



Family Life

... providing information and resources to help parish staffs better partner with households of faith.

May 2016

MARRIAGE & FAMILY + PASTORAL CARE + PRO-LIFE + COUNSELING SERVICES

NOW MONTHLY!

Full of great content written by the Family Ministries team, the *Family Life Newsletter* is a source for information, resources and faith-based discussions about all manner of issues affecting families today.

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"The desire to marry and form a family remains vibrant, especially among young people, and this is an inspiration to the Church."

Pope Francis
"Amoris Laetitia"
April 19, 2016

Marriage & Family Enrichment

contact: Deacon Stephen Bowling, sbowling@archlou.org

Our Beautiful Mother

As one of my priest friends has said to me many times, "Mother's Day is the one Sunday where everyone expects and demands that you to preach sentimentally."

Yes, Mom is usually the most perfect of people for most of us . . . or pretty darn close anyway.

The work of a mother is never done . . . it is always ongoing. Or as Dr. Carrie Gress quipped, "Motherhood became almost easy once I accepted that it is hard."

Mothers seek to soothe the hurting, build up the discouraged, and tend the sick. They encourage the downtrodden and rearrange difficulties to be what their loved ones most need them to be. Perhaps most importantly, mothers teach not only by word and example, but especially by patient forbearance toward those who need to learn.

Mothers are patient, mothers are kind, mothers rejoice with the truth. Mothers always protect, always trust, always hope and always persevere. We know that a mother is about love, about helping us find justice, about helping us feel mercy.

We long for these qualities all of our lives and we never outgrow them. We declare these attributes as good; we seek them as people fumbling in the unknown dark with just a small candle to light our way. We know that our mothers are always to be there for us . . . no matter how far we might roam.

All of these are the things we long for in our mothers . . . and most especially we long for them in our Holy Mother, the Church.

These things are not just simple definitions of motherhood; they are some of the highest aspirations for its perfection as well. That ideal vision we all long for is something that the Church strives always to honor and achieve . . . even when we sometimes fall short.



Timothy Cardinal Dolan perhaps said it best. In his remarks at the Los Angeles Prayer Breakfast in 2010 he said that the "Church is not always perfect anymore than our natural family is, for they are both made up of flawed human beings.

I'd like to think that in BOTH, everyone really works hard to try and get it right – and also I hope that they work real hard at saying they're sorry and trying to make amends – even when it's tough.

(cont. next page)



Marriage & Family Enrichment Cont.

But even when things are not as we might wish, we're STILL proud . . . we LOVE OUR HOLY MOTHER and we LOVE being a part of her.

We STILL heartily appreciate the wisdom that our mother's have passed on to us. We WANT to be with her always, especially at those pivotal moments in life.

You see the Church is not JUST an institution . . .

It's not JUST a clearly defined set of creedal and moral convictions . . .

It's not JUST a great agent of charity and education . . .

It's not JUST a great place to pray and worship . . .

All of those things are essential, yes, but first and foremost it's our spiritual home" . . . and our mother.

So say we all.



Counseling Services

contact: Martine Bacci Siegel, msiegel@archlou.org

The Power of a Mother

Have you ever been in love? We *all* have, at least once. The *attachment bond* is the term for your first interactive love relationship—the one you had with your primary caregiver as an infant, usually your mother. This mother-child attachment bond shapes an infant's brain, profoundly influencing your self-esteem, your expectations of others, and your ability to attract and maintain successful adult relationships. By learning about attachment, you can build healthier, attuned relationships, and communicate more effectively.

Individuals who experience confusing, frightening, or broken emotional communications during their infancy often grow into adults who have difficulty understanding their own emotions and the feelings of others. This limits their ability to build or maintain successful relationships. Attachment—the relationship between infants and their primary caregivers—is responsible for:

- shaping the success or failure of future intimate relationships
- the ability to maintain emotional balance
- the ability to enjoy being ourselves and to find satisfaction in being with others
- the ability to rebound from disappointment, discouragement, and misfortune



The mother-child bond is the primary force in infant development, according to the *attachment bond theory* pioneered by English psychiatrist John Bowlby and American psychologist Mary Ainsworth. The theory has gained strength through worldwide scientific studies and the use of brain imaging technology.

Insecurity can be a significant problem in our lives, and it takes root when an infant's attachment bond fails to provide the child with sufficient structure, recognition, understanding, safety, and mutual accord.

For better or worse, the infant brain is profoundly influenced by the attachment bond—a baby's first love relationship. When the primary caretaker can manage personal stress, calm the infant, communicate through emotion, share joy, and forgive easily, the young child's nervous system becomes "securely attached." The strong foundation of a secure attachment bond enables the child to be self-confident, trusting, hopeful, and comfortable in the face of conflict. As an adult, he or she will be flexible, creative, hopeful, and optimistic.

Pastoral Care

contact: Michelle Herberger, mherberger@archlou.org

Being Present: Pastoral Responses for Those Struggling with Infertility

One cannot help but notice the value our Church has placed on the gift of children. Marriage vows commit us to “accepting children lovingly from God.” The nuptial blessing of the couple asks God to “Bless them with children and help them to be good parents.” Couples celebrate the blessing of a long life together as they “live to see their children’s children.” Infant baptism is celebrated in the context of Sunday Mass. Mother’s Day and Father’s Day receive special attention in the Sunday Liturgy as moms and dads are recognized and blessed. In the midst of all this celebration of human life, however, we can fail to recognize those whose deepest longings for a child go unmet. They are living with infertility.

Infertility is defined as the inability to conceive after one year of unprotected intercourse or the inability to carry a pregnancy to term. It affects approximately one in five couples across all ethnic and socioeconomic boundaries. There are several losses often experienced by those living with infertility: a loss of the experience of pregnancy and birth, a loss of a dream, a loss of the parenting experience, a diminished feeling of self-worth, a loss of hope for the future, and perhaps even the loss of one’s image of God.

Often with infertility, there is not a specific event or moment that marks the experience. Rather, there is the monthly reminder that a pregnancy did not occur. This makes the grief and mourning process associated with infertility unique – it is chronic, with no clear ending.

Infertility can be seen as a taboo topic. Those who readily express hope and excitement for couples to become parents often retreat into uncomfortable silence, simply not knowing how to be with couples as they mourn. Others try to “fix” the pain by “looking at the positive side” of childlessness by saying things like, “just think of all the things you can do that people with children can’t.”

There are a few things parishes can do to be present to infertile couples. If parishes have a BeFriender listening ministry, they may want to offer a BeFriender as support. Perhaps the petitions on Mother’s/Father’s Day could include prayer for infertile couples. The blessing of parents might be extended to include those who are present to a child in other ways (ie. Godparents, aunts/uncles). Parishes could work regionally to offer grief support specifically for those experiencing infertility. The prayer ministry of the parish (perhaps those who are homebound) could pray specifically for those living with infertility.

For assistance with grief support, please call the Family Ministries Office.

For more information on BeFriender Ministry, visit their website: www.befrienderministry.org

(Material taken in part from a Care Note written earlier by Michelle Herberger: “Bearing the Pain of Infertility”)



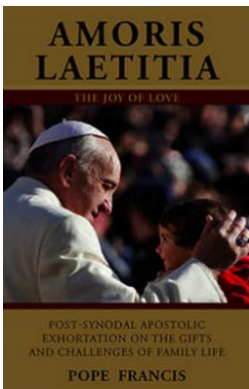
A Love Letter to Families - Pope Francis’ Amoris Laetitia

“The pope has given us a love letter to families—a love letter inviting all of us, and especially married couples and families, to never stop growing in love. It is also a love letter calling the Church, the family of God, to realize more and more her mission to live and love as a family.” Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz

With great anticipation, Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation “Amoris Laetitia” (the Joy of Love”) was released worldwide on April 19, 2016.

The document is intended to be the fruit of the two recent Synod’s on the family and as Archbishop Kurtz also said in his official statement announcing the release, “Pope Francis is calling us to enter more deeply into the beauty of marriage and Christ’s teaching. From the opening lines of Genesis to the closing chapter of Revelation, and throughout the Gospels, God speaks eloquently to us about the joys and challenges of marriage and family life.”

Amoris Laetitia is available for purchase in print through USCCB store at store.usccb.org and can also be downloaded and read in its entirety on the Vatican website for free at www.vatican.va.



Pro-Life

contact: Ed Harpring, eharpring@archlou.org

Is Pro-Life Pro-Mother?

One of the common criticisms in the abortion debate goes something like this: “‘prolifers’ only care about the unborn baby, but, they do nothing to help mothers.” In so many ways this common critique is aimed at all Catholics, along with those who believe in the sanctity of human life . . . and in what it tries to say about us, nothing could be further from the truth.

One thing we should all be clear on is that ‘prolifers’ are not some form of subset of the Catholic family, the term ‘prolife’ defines everyone who lives by those principles regarding life which are promulgated in Catholic Social Teaching. As the USCCB website states, “this belief that human life is sacred, is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.”

Catholic Teaching, by way of the Gospel, demonstrates that human life is a precious gift from God, and therefore, human life needs to be protected from conception to natural death. The Catholic Church, through its own ministries and in partnership with so many others, helps more mothers in unplanned pregnancies than any organization in the world. . . . and She doesn’t stop there. The Catholic Church serves the poor, the disabled, the marginalized, the abused, the homeless, the elderly, the refugee, the imprisoned, the victims of violence and the elderly . . . Often when no one else will. We very much do not stop protecting life after the child is born, for us the task is forever.

One of the primary and direct help ministries that ‘prolifers’ are largely responsible for in the United States are the growing number (over 4000) of Pregnancy Resource Centers (PCR’s). Free services and resources include:

- Pregnancy tests and Ultrasound
- Pre-natal care
- Childbirth classes
- Abstinence education
- Parenting classes
- Post-abortion counseling
- Peer-counseling
- 24-hour confidential helpline
- Tangible assistance
- Doctor referrals
- Referrals for resources

Over 2 million women are directly helped by PRC’s annually. In addition, many women stay at one of the 350 residential facilities for women and children operated by pro-life groups. Through the intercession of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, Little Way Pregnancy Resource Center PregnancyResourceCenter.net/ has been helping women, men, infants and children in many different ways including:



Little Way | Pregnancy Resource Center

515 W. Oak Street, Louisville, KY 40203; 502-583-2151

- Free Ultrasound and pregnancy testing for women in unplanned pregnancies
- Mentoring and referrals for women and men who need long term support
- Confidential, compassionate and non-judgmental counseling services for women and men designed to help the transition to parenthood.
- Baby supplies and tangible assistance as needed
- Post-abortive counseling and referral services

In addition, Little Way offers **Chastity and Abstinence classes** in 36 area schools

In 2015 alone Little Way:

- Performed **828** pregnancy tests
- Counseled **178** abortion-minded mothers
- Provided **67** life-affirming ultrasounds
- Helped **1070** mothers and families assistance with baby supplies
- Presented **3300** students with the Wait-Until-Marriage message of purity and chastity.

On Mother’s Day weekend, Little Way volunteers will be selling roses at 45 Archdiocesan parishes. This is a tremendous fundraiser for Little Way, and a win-win for those of us who need a last minute Mother’s Day gift.

In 31 years, Little Way has served **over 50,000** clients. If it was not for this ministry **several hundred** children would not be with us today.

This Mothers’ Day, with the simple gift of a bouquet of roses, we can affirm the value of the life in the womb, the mothers with child, and all mothers, most especially our Blessed Mother. Happy Mothers’ Day.



Up & Coming

Want to see what is happening with families?



<http://archloufamilyministries.org>

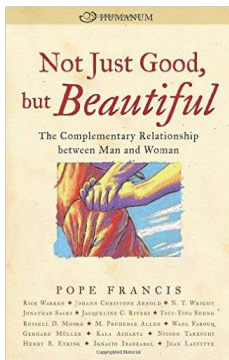


<https://www.facebook.com/Family-Ministries-Archdiocese-Of-Louisville-1557225541243067>



@Archloufamily

"Not Just Good, but Beautiful"



Book-of-the-Month for the U.S. Catholic Bishops' website "For Your Marriage"

Not Just Good, but Beautiful is a collection of writings by Pope Francis and fifteen religious leaders from around the world which explores the beauty of marriage and the complementarity of man and woman as a universal cornerstone of healthy families, communities, and societies.

Not Just Good, but Beautiful has won praise across the spectrum, from *Catholic World Report* ("A wonderful contribution to the Church in the modern world.") to the *Huffington Post* ("I sincerely suggest every married couple have a copy, regardless of religion.").

The book is available in paperback and as an e-book directly from Plough Publishing at www.plough.com and from Amazon.

Helpers of God's Precious Infants



7:00 a.m. - Mass at Cathedral of the Assumption followed by procession to local abortion facility.

9:00 a.m. - Benediction at Cathedral

Saturday, May 21 Fr. Jeff Nicolas

Visit: HelpersLouisville.org

Safe Environment Training

Monday, May 2 6:30 p.m. Corpus Christi Classical Academy, Simpsonville

Monday, May 16 6:30 p.m. St. Raphael

Tuesday, May 24 1:30 p.m. Assumption H.S.

Sunday, June 5 5:30 p.m. Flaget Center

Marriage Encounter

A weekend retreat for married couples who desire time away to enrich their marriage.
Cincinnati weekend - July 29 - 31, 2016
To learn more, visit www.wvme.org



Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery)

This ministry is designed to help couples in troubled marriages to heal and renew.
Next Louisville area weekend - Sept. 16, 2016.
To learn more, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org



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