



October 2017

Marriage & Family Enrichment

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Respecting Life . . .

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 family is the foundation of co-existence and a remedy against social fragmentation."



Pope Francis

It seems to me that respect is something that one values . . . or not. I do not see how respect can in any way be ambiguous or shaded with layers of grey.

Respect as we experience it is a binary concept – it's either a "yes" or a "no," a positive or a negative, either you have it or you don't. Respect is either something we carry with us in our hearts . . . or it is simply not within us at all.

Our support of individual human life in all its forms – from conception to natural death – demands that the idea of "respect" be an integral part of us. The outlook of "all people deserve respect" is something that our parents (hopefully) tried to instill in us from the very earliest days. Its potentiality certainly is present within all of us at our very beginning . . . but like any living thing, it must be nurtured and cared for in order to grow and flourish.

The idea of "respect for life" is, just like Jesus Christ, both fully human and fully divine simultaneously. It is an expression of God's creative power in the world, as well as a principle that should propel us forward as a society towards an ever-greater tomorrow.

By respecting life and making it as widespread an attitude as possible, we further facilitate the unfolding of God's plan in this world. By respecting life, we act towards each other in the way most fulfilling to each of our hopes and dreams. Even within the paradox of difficulty which often accompanies an unexpected pregnancy, choosing life is ultimately an affirmation of God's love for us in this created existence – and also an opportunity for us all to concretely express our own love for each other by assisting those in need.

As "[Respect Life Month](#)" comes upon us once more, let us all ask ourselves "what have I done lately to foster a respect for life with those I encounter?" I think we will find that by focusing once again upon the question, we will in fact strengthen the Holy Spirit in our hearts showering it down upon that "garden of respect" we all keep alive within us, helping it to bloom brightly once more.



Pastoral Care

contact: Michelle Herberger, mherberger@archlou.org

Respecting One's Own Life . . .

Several years ago, when watching a film on post abortion healing, a woman who had had an abortion spoke something that continues to influence my desire to see people healed from their experience of abortion. She said, "I made the choice to terminate life and continued to do so by my self-destructive behavior. Finally, I heard a voice within that told me I'd destroyed life long enough, it was time to live." That was a very strong respect life statement and one of which I had not considered. Post abortion healing is a respect life issue.



Current statistics reveal that one in four women in the United States will have an abortion by age forty-five. Feelings of hopelessness are often the case of those who have experienced abortion. Pope Francis is particularly reaching out to women, realizing that many were under tremendous pressure from significant people in their lives to terminate their pregnancy. Often, these women felt as though they had no choice.

For several years, I have had an opportunity to meet with women through Project Rachel, a confidential post abortion ministry and have seen the devastation abortion has caused to those who have experienced it. Many women develop coping mechanisms that can allow them to continue on with their everyday life following the abortion. As a

result, it can take years before a woman begins to face and deal with the consequences of her abortion.

According to the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, there are several coping mechanisms that are common among women who have had one or more abortions. I have seen these firsthand in my experience of listening to the stories of women in Project Rachel. Women can "rationalize" their decision by telling themselves that the baby is better off. Often, they can "repress" their feelings by saying that although it was a difficult decision, they would do it again given the same circumstances. Or, perhaps they felt as though there was no other choice and they were being forced to have an abortion. This reflects the felt hopelessness of their situation. Occasionally, women will attempt to "compensate" for their abortion by being overly involved in church activities, working in the pro-life movement, becoming a super mom, or other high achievement activities. Under all this "success," I have witnessed much shame and self-loathing. Some who are quite vocal in the pro-choice movement may actually be reacting to their own pain regarding their abortion. It's as though they are trying to convince themselves that their choice was indeed a good choice.

There are several possibilities for those who have had an abortion to experience healing, forgiveness, and hope. The Archdiocese offers Project Rachel, a confidential, one-to-one ministry, whereby the individual meets with someone who will walk with her through some steps toward healing, including the Sacrament of Reconciliation for Catholics.

The Archdiocese can also refer to neighboring dioceses in Kentucky for a weekend retreat experience, Rachel's Vineyard. Little Way Pregnancy Resource Center offers a scripture study, "Forgiven and Set Free" which is a ten week, small group process for women. Although the program is not specifically Catholic, the group will be facilitated by Catholic women who have been trained and volunteer at the Center. Together, these ministries become part of a "menu" of healing ministries available to those who have experienced abortion.

One unspoken tragedy of abortion is that in many ways, the one who has experienced an abortion "loses" her own life as well to feelings of shame and guilt, failing to allow herself to grieve the loss of her child and move to a place of hope. The first step on the road to healing is realizing the need for healing. As seen through the actions of Pope Francis, the Church stands ready to extend the Lord's unending love and mercy to those who seek it.

To speak to someone confidentially about an abortion and to discern a healing option, please call: 502-471-2155 or email: ProjectRachel@archlou.org

Respect Life Month 2017 “Be Not Afraid” and the Centennial of Our lady of Fatima

As we enter into Respect Life Month, (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops set aside the month of October to call attention to the dignity of human life) the urgency is greater than ever for Catholics to become even more engaged in becoming a voice for the voiceless. The theme for this year is “Be Not Afraid” and has timely significance with the 100th anniversary of the final Apparition of Fatima and the “Miracle of the Sun” witnessed by 70,000 spectators in Fatima Portugal on October 13, 1917.

As Mother Mary revealed to Lucia in Fatima, “Look, my daughter, at my Heart encircled with thorns, with which ungrateful men wound it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude.” Certainly, in our day and time, we have been deluged with seemingly unending inhumane offenses to our fellow man including abortion on demand, ever increasing euthanasia, human trafficking, suicide, religious persecution and eroding rights of those with disabilities. Recently, Pope Francis has called attention to another major human rights issue - the unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world who have been forced from their homes due to persecution, wars, and natural disasters. Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18. Entitled “Share the Journey” the new campaign is focused on providing practical ways for Catholics to break down barriers of fear and build bridges with migrants and refugees.



“Man’s inhumanity to man” and disregard for God’s natural law were referenced by Our Blessed Mother in the messages to the 3 children in Fatima. We know that Our Lady of Fatima’s descriptions of evil in the world are all too real. The battle between good and evil is raging. 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.

St. John Paul II in his encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, who attributes Our Lady of Fatima with saving his life from the attempted assassination in 1981 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.”

Despite these unsettling examples of disrespect for human life, Our Lady of Fatima provides her tender motherly solace through her Immaculate Heart. “In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph.” Similarly, Respect Life Month echoes this theme to “be not afraid” and to courageously stand up for Life. Christ calls us to see the face of God in everyone, for as Christians, there is no other view. The dignity of every human being must be upheld – even when this positions us in direct opposition to secular cultural norms.

Respect Life Month in the Archdiocese of Louisville provides opportunities to learn, advocate, and get involved with a variety of Life-affirming ministries and events during the month of October. For more information see [Up and Coming](#) on page 5 “Respect Life Events.”

Counseling Services

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Respecting The Life Of Creation . . .

A great way to teach our children about respect for creation is through animals. Scott Huntington is a writer for the Oxford University Press as well as a middle school Sunday school teacher. He offers these tips when teaching through animals.

1. Acquaint them with animals. More specifically, get them used to being around pets. It's easy to fear things that are unfamiliar, and children who are not exposed to common pets (dogs, cats, etc.) from a young age often develop irrational, hard-to-shake fears of all animals. It's hard to respect something you fear. Moreover, fear often prompts us to behave in harmful, sinful ways in the guise of self-protection. If owning your own pet doesn't work for you, try scheduling regular visits with a family member, friend or neighbor who owns friendly pets. Children can learn a lot of respect for animals simply by becoming accustomed to their presence.
2. Teach them about animals. Pets are only a small portion of the animal kingdom. Try taking your children to a local zoo (or if you can, a large zoo or aquarium) to introduce them to the diverse creatures God created. Respect improves with understanding. Have your children observe what animals live in your area, and then do research together to discover more about the unique biology and place in the ecosystem that God gave to them.
3. Encourage them to volunteer. Find ways to volunteer with animals. Get in contact with local shelters and animal rescues to learn more about their volunteer requirements and opportunities. Shelters are a great way to learn firsthand not only about the cruelty and abuse animals suffer, but also to see the healing power found in loving, playful interactions. These experiences won't just teach a greater compassion for animals. That compassion for animals can help improve kids' empathy for anything suffering abuse, animal or human. If there are no opportunities at a shelter, try something simple like pet sitting for a neighbor or family friend.
4. Model kindness and compassion. Children imitate their parents. It's almost impossible to teach a child to respect animal life if we, as parents, do not first set an example. Model the behavior you want to see. If you have pets, model how to care for, train and play with them. Set an example of how to be respectful toward other people's pets. Be compassionate and merciful towards wildlife whenever possible.
5. Teach them about biblical stewardship. Make it clear that the earth and everything in it is part of God's creation (plants, animals, people) and that we show love and obedience to our Creator by treating His creation with love and respect. God's command in Genesis was for humans to "rule" over the earth as God's stewards, so take time to teach them what it means to be a steward. Explain how creation ultimately belongs to God and that He has trusted us to care for it, just like a king would trust a steward to help with some of his duties.



October is Respect Life Month. Remember, compassion starts at home and is the beginning of empathy. Teach our children young so God's creation is well cared for.

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Up & Coming

Respect Life Events

Family Life and Disabilities – Tue., October 17; St. Patrick Parish (6:30 – 9:00 pm)

Keynote speaker, Jeff Wright, father, teacher, family man, (as featured on the TODAY Show), is sure to inspire with his family's story and his special son Adam. For more information, please call the parish at 502-244-6083.

A Catholic Perspective-Understanding & Preparing for End of Life Decisions - Mon, Oct 23 – St. Agnes (7 - 9)

Topics covered will include End-of Life Ethics, Advance Directives, Health Care Proxy, Extraordinary vs. Ordinary Care and first-hand end of life experiences from a panel of experts including:

- Fr. Patrick Dolan (STL in medical ethics & STD in Moral Theology from Angelicum University in Rome)
- Mike Ahrens, Member of St. Albert the Great Parish, retired Director of Mission & Values Integration at KentuckyOne Health. Served on the medical ethics committees of several area hospitals.
- Emily Monarch, Attorney, Elder Law Solutions, who helps clients answer the tough questions that families face when confronted with age, disability, or chronic illness.

Persecuted Christians & Refugee Crisis – Education, Prayer and Advocacy – Fri. Oct. 27 - St. Peter the Apostle

Doors open 6:00, Dinner at 6:30 p.m. \$10 per person. You must have prepaid reservation - call: 502-937-5920

A 30 minute documentary, available in Spanish & English, shows how ordinary people have coped with desperate situations with courage and hope. A panel will give comments from their perspective:

- Fr. Deogratias will speak of persecution occurring in Kenya.
- Francisco Casal Matea, a medical doctor in Venezuela will speak of how his family fled the country.
- Ed Harpring, Coordinator of Pro-Life Ministries will comment on this topic as a Life Issue.

Events



Special Mass for Those Grieving the Loss of Child Through Miscarriage or Stillborn

Sunday November 5, 3:00 p.m.

St. Raphael the Archangel Church, 2900 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40205

This Mass is intended to provide comfort and an opportunity to grieve together in Christ's presence with others who have experienced this particular type of loss. With this in mind, it is requested that only those actually affected by it, along with their families, attend this special liturgy.

Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery)

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

Owensboro weekend - January 12 - 14

To learn more, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org



Marriage Encounter

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

Cincinnati, OH - Oct 20 - 22

Louisville area - Feb 2 - 4

To learn more, visit www.wwme.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, Oct. 14 - St. Louis Bertrand priest

Visit: www.HelpersLouisville.org

Safe Environment Training

Thu, Oct. 12 6:30 p.m. - St. Albert the Great

Mon, Oct 23 6:30 p.m. - St. James School
Louisville

Visit www.archlou.org/restoringtrust/safe
for additional dates



<http://archloufamilyministries.org>



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