationships right. Lent calls us to spiritual renewal through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These practices give us special grace to restore love and connection in our families.

- 1. Prayer and Fasting.** Offer yourself in prayer and fasting for the intention of unity in your family. Ask God to transform your heart and the hearts of those involved.
- 2. Bless your Enemies.** The Lord asks us to love our enemies. When we feel jealous, angry, disappointed or betrayed by a family member, resist the desire to blame or criticise and instead, ask God to bless them even more.
- 3. Words of Hope.** Speak kindly and respectfully of all those involved in the dispute. Keep the focus of your conversation on the gifts and goodness of each member rather than their faults. When the conversation turns sour, gossipy or critical, acknowledge that the person is speaking from a place of hurt and gently refocus them on the goodness of the other.



## Building Bridges @ Home

It can be difficult to reconcile. Feelings of hurt from what was done or said to us can be powerful. Sometimes though, what most blocks us from reconciliation is our sense of shame for our own actions or words. Even when both are guilty of bad behaviour, you **can** take the initiative and write a letter of reconciliation to someone you've hurt.

### A Reconciliation Letter

1. Say what you did or said (or failed to do) that hurt them.
2. Say how it impacted them: how they felt, how they reacted.
3. Say how it affected your relationship with them.
4. Say how sorry you are, and ask for forgiveness.
5. Say what you will do to make amends.

***When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."*** Luke 5:19-21



# Restoring Couple Unity

Francine & Byron Pirola

What most often brings couples undone, is not one massive act of betrayal, but the myriad of daily pinpricks of hurt. Criticism, put downs, rudeness, small selfish acts, being taken for granted, independent decisions... it's these little things that gradually erode the sense of connection and security in a marriage. Most couples brush these things aside, thinking they're too small to make a big deal of. Yet, like pebbles in a jar, eventually the jar fills, and our resentment bubbles over into a major, sometimes devastating, fight.

One of the most valuable practices a spouse can take on is a regular 'audit' of their relationship. This needn't be a protracted process, just a few minutes reflecting on how you may have failed to love your spouse that day, and a prayer to be strengthened in your resolve to do better at love tomorrow. It's also important to guard our own hearts from the accumulated wounds of those daily bumps and bruises. So a second reflection on how you may have been wounded by your spouse and a prayer to forgive is equally needed.



## Daily Marriage Audit

**Restoring Love** | 2 mins daily

How have I failed to love my spouse today?

Pray for the grace to do better at love tomorrow.

**Restoring Trust** | 2 mins daily

How have I been wounded by my spouse today?

Pray for the grace to forgive my spouse.

Print version

## St Valentine's Day | Feb 14

*St. Valentine was a priest in Rome at the time of Emperor Claudius II. His association with marriage arises from the story that Claudius banned weddings to encourage men to join his army. Seeing the anguish of the young couples forbidden to marry, St. Valentine allegedly performed secret weddings in defiance of the Emperor.*

*He was arrested and imprisoned. While awaiting execution, St. Valentine healed his jailer's blind daughter. On the eve of his death, he penned her a farewell note signing it, "From your Valentine".*

*On February 14, 269 AD he was beheaded. He is the Patron Saint of engaged couples and married lovers.*

**Download the Australian Bishops' notes on Romantic Love for the 2012 celebration of this saint.**



## SmartLoving.org

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