



\* Promoting Peaceful  
Relationships at Home

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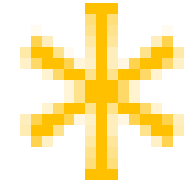


Catholics For  
Family Peace

Education and Research on Domestic Abuse

 NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE FAMILY

# God's grace is in the midst of family life.

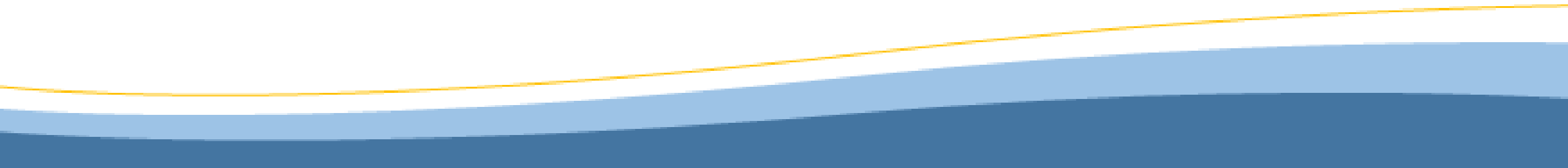


- “A family is not holy because it is perfect, but because it begins again each day to follow the way of love.”

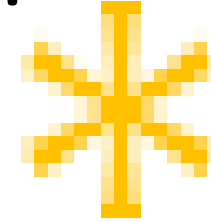
- U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Follow the Way of Love*



# \* All with equal dignity; in a variety of roles

- **Each member of the family is precious.**
  - Adults should work together for the good of all.
  - Parents have authority that they must exercise with love.
  - Children are responsible for treating others with kindness.
  - Each member, no matter the age, is called to bring peace.
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# Conflict? Be the change you want to see.



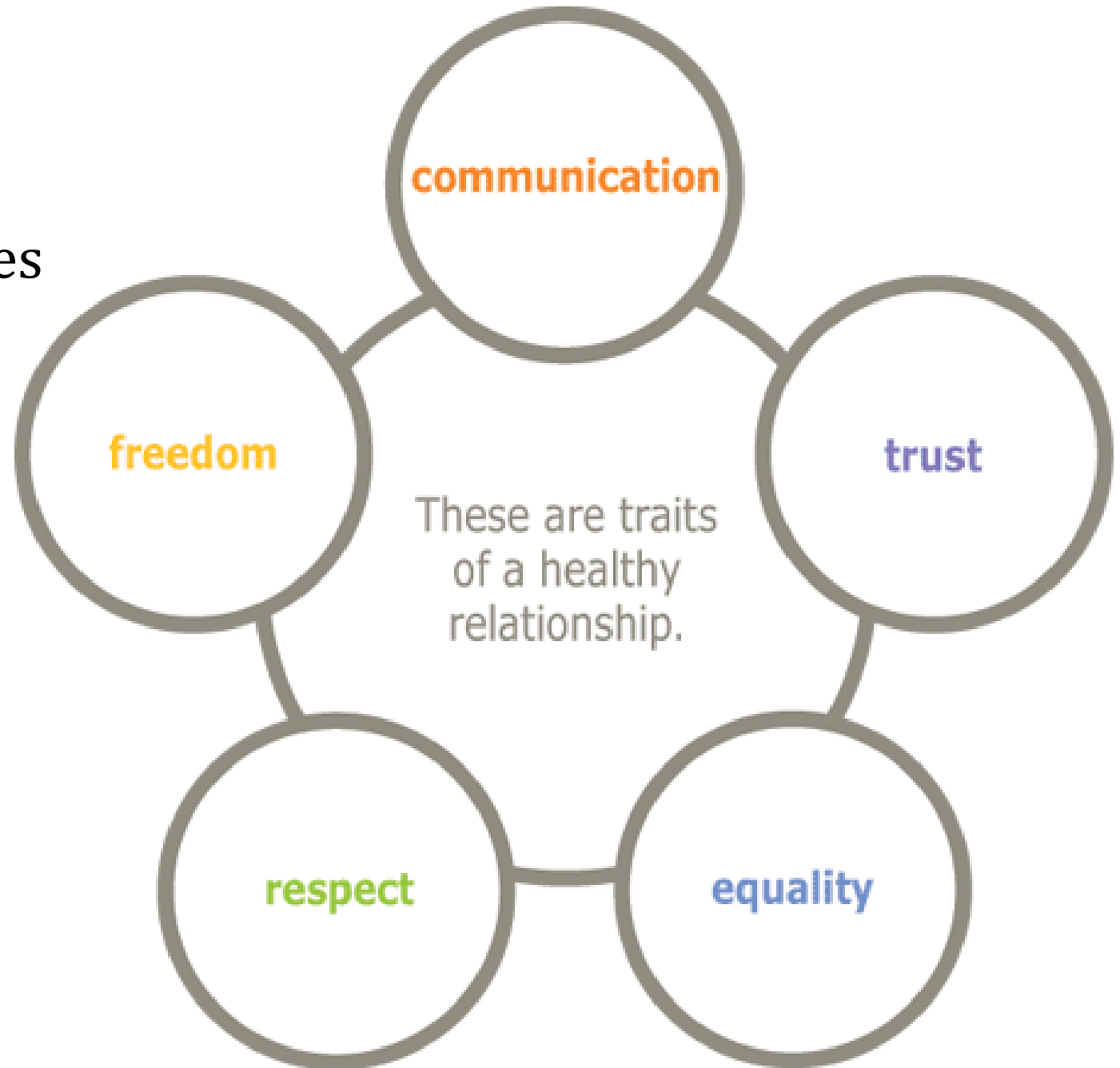
- Put on your own mask first...
- Bring your own calm to the situation.
- Respect the equal dignity of every person.
- Manage the stories you tell yourself about others.
- Always live up to your agreements -- or renegotiate if you can't.

*“Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is the presence of justice.”*

*– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

# Stay Connected

...while setting boundaries  
and dealing with  
one's own emotions.



## \* Sometimes conflict turns toxic.

- **Healthy conflict resolution:** Both parties work respectfully on a solution that is fair to both of them.
- Unhealthy family relationships are marked by **disrespect** for the other person's independence and feelings.
- Behaviors that damage peace:
  - Criticism
  - Contempt
  - Defensiveness / Quick to take offense
  - Stonewalling/Silent Treatment



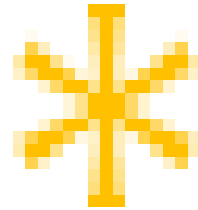
## When families struggle, you may be a **First Responder**

- Listen and believe them.
- Respect their choices.
- Affirm their right to be safe.
- Refer them to a professional helper.

**Domestic Violence Awareness Hotline**  
**800-799-SAFE**

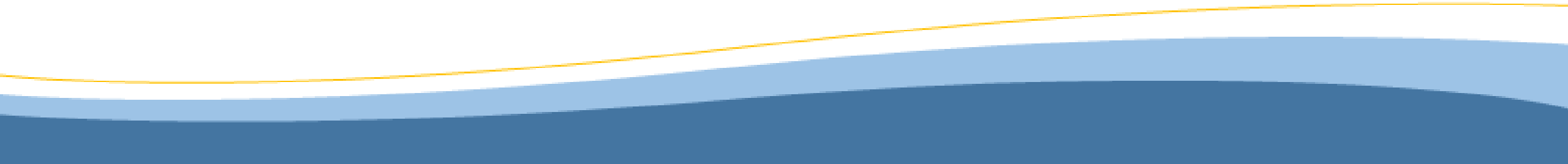
# Some things to say when someone turns to you

- You are not alone.
- You do not deserve this.
- The abuse is not your fault.
- Let me give you some helpful information.
- Let's pray together.
- This is not God's will for you.
- I am very concerned for your safety.
- Forgiveness does not mean staying in unsafe situations.





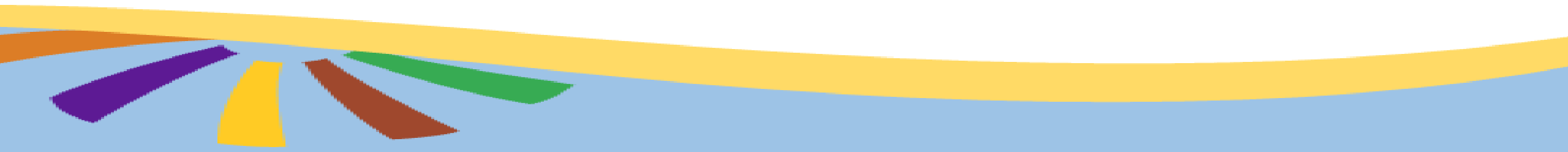
## \* Good news for families

- The good news is that most Catholic families do experience peace most of the time.
  - The other good news is that when a family struggles to experience peace, we want them to reach out for help.
  - We are meant to live as beloved children of God, accepting his love for us and sharing it with others.
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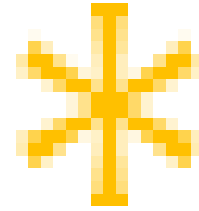
# Jesus is our model of tenderness.

We can imitate Jesus in conflict situations by...

- resisting passing judgment,
  - helping others understand the consequences of their actions
  - showing by our own example that there is a better way.
- “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” - Matthew 11:28-30*



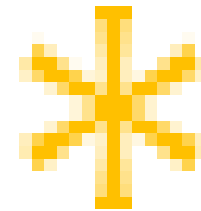
# Steps to tenderness



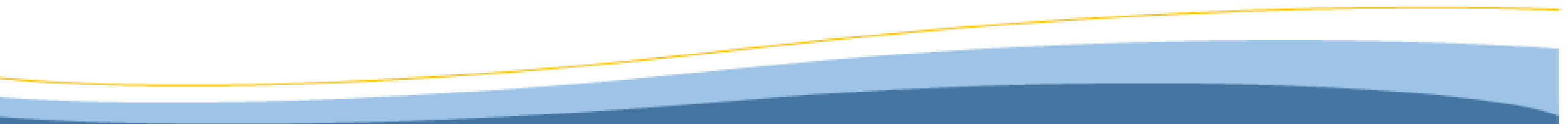
- Cool down.
- Look with love.
- Ask questions to learn why people are acting that way.
- Speak a peaceful word.
- Show a better way.

# Mind your words and tone.

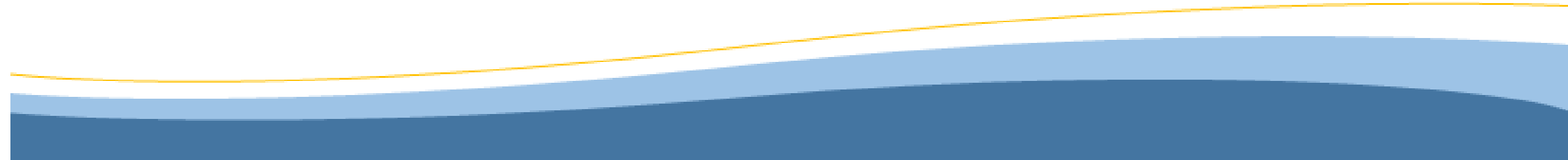
- Make all requests of the other clear, simple and specific.
- Practice sharing compliments, appreciations, and praise daily.
- Speak respectfully even when angry.



# Bring peace to family conflict situations.

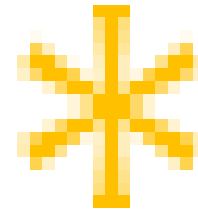
- Learn how to mirror the other's complaints.
  - Scan for whatever is valid in the other's complaint, and address that.
  - Practice holding yourself and the other in warm regard, ...even when feeling distant or during a fight.
  - Learn the skills of repairing damage in the relationship.
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# Skills for repairing family peace

- Praying for guidance
  - Listening
  - Expressing what we need
  - Asking for help
  - Complaining without criticizing
  - Taking responsibility for my part
  - Acting on what you have learned and adjusting your behavior
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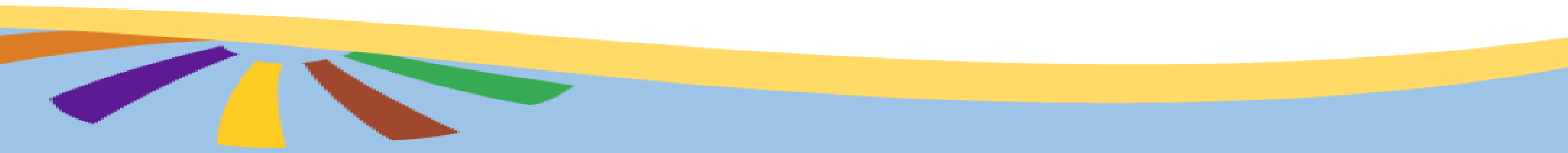
# What adjustments can you make?

- Give and expect respect.
- Simplify schedules.
- Involve everyone in decisions.
- Eat and spend peacefully.
- Take time for prayer alone.
- Celebrate successes and mourn losses together.



# Growing in peaceful relationships

- Stay connected with Jesus and the Church.
- Renew your spirit through worship and the Sacraments.
- Ask for help from supportive friends (in heaven and on earth)
- Remember: “Excuse me; thank you; I’m sorry.”

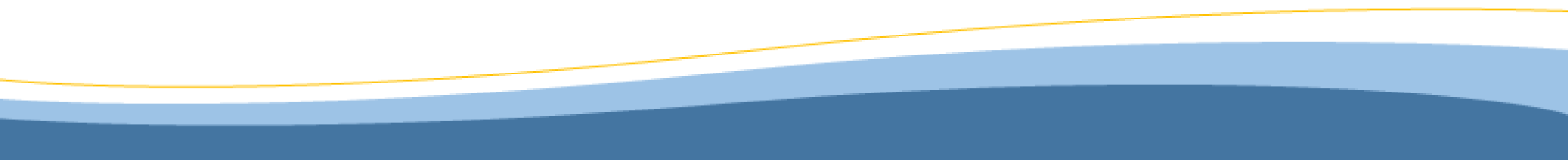




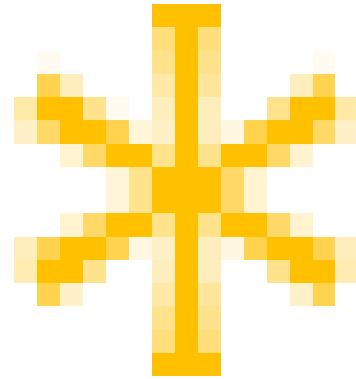
# Peaceful families for a peaceful world

- “Love shatters the chains that keep us isolated and separate; in their place, it builds bridges.”
- “Love enables us to create one great family, where all of us can feel at home... Love exudes compassion and dignity.”
- “Our human family can experience a rebirth, with all its faces, all its hands and all its voices, beyond the walls that we have erected.”

- Pope Francis: *We are all brothers and sisters.*



Questions?





## Learn more:

- Resources and education for your parish or school about healthy relationships and domestic abuse prevention
- Catholics For Family Peace
  - An initiative of the National Institute for the Family
  - With the National Domestic Violence Awareness Month Partners

[www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org](http://www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org)

# A Family Prayer for Peace

Lord, we are sorry and we ask your forgiveness for the times we show lack of respect and understanding and love.

We are sorry that we have often spoiled the perfect relationship you planned for us; that we neglect each other by neglecting to pray for each other and by failing to listen to each other and to respect each other's ideas and feelings;

And yet we also want to thank you for the happiness we have known together, for the sadness we have faced together, for the problems we are overcoming together, for the love that you give us which is completely unspoiled.

Amen.

