



September 2017

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

Marriage & Family Enrichment

contact: Deacon Stephen Bowling, sbowling@archlou.org

"Going the Distance"

One of the best truths I ever learned in all my many years in the corporate world was the primacy of the concept of "following through" . . . "going the distance" as it were.

No matter how clever you were, no matter how good (or even necessary!) that your idea or program was, unless you could see it all the way to completion and then to have it be sustained thereafter, there was pretty much no reason to waste yours and every-



one else's time. The creative process was pretty much valued only to the extent that it could be operationalized. Like the song from the 1997 Disney Movie "Hercules" (which both my daughters still love to this day), "[Going the Distance](#)" was what truly mattered and, yes, it still makes so much sense, even today.

This mantra was (and still is for the most part) pretty much everywhere in the business world . . . and yet it seems, no matter where you might go there, actually "going the distance" is all-too-often a rare event. Unless what you are doing is a simple and quick thing, requiring little change or time, making something serious happen is almost like pushing that metaphorical boulder up the mountain.

Unless we can just "do it now," it often doesn't seem to get done, and I think this is something that humanity struggles with more today than ever before in this "instantaneous-oriented" society in which we live.

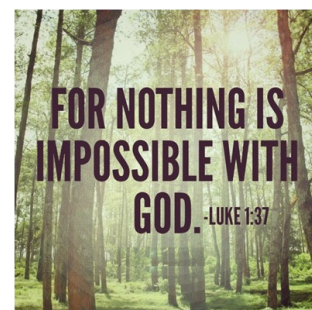
And yes, this tendency is also oh-so preeminent in Christian family life as well.

Nothing needs us to "go the distance" more than our precious relationships – with both God and each other – but actually doing this so oftentimes is just plain TOUGH. Fortunately, Christ recognized this inclination in us long ago (it really is nothing new) and gave us something precious as an antidote for it . . . the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

That "spiritual salve of healing" is always here for us; it is here to sustain us when we ourselves seem unsustainable. When weakness overcomes us, when all those many stresses on our relationships seem too much to bear, God's grace and strength in the Sacrament is there. I truly believe that the reason we humans find it so difficult to "go the distance" on so many worthwhile things, is because we all-too-often forget to seek out God's strength.

Family relationships can indeed be messy . . . but we must never forget those beautiful words spoken to our Blessed Mother by the angel Gabriel in Luke's Gospel . . .

"Nothing is impossible with God."



Pastoral Care

contact: Michelle Herberger, mherberger@archlou.org

A Time for Healing

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 *For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven....*

Before I learned the theme of this newsletter, I was thinking about writing something on divorce. With the theme being *Harvest*, I wondered how that might apply to one who has experienced divorce. I decided to ask someone who is recently divorced. Her reflection follows.

There were several things she reflected on as she moved toward healing. She said one of the first things on which she chose to focus following her divorce, was the blessing of those years of marriage. She recognized immediately, the gift of her children as well as the gift of her grandchildren. They were deeply wanted and loved and remain so, today. She spoke of the memories of the good times and shared hopes. She also spoke of the strength that came from the struggles of a hurting marriage.

In addition to the time of harvesting, there is a period of letting go that we experience each fall as leaves "let go" and plants go dormant or die. That was a second focus of hers as she reflected on her status as one recently divorced. There seemed to be an inherent need to let go of all the hurts and all the unrealized dreams. But, that couldn't happen without also learning to forgive. And that was the third thing she spoke about in her journey toward healing. She realized she had to forgive him, and in some ways, more importantly, she needed to forgive herself.

I sat in awe as I listened to her and recognized I was in a very holy place as she reflected. I also saw how those things she focused on were things each of us could ponder during this harvest season. For what are we grateful? What must be relinquished? What or whom must be forgiven? What I find comfort in is the belief that God is with each of us as we ponder these things and graces us with hope and healing.



For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.
Ecclesiastes 3:1

Counseling Services

contact: Martine Bacci Siegel, msiegel@archlou.org

The Colors of the Season

As we turn the calendar to September we move toward fall, traditionally a time for harvest and maybe an Indian Summer, a brief return of warmth following the first frost.

Fall can be emotional for many looking back on a summer vacation while at the same time "getting ready" for the busy holiday season. Fall seems to be conveniently wedged nicely between the two seasons providing a great opportunity to live in the here and now while evaluating where we want to be.

As the cooler temperatures descend, don't spend too much time wishing you were on the beach still in shorts and flip flops or worrying about the cold and snow the winter may bring. Instead as the leaves of summer begin to fade, take in the sights and smells of fall that give us an energy and excitement that will carry us through the change in seasons.



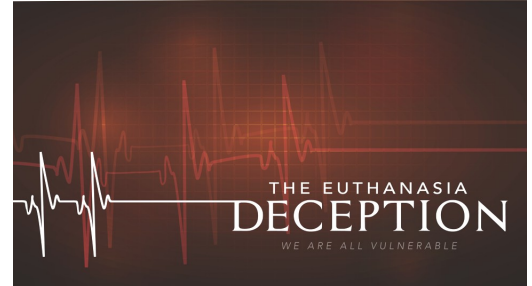
Winter and the rush of Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here soon enough. Now is the time to allow yourself to be fascinated by the colors of the season and look at where you are. What have you accomplished? Where else do you want to grow?

Like the leaves on the trees, fall is the perfect time to shine and celebrate growth, while at the same time, think about where you need to plant your seeds for the next growing season.

Living Life To Its Natural End - Who Decides?

"To end a person's suffering seems a mercy. And does the exact time of death really matter that much?" This candid reflection by Suzanne Marshall caught my attention as I read her account of her mother's lengthy and painful death. On the surface, it seems merciful to want to end the suffering for any human being, and especially for our family members who are closest to us.

In her article, "Time of Death - The Things Euthanasia Would Have Stolen from My Dying Mother and Me," <http://www.plough.com/en/topics/justice/culture-of-life/time-of-death> Marshall recounts her roller-coaster range of thoughts and emotions that led her from a desire to mercifully end her mother's life quickly to avoid suffering, to a profound realization that God's timing, even in the throes of suffering, brought forth an unexpected mutual strengthening and renewal of the love between Suzanne and her mother.



Marshall recounts the dreaded, cancer diagnosis that would include a painful and expensive march to death over the coming 6 - 9 months. Overwhelmed almost to despair, she began to understand, "why euthanasia is becoming increasingly accepted and legalized (Washington, Oregon, California, Vermont, and Montana currently allow euthanasia, as do several other countries)." However, as Suzanne sat with her mother over the ensuing weeks, she began to feel the movement of the Holy Spirit helping her to rise above the dark veil of impending death and to reveal to her the deeper meaning of this blessed time with her mother. "With each passing minute, my mind insisted, 'Death, is wrong, wrong, wrong.' I realized that humankind's selfish willfulness produced this consequence, this destruction that has wormed its sick ruin into every facet of creation until it wreaks its worst outcome."

This stark realization of how man's sinful nature has led to death and destruction, temporarily stunned her, and tempted her to think of a quick fix to hasten her mother's death. But just as quickly as the despairing thought entered, she felt a more powerful illumination when she thought, "what about my mother's perspective? I am certain that my presence communicated worth to her. In effect I said, 'Mom, suffering with you is tearing me up, but you are worth it. You are immeasurably valuable, and I want to spend every last second with you that I can.'" Maybe this reassurance was something she needed to take with her." What would euthanasia have communicated to her? Would she be grateful and understand that I did it in mercy, or would she interpret my actions as ending my own pain and inconvenience?"

Marshall's gift of self for her mother's sake brought her to the cross of Jesus itself, and the meaning of suffering, as she concluded, "Perhaps the last natural moments on earth held the clock-ticks that allowed my mother, like Jesus, his mother, his disciple, and the criminal, to extend love, to express faith, to forgive or be forgiven, and to look into God's face."

As Pope Francis reminds us, "Compassion does not mean pity, it means 'suffering with.'"

We are called to "finish the race," and allow the Father to lead us to the time and date that only He knows for the end of life.

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Up & Coming

Events

Archdiocesan Celebration of Matrimony

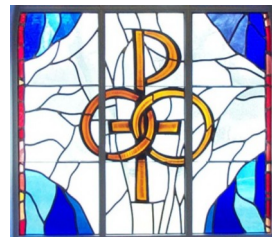
For couples celebrating 30, 40, 50, 60 and 60+ years of marriage in 2017

Sunday, October 22, 2:00 p.m. at Cathedral of the Assumption.

Couples are asked to register with their parish. (information mailed to parishes 9/7)

Registration deadline is Tuesday, October 10.

Please send registrations by fax 502-636-2379 or email ckupper@archlou.org



Building Your Financial Foundation

For Newly Married and Engaged Couples



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 for more information.

NEW "Joined by Grace" Companion Couple Marriage Preparation Program

- Hour-long Information Sessions for prospective couples

Monday, September 18 - 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 18 - 7:00 p.m.

- Program Training Sessions:

Saturday, November 11, 2017 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 3, 2018 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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

Contact Deacon Stephen Bowling at sbowling@archlou.org for more information.



13 Week Seminar for Divorced and Separated

Thursday evenings starting September 7, 7:00 p.m.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Office, 508 Breckenridge Lane

For more information and to register contact:

Joni Richter, Director of Pastoral Care

502-896-0241, ext 18 or jonir@ourlourdes.org

Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery)

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

Louisville area weekend - Sept 15 - 17

To learn more, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org



Marriage Encounter

A weekend retreat for married couples who desire time away to enrich their marriage.

Cold Spring, KY - Sept 22 - 24

Cincinnati, OH - Oct 20 - 22

To learn more, visit www.wvme.org



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

Sat, Sept, 9 - Fr. Michael Wimsatt

Visit: HelpersLouisville.org

Safe Environment Training

Mon, Sept 11 6:30 p.m. - St. Mary Academy, Prospect

Thur, Sept 14 6:30 p.m. - St. Dominic, Springfield

Mon, Sept 18 6:30 p.m. - St. Paul School

Mon, Sept 25 6:30 p.m. - St. Francis Xavier, Mt. Washington

Thur, Sept 28 6:30 p.m. - St. Augustine, Lebanon



<http://archloufamilyministries.org>



<https://www.facebook.com/ArchdioceseLouisvilleFamilyMinistries>



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