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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 triune God is a communion of love, and the family is its living reflection."*



Pope Francis

## Marriage & Family Enrichment

contact: Deacon Stephen Bowling, [sbowling@archlou.org](mailto:sbowling@archlou.org)

### Motherhood Is . . .

In the liner notes of his 1975 album ["Windsong"](#), the late John Denver wrote about how he had tried to record the sound of the wind in order to incorporate it into the album which carried its name, but for some reason, he "could never capture the sound on tape so as to do it any justice."

This is the same kind of problem one has when trying to adequately describe all that goes into the concept of motherhood . . . our language is simply not big enough to do justice to the power and beauty that the word encompasses. The word defies being forced into any description we might wish to place upon it . . . nevertheless during the month of May every year we all make our attempts at doing so.

Perhaps it is this deficiency which drew me to the above quote on motherhood by Gilda Radner. I think it more than any other begins to capture the true essence of motherhood without in any way diminishing the grandeur and holiness it carries with it. In many ways the quote actually seems to enhance the term – something I thought impossible before finding it.

"Infinite Optimism" may be a phrase which begins to tell the story properly.

Motherhood always seems to me to be at its heart an act of positivity . . . something, as John Denver himself said on that very same album, which ["works in the service of life and the living . . . part of the movement, part of the growing, part of beginning to understand."](#) Mothers always look for the best in us; they support us when we are in need, they protect us when we are afraid, and perhaps most important of all, they love us for just who we are, just as we are.

"Infinite optimism" is perhaps one of the most succinct descriptions for Holy Mother Church as well. Even though there are many who might not be able to live up to this ideal expression of motherhood, the Church herself absolutely must do so . . . to assist those in need and to model for us all exactly how "mothering" was intended by God to be done from the very beginning.

The Church indeed works in "service of life and the living" as it seeks to accompany us along our journey through this life. Our benefit is always in her heart, our welfare is her intent and our success and salvation are ever her wishes for us.

### (MOTHERHOOD IS)

the biggest gamble in the world.  
It is the glorious life force.  
It's huge and scary – it's an act of

## INFINITE OPTIMISM.

— Gilda Radner



## Marriage & Family Enrichment cont.



The Church is our spiritual mother and the infinite optimism she pours forth upon us in the sacraments is intended to become a living part of us, just as the Gospel itself is as well.

On this upcoming Mother's Day . . . a day when we seek to remember our own mothers' "infinite optimism" (or at least their best attempts towards it) we also should take a moment and remember Mother Church and her best attempts at achieving this sacred goal too. Just as with most mothers, the attempts and the successes are far more numerous than we might always remember . . . and the victories that she has achieved for us are very much worth celebrating anew once more.

## Counseling Services

### *How Almost Everything About Your Mother Comes Down to Neurochemicals*

Mother's Day should be a joyful celebration, and our mothers deserve a special day. But what about the day after Mother's Day? And the 363 days after that? What can neuroscience teach us about how to celebrate and treat our mothers every day?

While psychiatry and neuroscience are incredibly complex fields, some surprisingly simple insights have emerged about the easy ways you can help yourself and others to boost well being, vitality, and happiness. A surprising percentage of human behavior comes down to the interplay of 4 important neurochemicals.



- - **Cortisol:** Our bodies release cortisol when stressed, and it can seriously damage the body in the long run. As we age, we become more sensitive to cortisol. The older your mother is, the less cortisol (and stress) she'll be able to handle well.
- - **Dopamine:** This neurochemical is released any time we encounter something new. It could be a new song, a new movie, or even a new website or a piece of technology. Essentially, it is our brain's way of rewarding us when we discover something.
- - **Endorphins:** Endorphins are released in response to physical activity/exercise. This is the neurochemical that is responsible for the "runner's high."
- - **Serotonin:** Serotonin is produced when you help others, bond with others, and when you feel healthy pride in a job well done.

Here are some examples that will help you go beyond telling your mother that you love her and show you how to demonstrate and create love.

- **Help manage her cortisol:** Find ways to reduce her stress. If your mother is not being social enough, her loneliness could lead to increased cortisol levels. If she's struggling with keeping up with housework, you can reduce her stress by helping her out. Also, just be kind. Nothing makes a mother prouder than a kind child. Seeing you being kind to others goes a long way toward reducing her stress level. **(Cont)**

## Counseling Services cont.

- **- Increase her dopamine:** This one is easy. The more new and novel experiences you can give your mother, the greater her dopamine level. This could be taking her to a restaurant she's never been to before, or introducing her to a new technology.
- **- Endorphin rush:** Do your best to increase your mother's physical activity. It could be going on walks, gardening, or any physical activity that is appropriate for her fitness level.
- **- Elevate Her Serotonin:** There are several ways to boost serotonin. Frequent contact, especially face to face, is one of the most effective ways. Visit, call, send texts or emails...the point is to maintain consistent and frequent contact. Another way to boost serotonin is to engage in acts of kindness, so consider taking your mother to a volunteer event, or over to help a friend or relative.
- Helping others will do amazing things for her mood and well being. Serotonin is per-



## Pro-Life Activities

contact: Ed Harpring, [eharpring@archlou.org](mailto:eharpring@archlou.org)

### "Our Lady of Fatima"

The month of May draws our attention to Mother's Day. This year we have the added focus on Mother Mary's role as our heavenly mother with the ongoing Centennial of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima celebration taking place around the world (including the Archdiocese of Louisville) and Feast Day on May 13<sup>th</sup>.



## Our Lady — of — Fatima

The apparitions of Fatima to many of us have a mysterious and prophetic aura about them with the "miracle of the sun" spinning and dancing in the sky to more than 50,000 onlookers, the three secrets revealed to three young Portuguese children, Lúcia Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto, starting on May 13, 1917, and the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Our Lady appeared six times between May and October 1917 to the three children.

Despite the intrigue and mystery of Fatima, the overall message is straightforward and

aligns with the "Good News" of the Gospel. Mary implores us to turn away from sin, open ourselves entirely to her Son – Jesus through prayer, reparation, repentance, and sacrifice. And yet she provides her tender motherly solace through her Immaculate Heart. "My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God."

And today, we know that Mother Mary's descriptions of evil in the world are all too real. The battle between good and evil is raging -100 years. Sister Lucia related before her death in 2005 that the *final battle between the Lord and the reign of Satan will be about marriage and the family*. Family and marriage is under attack like never before, and we know that in our county alone, nearly 60,000,000 unborn lives have been lost to abortion. Similarly St. John Paul II in his encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, said "we are facing an enormous and dramatic clash between good and evil, death and life, the "culture of death" and the "culture of life." We find ourselves not only "faced with" but necessarily "in the midst of" this conflict: we are all involved and we all share in it, with the inescapable responsibility of choosing to be unconditionally pro-life." Saint Mother Teresa echoed this when she proclaimed that the "The Greatest Destroyer of Love and Peace is Abortion."

But like the good mother that she is, Our Lady gave us the antidote to the evil in our world – the rosary. (Cont.)



## ***Pro-Life Activities cont.***

She stressed the importance of praying the Rosary in each of Her apparitions, asking the children to pray the Rosary every day for peace. Our Lady of Fatima promised that “in the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph.”

The Archdiocese of Louisville will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima Anniversary on the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima: Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 11am at the Cathedral of the Assumption. Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz will be the celebrant and concelebrated by Fr. Matthew Hardesty, Director of the Archdiocesan Marian Committee and Pastor of Holy Trinity, Fredericktown and Holy Rosary, Manton.

## ***Pastoral Care***

contact: Michelle Herberger, [mherberger@archlou.org](mailto:mherberger@archlou.org)

### ***The Fullness of Love in the Face of Loss***

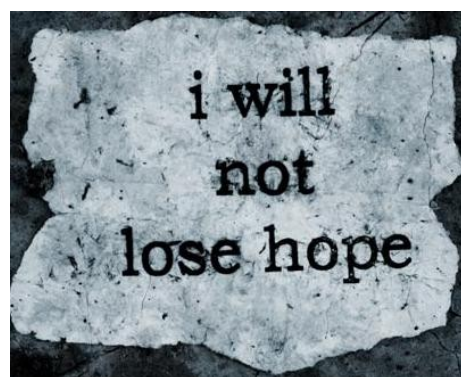
Pregnancy is often a time filled with hope and expectation. The new life growing in the womb is a sign that life continues and there is promise for the future. It is no wonder that couples look forward to their ultrasounds where they get a glimpse of their growing miracle.

However, for some, that ultrasound is the beginning of a devastating loss, one for which they were ill-prepared and one where support seems limited. Adding to the shock and pain of adverse fetal diagnoses is the frequent recommendation to terminate the pregnancy.

Organizations such as [Be Not Afraid](http://benotafraid.net) offer concrete help and support to couples who learn their unborn child has little to no chance of surviving outside the womb. Couples can make a birth plan, get support from others who have experienced a similar pregnancy, and plan ways to create memories of their baby immediately following the birth. There is also support following the death of the baby.

Although no amount of support can take away the pain of this tragic loss, there is a way to embrace and celebrate the gift of your child for the brief time you have him or her with you. For more information about resources available to you, in addition to the support you may receive in your parish, please contact the Family Ministries Office for accompaniment in these very difficult situations.

(Link for Be Not Afraid above: [benotafraid.net](http://benotafraid.net))



### ***Pastoral Care to the Sick & Dying and Befriender Hospital Ministry Training***

This combined training is open to all, but it is especially beneficial to deacons, wives of deacons, pastoral associates, those involved in parish ministry to the sick and homebound, as well as, individuals who want to be part of a hospital team which visits Catholic patients. The training will begin on June 10.

A total of 10 sessions will offer the education, formation, and skills needed for those who minister to the sick and dying in hospitals, nursing homes, or homebound. Through an understanding of family systems, pastoral communication, grief, and cultural and racial diversity, participants will be better prepared to respond to the needs of the suffering.



For additional questions or to register contact Michelle, 502-636-0296, ext. 1201.

## Up & Coming

### Financial Help for Newly Married

The Family Ministries Office is proud to announce the first of its many upcoming programs designed to assist and accompany couples in the critical first few years of marriage!

Come and spend two intensive and personalized days with **certified financial planner Jerry Zimmerer** from **D. Scott Neal, Inc.** as we dive deeply into proven financial practices and planning and explore how such critical tools and techniques can support, enrich and strengthen Catholic marriages!

### Building Your Financial Foundation

For Newly Married Couples



The Saturday sessions will be held at **St Gabriel Parish, 5505 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY, 40291** in Loft 1 on **both May 13 and May 27** from **9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.**

The cost for attending this two day workshop is at the **SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE of \$110 per couple.**  
Visit: <http://bit.ly/2ouvYsQ> to register.

### 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 20 - Archbishop Kurtz  
Visit: [HelpersLouisville.org](http://HelpersLouisville.org)

### Safe Environment Training

Mon, May 15	6:30 p.m.	St. Gabriel
Mon, May 22	6:30 p.m.	St. Stephen Martyr
Mon, June 5	6:30 p.m.	St. Margaret Mary
Mon, June 19	6:30 p.m.	St. Leonard



### Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery)

This ministry is designed to help couples in troubled marriages to heal and renew.  
Owensboro weekend - Aug. 18 - 20  
To learn more, visit [www.HelpOurMarriage.org](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.org)



### Marriage Encounter

A weekend retreat for married couples who desire time away to enrich their marriage.  
Louisville area weekend - Aug 18 - 20  
To learn more, visit [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org)



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