



# Family Life Newsletter



Marriage & Family • Pro-Life • Pastoral Care • Counseling Services

August 2017

## Marriage & Family Enrichment

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### Sitting at the Feet of Socrates

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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“For all a family’s problems, it can always grow, beginning in love.”



Pope Francis

At this time of the year when going back to school is on the mind of so many, I can’t help but wonder how many folks see learning as something that belongs only in the classroom.

One of my fondest memories as a child was of listening to an adult whom I loved – my father, mother, grandparents or whomever – tell me things about the world and life in general.

I learned how to plow a field from my grandfather, how to weed a garden from my mother (although I absolutely hated the task) and a great deal about the history of Western Civilization from my dad.

Through these and many other experiences, I came to learn that one of the very best ways to **really learn** something was to simply spend some significant time with a wise person, kind of like how Plato described learning from his mentor Socrates . . . he would just literally sit at his feet and listen.



Is this not one of the most beautiful treasures associated with the idea of family? Is not the family the very place where the passing along of wisdom from one generation to another is made a reality?

Just as faith is first taught in the home and through the family, cannot the same be said with regard to all forms of virtue and wisdom?

The family is the best of teachers, as it says in the blessing at the end of the Church’s Rite of Baptism, and as such it must always be a place where learning is a key component in its everyday life. While school may come into and out of session with the seasons, the family’s duty to “impart wisdom” is a responsibility which must always be kept both alive and active at all times and in all weathers.



As children grow, parents often look backwards and see how far and how fast they have come. Should not this all-too-common moment of reflection perhaps serve as a powerful motivator for each of us . . . encouraging us to “be present” for our children all that much more while they are still young and at home with us?

Conversation is the art of being uniquely human . . . it is the place where we learn to both listen and contribute to the betterment of both the world in general and, in particular, our places within it.

Perhaps our task this fall, as learning once again comes back into term, might be for us to spend some new time conversing with the young people whom we love and value. I suspect that this true gift from our hearts and minds would be one which would always be treasured . . . by both them and us.

## Pastoral Care

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### Longing for Normal

It's back to school time! For many, that means being back in a routine. A routine can be comforting as it offers stability and a level of predictability. There's little room for guessing in a routine; one knows what's expected of him/her and what's coming next.

However, when you are grieving, the comfort "routine" is changed or absent. You may long to get back to normal. Perhaps one of the most difficult realizations is that there is no going back to the time before your loss. You won't return to that former "normal." There is also, no getting over your grief. In time though, as you move through your grief, a new normal will appear. In the meantime, be gentle with yourself and faithful to moving through your grief. The new normal, in many ways, is the assurance that life does indeed go on and God is faithful and with us through it all.



## Counseling Services

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### Protecting Our Children

The return to school is an exciting time for most, but for some it simply serves as a short respite from abuse at home. Listed here are some behaviors school staff should be on the lookout for as they could be an indicator of a more serious problem. Remember, the Commonwealth of Kentucky is a mandatory reporting state. You **MUST** report any suspicions you have. If you believe a child is being abused, neglected or is dependent, please call the Child Protection Hotline number below or the Protection and Permanency office in your county or call the **Child Protection Hot Line 1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331)**

The online KY Child/Adult Protective Services Reporting System is available for professionals to report non-emergency situations that do not require an immediate response from staff. The website is monitored from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Friday. Reports will not be reviewed evenings, weekends or state holidays.

Here are a list of behaviors to look out for

1. **Changes in behavior.** Abuse can lead to many changes in behavior. Abused children often appear scared, anxious, depressed, withdrawn or more aggressive.
2. **Returning to earlier behaviors.** Abused children may display behaviors shown at earlier ages, such as thumb sucking, bed-wetting, fear of the dark or fear of strangers. For some children, even loss of acquired language or memory problems may be an issue.
3. **Fear of going home.** Abused children may express apprehension or anxiety about leaving school or about going places with the person who is abusing them or exhibit an unusual fear of a familiar person or place.
4. **Changes in eating.** The stress, fear, and anxiety caused by abuse can lead to changes in a child's eating behaviors, which may result in weight gain or weight loss.
5. **Changes in sleeping.** Abuse children may have frequent nightmares or have difficulty falling asleep, and as a result may appear tired or fatigued.
6. **Changes in school performance and attendance.** Abused children may have difficulty concentrating in school or have excessive absences, sometimes due to adults trying to hide the children's injuries from authorities.
7. **Lack of personal care or hygiene.** Abused and neglected children may appear uncared for. They may present as consistently dirty and have severe body odor, or they may lack sufficient clothing for the weather.
8. **Risk-taking behaviors.** Young people who are being abused may engage in high-risk activities such as using drugs or alcohol or carrying a weapon.
9. **Inappropriate sexual behaviors.** Children who have been sexually abused may exhibit overly sexualized behavior or use explicit sexual language and may exhibit symptoms of a genital infection.
10. **Unexplained injuries.** Children who have been physically abused may exhibit unexplained burns or bruises in the shape of objects. You may also hear unconvincing explanations of a child's injuries.

## Suicide Prevention is a Pro-Life Issue

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Tragically, suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, claiming over 40,000 lives per year. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that the number of suicides in the United States is at its highest level in 30 years. Their 2016 report revealed a 24% increase in the number of suicides from 1999–2014. Even more alarming is the stark fact that suicide is now the third leading cause of death among persons aged 10-14, and the second among persons aged 15-34 years.

Ambassadors for Life, a newly formed group of high school students in the Archdiocese of Louisville, focuses on the full spectrum of “Life” issues, and is facilitated by the Pro-Life and Youth Ministries Offices. Because many of these young people know someone personally who has taken their life, they have asked us to focus on suicide prevention as one of our “Life” issues. The Ambassadors are right – suicide and suicide prevention is a Pro-Life issue, and it’s essential that we do more to arm our youths with the resources and formation tools to better understand the warning signs of suicide.



Studies confirm that approximately 90 percent of people who take their own lives have some type of mental disorder, primarily depression. Experts tell us that depression can originate from a variety of factors, making it particularly difficult to successfully treat.

St. John Paul II commented on the increase in suicide and depression in 2003:

*The spread of depressive states has become disturbing. They reveal human, psychological and spiritual frailties which, at least in part, are induced by society. It is important to become aware of the effect on people of messages conveyed by the media which exalt consumerism, the immediate satisfaction of desires and the race for ever greater material well-being. It is necessary to propose new ways so that each person may build his or her own personality by cultivating spiritual life, the foundation of a mature existence.*

Note the connection between our current cultural focus on consumerism, instant gratification, and the lack of meaning in life, especially for youths. St. John Paul II famously told millions of youths at World Youth Day what the solution is to depression and the lack of meaning in life that inundates our materialistic culture.

*It is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; He is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is He who provoked you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is He who urges you to shed the masks of a false life.*

Finally, St. John Paul II urged compassionate care for those who may show signs of depression:

*In his infinite love, God is always close to those who are suffering. Depressive illness can be a way to discover other aspects of oneself and new forms of encounter with God. Christ listens to the cry of those whose boat is rocked by the storm (cf. Mk 4: 35-41). He is present beside them to help them in the crossing and guide them to the harbor of rediscovered peace.*

Similarly, the Catholic Church urges hope, not despair, towards those who have lost their lives to suicide.

*CCC 2283 We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives.*

The increase in suicide, especially among adolescents is a major concern to the Church. There are many good resources that are available to better understand ways to prevent suicide. Listed below are resources to help prevent suicide and assist families who have experienced the death of a loved one by suicide:

<http://www.ncpd.org/>

<https://afsp.org/>

<https://www.jedfoundation.org/>



# Up & Coming

## Information Sessions, Trainings & Workshops

### NEW "Joined by Grace" Companion Couple Marriage Preparation Program

#### - Hour-long Information Sessions for prospective couples -

- Saturday, August 19 - 10:00 a.m.
- Monday, September 18 - 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 18 - 7:00 p.m.

#### - Program Training Sessions -

- Saturdays, **November 11, 2017** or **February 3, 2018**—9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

All sessions to be held in Loft 1 at St Gabriel Parish, 5505 Bardstown Rd, Louisville

Contact Deacon Stephen Bowling at [sbowling@archlou.org](mailto:sbowling@archlou.org) for more information.



### Building Your Financial Foundation, Two Session Workshop

For newly married & engaged couples to receive deep personalized financial planning advice and assistance from Certified Financial Advisor Jerry Zimmerer.

**Saturdays, October 7 & 28, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at St. Gabriel.. 5505 Bardstown Rd**

Contact Deacon Stephen Bowling at [sbowling@archlou.org](mailto:sbowling@archlou.org) for more information.

### 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, August 12

Visit: [HelpersLouisville.org](http://HelpersLouisville.org)

### Safe Environment Training

Mon, Aug 7 6:30 p.m. - St. Joseph, Bardstown

Wed, Aug 9 5:00 p.m. - Holy Trinity

Mon, Aug 14 6:30 p.m. - St. Martha

Thu, Aug 17 6:30 p.m. - St. James, Elizabethtown

Mon, Aug 21 6:30 p.m. - St. Gregory, Cox's Creek



### Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery)

This ministry is designed to help couples in troubled marriages to heal and renew.

Owensboro weekend - Sept 15 - 17

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.wmme.org](http://www.wmme.org)



### Staff

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