

Two thousand years ago the world was touched by a miracle. Praying that same gentle miracle of faith blesses you and your family this Advent.

Marriage & Family

two by two

DECEMBER 2014

OFFICE OF MARRIAGE & FAMILY

IN THIS ISSUE

It's Official - Pope Francis is coming to America



We are excited to share that there is official confirmation that the Holy Father will be joining us in Philadelphia in September 2015 for the World Meeting of Families. We look forward to welcoming Pope Francis not only to Philadelphia for the first time, but to the U.S!

Pope Francis Will Attend the World Meeting of Families—Philadelphia 2015

The Office of Marriage & Family is coordinating a bus pilgrimage from Saint Cloud to Philadelphia, leaving Monday, September 21 and returning Monday, September 28. Approximate cost is \$1,700 per person, double occupancy. Price will include: Round-trip Luxury Coach Bus transportation from St. Cloud to

Philadelphia, Hotel for 5 nights at a 3 star hotel within walking distance to the Meeting and Papal events (double occupancy), and registration fee to the World Meeting. We are currently working on scholarships to assist with expenses.

If you are interested in learning more about this once in a lifetime opportunity, please e-mail Chris Codden at ccodden@gw.stcdio.org and travel and registration details will be sent to you as soon as they are confirmed.



Bishop Kettler invites us to celebrate Advent. He says, "One way to enter more deeply into Advent is to set aside additional time for daily prayer and spiritual reading. Many families have a tradition — one that I would encourage — of praying around an Advent wreath and reflecting on each day's Scripture readings. The progression of lighted candles on the wreath each week reminds us that we, too, are called to be ever-brighter lights in the world through our words and actions."

Subscribe to the Diocesan Advent calendar that offers daily ideas for Advent. Included are kids activities, reflections, trivia and giveaways. Go to <http://advent.stcdio.org/>

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Diocese of Saint Cloud
Office of Marriage and
Family

Marriage tips, parenting pointers, current happenings for pro-life and religious liberty, plus much more.

The Importance of Family Meals

From Abstinence Clearinghouse

The US ranks 23rd out of 25 countries in the percentage of children who eat the main meal of the day with their parents several times a week. As families get busier and busier, more meals are consumed while driving in the car and sitting in front of the TV. This "on-the-go" life style contributes to lower levels of health and happiness. What is interesting is that the infrequency of shared family meals is not due to a lack of desire for them. Several studies report people having fond memories of eating together during childhood. And it's true – communal eating is a great time for good conversation and genuine family bonding. But besides relationship-building, eating together has significant benefits on the health of the children involved. Researchers at the

European Conference on Obesity reported that children who don't eat dinner with their parents at least twice weekly are 40 percent more likely to be overweight than those who do. Children who eat with their families at least five times a week are 42% less likely to drink alcohol, 59% less likely to smoke cigarettes, 66% less likely to try marijuana and less likely to be depressed. It is obvious that the family connections built over meal time are essential to a child's well-being, but especially when parents use this time to engage with their children and learn about their everyday lives. Family meal times should not consist of nagging about chores or texting on a phone. In order to make family meals happen, you must make them a



priority and plan for them. However, the reward of connecting with your kids will far outweigh the time it took to get everyone around the table.

READ MORE, GO TO:

http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/09/20/important-role-of-family-meals.aspx?e_cid=20140920Z1_DNL_art_1&utm_source=dnl&utm_medium=email&utm_content=art1&utm_campaign=20140920Z1&et_cid=DM55914&et_rid=665682796



For conference videos, go to:
<http://humanum.it/en/>

Colloquium overview:
<http://www.romereports.com/pg15914-5-first-day-of-humanum-conference-studies-the-beauty-of-marriage-between-man-and-woman-en>

The Complementarity of Man and Woman: An International Colloquium from Zenit

The colloquium being held at the Vatican this week is sponsored by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and co-sponsored by the Pontifical Council for the Family, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

The conference is bringing together leaders and scholars from various religions worldwide "to examine and propose anew the beauty of the relationship between the man and the woman, in order to support and reinvigorate marriage and family life for the flourishing of human society."

The Holy Father, during his remarks, admitted that the family is under crisis and urged those gathered to bear in mind that young people represent our future.

"Commit yourselves," he said, "so that our youth do not give themselves over to the poisonous environment of the temporary,

but rather be revolutionaries with the courage to seek true and lasting love, going against the common pattern."

For more information on the colloquium, here are some great resources: Full translation of Pope's address: <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-francis-address-at-opening-of-colloquium-on-complementarity-of-man-and-woman> Cardinal Mueller's Address at Colloquium on Man-Woman Complementarity: http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/cardinal-mueller-s-address-at-colloquium-on-man-woman-complementarity?utm_campaign=dailyhtml&utm_medium=email&utm_source=dispatch

The beauty of marriage between man and woman by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/rabbi-sacks-family-is-most-humanizing-institution-in-history?utm_campaign=dailyhtml&utm_medium=email&utm_source=dispatch

MEN OF INTEGRITY



Pope Francis denounces “false compassion” behind abortion and euthanasia

Pope Francis delivered a powerful speech about the value of human life, spanning from conception to natural death. He said the dignity of life is not tied to one's well-being, adding that one life is not more sacred than another.

<http://www.romereports.com/pg159131-pope-francis-denounces-oefalse-compassion-behind-abortion-and-euthanasia-en>



Affirmation from a Dad

Have you ever heard, “I’m proud of you” from your dad?

<http://www.fathers.com/57-hot-topics/c41-your-dad/affirmation-from-a-dad-see-video/>

FAST FACTS

33%

33% of Pregnancies Used to End in Abortion

18%

Abortions Decline to Historic Low: Now Just 18%

FOR MORE INFORMATION

TO READ MORE ON THIS STUDY ON THE STATISTICS ABOVE, GO TO:

<http://www.lifenews.com/2014/11/28/abortions-decline-to-historic-low-33-of-pregnancies-used-to-end-in-abortion-but-now-just-18/>

Intentionally Married, Happily Married

by Abstinence Clearinghouse

Posted on November 17, 2014

John Stonestreet from BreakPoint has released some interesting data and conservative strategies regarding the “extinction of marriage” in America. It’s true that barely half of adults in the U.S. are married and that the median age of first marriage is higher than ever before. In most cases, this is because couples give marriage a “trial run” by cohabitation and then get married around the age of 30. All of this coincides with record numbers of children being born in out-of-wedlock situations. In a study entitled, “What Happens in Vegas Doesn’t Always Stay in Vegas,” it was found that the way couples “conduct their romantic lives before they tie the knot is linked to their odds of having happy marriages.”

Researchers found that about 90% of couples today have sex before marriage and only 23% of those couples stay committed to one partner. So what makes a marriage successful and stable? Intentionality and regular church attendance. Couples who consciously commit to engagement and a wedding date do much better than the couples who slowly “slide” into cohabitation without planning it. The research project also showed that the couples who regularly attend religious services divorce far less frequently than the general population. Entering marriage intentionally, knowing that every day is not perfect but committing to stay faithful even during the hard times, will make all of the difference.

Think again because you may be the deciding factor in whether your teen engages in unhealthy and harmful behaviors such as underage drinking. In fact, the Mayo Clinic is now urging parents to take a preemptive role in encouraging their children not to engage in underage drinking. Information provided by the Mayo Clinic suggests that underage drinking alone can lead to other unhealthy and risky behaviors including, but not limited to, drug use, engaging in sexual activity, violence, and a predisposition to alcoholism later in life. The Mayo Clinic makes a strong case for the role that parents play in helping prevent underage drinking and subsequent behavior in their children. Without involved parents, youth would have only their peers and society to help them in formulating their views about important, life-changing matters such as underage

drinking. So, thanks to many of you involved parents, the youth of our nation will have a fighting chance to resist engaging in harmful behaviors.



Sources:

<http://www.breakpoint.org/bpcommentaries/entry/13/26255?spMailingID=9705797&spUserID=OTQoMjMzOTc1So&spJobID=401507064&spReportId=NDAXNTA3MDYoSo>

Britain’s Happiest Baby

A 4D Ultrasound showed a little boy smiling ear to ear in his mother’s womb. After he was born, his parents named him Leo and now he’s known as, “Britain’s Happiest Baby.” (from LifeNews.com | 11/14/14)



Natural Family Planning First Instruction: Billings Ovulation Method

- Little Falls: December 2 & January 6 at 7:30 PM
- Long Prairie: December 22 at 7:00 PM
- St. Cloud: December 11 & January 12 at 6:30 PM
- St. Michael: & December 2 & January 6 at 6:00 PM
- Wadena: December 12 at 7:00 PM
- December 19 at 5:00 PM

For additional sites, information/register, visit www.stcdio.org/omf/nfp or contact Sheila Reineke 320-252-4721 sreineke@gw.stcdio.org.

MARRIED and ENGAGED COUPLES: Would you like to gain a better understanding of yourself as man, woman, and couple? Advent is here and is the season of preparing and making straight our path. Jesus' coming and incarnation reminds us of the importance of how we love with our bodies. Learn about your gift of fertility and true love. Why wait to learn and use Natural Family Planning?



4 Ways Dads Can Help Hurting Kids

Sometimes life leaves emotional scars on children. How can we dads help them most effectively?

A stepdad named Eric wrote to us about this. He said that the greatest difficulty he has faced with his children has been dealing with the hurt they brought with them from earlier years. Eric's wife went through a nasty divorce, and the kids were deeply affected.

Eric wrote that because his stepchildren went through that drama and pain—and they had no say in the matter—they live in fear. And they'll fight to control every aspect of their lives.

4 Ways Dads Can Help Hurting Kids So today, as Eric attempts to influence and love these kids, all that baggage gets in the way, particularly when he needs to correct them or enforce consequences.

Eric has four insights and suggestions for dads that I'm passing on to you today. And I realize that these might come off like I'm presenting easy answers to complex problems in a few hundred words. So, keep in mind that these situations are never simple or easy. Still, I believe his ideas will be helpful to other stepdads—and can be applied by all dads.

1. When kids express rejection or defiance, remember there's often something deeper going on. He identified it as fear in his children, and it may be a range of other factors for other kids. But the real challenge is to remember and consider that deeper cause in the heat of the moment. When a child is misbehaving and you're feeling all that rejection and attitude, it isn't easy to keep your cool and think about what might be causing it. But it's very important.
2. Find support. I recommend this for every dad, but it's particularly true in complex situations. Find a men's group or another group that can encourage you and remind you that you're not alone in your challenges.
3. Always tell the truth. Children who have been through a lot need to know without a doubt they can count on you. And trust you. And that may take months or even years. So always be honest in day-to-day matters as well as the big issues.
4. Don't make promises. This one might be surprising, but here's Eric's thinking: When we make promises to our children, it's so easy for plans to change and we can't follow through. And that can leave scars on fragile kids. It's better to say "If we can" or "We're hoping to" than to make a firm promise when we probably haven't thought through the entire situation. As the proverb says, "It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it."



By Carey Casey is the CEO of the National Center for Fathering, a nonprofit organization seeking to improve the lives of children and establish a positive fathering and family legacy that will impact future generations by inspiring and equipping fathers and father figures to be actively engaged in the life of every child.

Events for December 2014

December 6

Feast of St Nicholas

December 8

Feast of the Immaculate
Conception

December 12

Feast of Our Lady of
Guadalupe

December 14

Mass & Celebration of
Solidarity

02:00 PM

Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville,
The Catholic community comes
together in prayer and support with
our Latino brothers and sisters as
we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady
of Guadalupe.

3:30 p.m – Reception will continue
with a traditional meal, music and
folkloric dances Social at the Old
Gym (Guild Hall). The evening will
conclude at 6:30 p.m.

December 25

CHRISTMAS Day



Janice Shaw Crouse Takes a 2nd Look at the Decline of Teen Sexual Activity

More distortions about abstinence, but it IS
working! – Janice Shaw Crouse

You've certainly seen the news about the decline in pregnancy rates, birthrates, abortion rates and sexual activity among teens. Many liberal researchers claim that this is all due to the increase in contraceptive use. However, Janice Shaw Crouse has delved further into the issue to show that the abstinence movement is responsible for the decline in the teen birthrate! Below is a graph from Janice's article that shows the incline of birthrates for females under 15 years of age during 1970-1990. This twenty year span was when condom based sex education was the strongest voice influencing our teens. They taught that teens could not control their hormones, so they should just use a condom. If the condom broke, then they could always get an abortion. Thankfully, from 1990 to 2012, we see a drastic decline, which is when the abstinence movement became an effective counter influence. Janice Shaw Crouse has done an excellent job and speaking truth, uncovering the real facts and promoting abstinence education. We applaud her efforts! Read her full article at:

http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2014/10/another_look_at_abstinence_and_declines_in_teen_sexual_activity.html?utm_source=General+Email+list+for+Weekly+Updates&utm_campaign=c940c5841a-March_16th_Weekly_Update03_16_2011&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_778f4d28f1-c940c5841a-233041073#.VD7CQ--RtVI.email

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- Dating & Relationships
- Marriage & Divorce
- Contraceptives & NFP
- Pro-Life
- Homosexuality
- Pornography
- Reproductive Technologies
- And More...

18-Year-Old's Short Film on Abortion Will Blow Your Mind

(LiveActionNews) — One decision can change everything. Mitosis, a short film from 18-year-old director Hannah Victoria (Worth Saving), aims to prove that. It may seem that the choices we make for ourselves will affect us and us alone, but it simply isn't true. There is always a ripple effect, whether small or large.

Mitosis tells the story of a young doctor, who after making a promise to a childhood friend, sets out to find a cure for cancer. The film, from Victoria's company Expressionistic Studios, was released on YouTube this week and promises to shine a light on the magnitude of damage each and every abortion could have on the world.

To view the video, go to:

<http://www.lifenews.com/2014/11/28/18-year-olds-short-film-on-abortion-will-blow-your-mind/>



Worldwide Marriage Encounter

Dec 05-07, 2014

For more information, contact Alan &
Missy Block at 320-259-4444



Retrouvaille

January 23 – 25, 2015

For more information, contact Jerry &
Carol Jansen at 2016@retrouvaille.org or
320-255-5314

Website:

<http://www.savingmarriages.org>