



Introducing Colin & Rebecca

To introduce this set *Faith Matters*, we meet Colin & Rebecca, a clergy family co-leading a church in Dublin, Ireland along with raising their two young children. Family Life with a 4-year-old and 1-year-old is “always a changing picture... we are constantly figuring out how to do it well.” Colin and Rebecca share with honesty and insight how they are doing this in their context. An inspiration to us all.

Simple daily practices

From the earliest days with a new-born, Colin and Rebecca practised simple family routines, such as prayers at mealtimes and bedtimes. This is something that is now totally ingrained.

Sharing stories is also a way of incorporating faith into everyday life. Reading a story from the Children’s Storybook Bible before or after a Julia Donaldson tale is natural and normal for this family.

Our heart is that their parents’ faith would become their own.

The 6th aspect of Children’s Holistic Development

In the West, many have neglected the idea that children are spiritual beings. Their spirituality needs sensitive tending and nurturing to develop. Their spirituality can be seen as equally integral to the other 5 better-understood and inter-connected aspects of child development (Physical, Intellectual, Social, Language & Emotional Development).

Working out priorities

Colin and Rebecca are very clear about their priorities. As co-leaders of their church, they understand that their primary ministry is to their family. Church must fit around this.

It’s taken another level of intentionality

Colin explains that these priorities provide them with the vision and values which shape how they do life. They actively manage the detail by regularly assessing, reviewing, managing diary commitments etc. etc. Whilst their children are young, they can often bring their children and see there are rich benefits in doing this.



Ministry can be all-consuming and dictate family life. It can be disruptive. Colin and Rebecca reflect with honesty how they are learning to manage their ministry commitments so that their family do not feel the cost. They realise the structures they put in place now are likely to shape their ministries well into the future.

They are also very careful to protect their children's privacy, especially around social media.

Offering style of parenting to others

As church leaders, Colin and Rebecca realise that they are unintentionally modelling 'in the moment' parenting to others. Rebecca explains the dilemma of being real as they are authentic in how they manage those public *moments*. As a couple, they are by nature relaxed about children in church; they want to encourage other families to be themselves and relax.

To teach or not to teach?

Rebecca finds herself asking, "Do we do enough?" However, they are encouraged and see that much is being absorbed. Hearing their daughter's spontaneous simple prayers, retelling a bible story and singing a familiar song all evidence her developing spirituality.

What is being taught are simple attitudes of thankfulness, foundational truths about being loved (by their parents and God), loving others and caring for the world. They know that such principles of faith are being absorbed through family routines, practices and seeing their parents' authentic faith in action.

Colin also explains there is an atmosphere they try to cultivate at home, where worship (& Barbie!!) music is played, flavouring family life.

It takes a village....

Kids are such a natural connection point.

In Church, there are rich opportunities for connecting with others. Friendships are formed in creche, through Sunday school, with different generations. Colin and Rebecca want their children to know they are Mum & Dad to their children FIRST, so the input of others is vital. They will be shaped and moulded by others in the church family.

Their Wider Family & Friends

Many friends and family live some distance away. Rebecca is so grateful for the support of friends and family who are intentionally and actively **present**. Their commitment to tangibly invest in their lives means that their children are **building strong**

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SET 4 Delving *a little* Deeper

Faith Matters!

Audio 1 – Nurturing Faith at Home

Companion Notes

Set 4; Audio 1
with Colin & Rebecca
Hamilton

relationships despite distances (many live abroad). Their commitment to travel and connect as much as possible is clearly vital to nurturing their kid's faith.

The place of **prayer** can never be underestimated. Rebecca points to the faithful prayers of her parents, something she continues for her own children – that they would grow in wisdom and stature... and walk closely with Jesus every day of their lives. Knowing there are prayer warriors covering the whole family is powerful and important.

Colin expresses his recognition of perhaps the greatest gift of the church is to be a 'family'.

The greatest gift is for us to be pursuing our own faith and let it spill out at home

Further information, practical guidance and advice are available through

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