

Family Matters

E-Newsletter of the Family Life Office
Archdiocese of Dubuque, IA

January/February 2017

A New Look!

Family Matters has a new look for the new year! You're comments and suggestions are always welcome! Contact us at dbqcfsec@dbqarch.org

Happy New Year!

Consider the many ways your family might usher in the New Year through prayer, new habits and faith-filled resolutions.

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Archdiocesan Women's Conference

Mark your calendars and plan to attend this awesome conference to be held on February 4th!

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*"The relationships within the family bring an affinity of feelings, affections and interests, arising above all from the members' respect for one another."
(No. 2206, Catechism of the Catholic Church)*

The office of Family Life offers support and training to parishes and individuals interested in this ministry. We invite you to volunteer for any of these ministries or to offer suggestions to our office.

We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.dbqarch.org/familylife

Welcome to the New Year! What will it hold for your family?

It's that time again – time to make those New Year's Resolutions! During the coming year, why not make resolutions that strengthen your Catholic faith? Choose one or two of the following resolutions to improve your spiritual life throughout the coming year.

Five resolutions you can make with your family:

- 1. Attend daily Mass.** Most parishes offer daily Mass during the week in the morning, evening, or during lunch. Most daily Masses will only take about 30 minutes of your day. In return, you'll receive extra graces and blessings for the small sacrifice.
- 2. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation more frequently.** Reception of this sacrament gives you the grace to fight against sins and perhaps finally defeat them. If your parish's allotted time for confession conflicts with your schedule, call the parish office to make an appointment.
- 3. Read the Bible as a family.** Invest in a Catholic Bible and keep it out where you will see it every day. You can set aside nightly family time after dinner, or attend a parish Bible study, or ask your priest to start one if it's not available. You can also find helpful guides online or in a Catholic bookstore.
- 4. Get involved with your parish.** Volunteer as a lector, Eucharistic Minister, choir member or usher. Offer to present offertory gifts as a family. These ministries require a very small time commitment, but will help you to feel like an important part of your parish.
- 5. Spend some time in Eucharistic Adoration.** Many parishes offer Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, but you can stop by a Catholic church any time the doors are open and spend a little quality time with Christ as a family. Even just 10-15 minutes on a regular basis will deeply improve your spiritual life.



January

January 1 – Honoring Mary, Mother of God

On New Year's Day, the octave day of Christmas, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. This feast is the celebrations of Mary's motherhood of Jesus. It celebrates the important role Mary played in the incarnation of the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Like Mary, our own mothers bring life, a gift from God, into the world.

Learn about the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God:

<http://www.marypages.com/SolemnityofMary.htm>

Check out these family-centered ideas for ringing in the New Year:

<http://www.catholicfamilycelebrations.com/january-1-mary-mother-of-god.html>

Prayer for the Feast of Mary, Mother of God



Heavenly Father,
You blessed the Virgin Mary with the fullness of grace.
She is my model of faith, hope and love.
I give this New Year to her intercession,
and ask for her holy prayers.
Place my needs into the protection of her motherly love.
With her help, may my faith grow.
Give me an increase in the virtue of hope
when troubles tempt me to despair.
Guide me in understanding your infinite love.
And join my heart, dear Lord,
to the Holy Mother's Immaculate Heart,
so that I may improve in loving everyone unconditionally,
in imitation of my Savior, Jesus. Amen.

<http://www.marypages.com/SolemnityofMary.htm>

January 22

Day of Prayer of the Legal Protection of the Unborn Child

"In all Dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion. The liturgical celebrations for this day may be the Mass "For Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life." *From USCCB*

The **March for Life** will take place in Washington, D.C. on Friday, January 27, 2017. The theme for this year's march will be *The Power of One*. Join or support and pray for the groups of young people from the Archdiocese of Dubuque and throughout the whole country participating in the March for Life. To learn more: <http://marchforlife.org/mfl-2017/>

For information on the March for Life happening in the United States, see:

<http://marchforlife.org/mfl-2017/local-march-for-life-events/>

This year, the Midwest March for Life, usually scheduled for January in Des Moines, will be replaced with a vigil in the Capitol Rotunda on March 30. More details about this event can be found on the Iowa Right to Life website: <http://www.iowartl.org/midwest-march-for-life/>

Other ways to observe this day as a family:

<http://www.catholicfamilycelebrations.com/january-22-day-of-prayer-for-the-legal-protection-of-the-unborn-child.html>

National Hug Day – January 21

National Hug Day is an annual event dedicated to hugging. It was created by Kevin Zaborney and occurs annually on January 21. The day was first celebrated in 1986 in Clio, MI. The holiday is also observed in many other countries. The idea of National Hug Day is to encourage everyone to hug family and friends more often. For more information, see the official website: <http://www.nationalhuggingday.com/>

February

Catholic Schools Week: January 29 – February 4

Since 1974, National Catholic Schools Week is the annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. The theme for the National Catholic Schools Week 2017 is “Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service.” Schools throughout the country celebrate this week with Masses, open houses, and other events focusing on the value of Catholic education for youth and its contributions to our church, community, and nation.

Check out ideas about celebrating Catholic Schools Week with your family, from the National Catholic Educational Association:

https://www.ncea.org/NCEA/Proclaim/Catholic_Schools_Week/School_Choice_Week.aspx

To learn more about the K-12 Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Dubuque:

<https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/catholic-schools/k-12-schools/>

To learn more about the Catholic Colleges, Universities, and Student Centers in the Archdiocese of Dubuque: <https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/catholic-schools/colleges-universities/>



Celebrating St. Valentine's Day

For some, St. Valentine's Day is all about giving or receiving flowers, gifts or candy from a sweetheart. But there is more to the story....

Learn about St. Valentine and the history of this celebration:

<http://www.catholicfamilycelebrations.com/february-14-st-valentine.html>

An Animated History of St. Valentine's Day for Children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdKZepHMFWE>

Valentine's Day and the Catholic Church – How we can use the holiday as an inspiration to care for each other: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuQ1-zZMrK4>

For Valentine's Day family craft ideas: <http://www.catholicicing.com/search/label/St.%20Valentine> or <http://www.catholicicing.com/catholic-st-valentines-day-crafts-feb-14/>

St. Valentine Prayers: <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?s=100>



February 11, 2017 World Day of the Sick / National Shut-In Visitation Day

Observed on February 11, World Day of the Sick is a day started by Pope John Paul II in 1993 as a way for believers to offer prayers for those suffering from illnesses. The day coincides with the commemoration of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Learn about the history of this day: http://www.jp2shrine.org/en/news/world_day_of_sick.html

Read Pope Francis' 2016 message from the 24th World Day of the Sick here:

https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/sick/documents/papa-francesco_20150915_giornata-malato.html

February 11 is also National Shut-in Visitation Day. For ways to observe this day as a family:

<http://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/national-shut-in-visitation-day-february-11/>

<http://dietitians-online.blogspot.com/2015/02/february-11-national-shut-in-visitation.html>

http://www.giftypedia.com/National_Shut-in_Visitation_Day

A Valentine's Day Idea...
This Valentines Day, plan to spend quality time with someone who has recently lost a beloved spouse, or with a single person who is lonely. Your thoughtfulness can be a blessing to them, and to you.

Resources for Marriage and Family Enrichment

Practicing Marital Virtues: Friendship

In this series, various writers will address virtues that characterize a holy and happy marriage. In this issue, Paul Leingang addresses the virtue of **Friendship**:

<http://www.foryourmarriage.org/just-friends/>



January 8 - Sunday Supper Day

The second Sunday in January is known as National Sunday Supper Day, a time to honor meals at the family table. During the entire month of January (and all year long) families are encouraged to make a vow to eat a meal together on Sunday evenings. This is a day set aside to recognize the importance of gathering as a family around the family table. For ideas on ways your family can commit to celebrating Sunday as family day, and to read more about the Sunday Supper Movement, see:

<http://sundaysuppermovement.com/project/january-is-national-sunday-supper-month/>

Take the Sunday Supper Month pledge:

<http://sundaysuppermovement.com/sunday-supper-pledge/>

Download these Ten January Activities for Catholic Families printables:

<http://www.reallifeathome.com/10-activities-for-catholic-families-in-january-printable/>



Strong Catholic Families

The Archdiocese of Dubuque is partnering with pastors, parishes and school leaders to engage parents in the life and mission of the family, the domestic church. This process of evangelization, titled *Strong Catholic Families: Strong Catholic Youth*, engages families as they grow in faith. Through reflection, evaluation and implementation of strategies, participants become part of an ongoing movement to empower and support family faith growth. To learn more about *Strong Catholic Families: Strong Catholic Youth*, check out the Archdiocese of Dubuque website:

<https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/family-life/strong-catholic-families/>



*Partnering with
Parents to Bring Home
the Faith*

NFP Information Station

Check out the new **Natural Family Planning website** for the Archdiocese of Dubuque, which includes promotional items, instructor contact information, Top Ten Reasons to Use NFP, and a series of informational and witness videos meant to raise greater awareness and understanding of the Church's teaching on NFP. For a preview of the series, watch the introductory video at YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/hQ7-wPIQoJs>

The website can be found here:

www.dbqarch.org/nfp

Two new names were recently added to the list of Natural Family Planning instructors in our area. For an updated list of instructors, see:

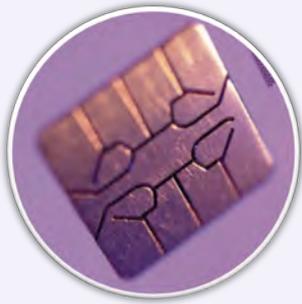
<https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/family-life/ministry-to-marriage/natural-family-planning/>

For more information about NFP, see:

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/>

<http://www.foryourmarriage.org/connections-living-natural-family-planning/>





Celebrate National Spouses Day January 26

National Spouses Day is observed annually on January 26th. Dedicated to recognizing spouses everywhere, this day reminds us to take time for our spouse.

When life gets busy, we can often take our spouse for granted. Take time today to be thankful for the fulfillment and security marriage brings.

Celebrate this day by showing your spouse that you care and appreciate all the things he/she does for you, your family, and your home. Remind them of the joy they bring to your life.

National Spouses Day is not a day for giving gifts. The best gift you can give your spouse is a heartfelt "Thank You" or a loving compliment. Spend time together and reconnect. Enjoy each other and appreciate each other. And don't forget to say, "I love you."

<http://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/national-spouses-day-january-26/>

Prayers and Reflections



Prayer of Spouses For Each Other

Lord Jesus,
Grant that I and my spouse
may have a true and understanding love for each other.

Grant that we may both be filled with faith and trust.
Give us the grace to live with each other
in peace and harmony.

May we always bear with one another's weaknesses
and grow from each other's strengths.
Help us to forgive one another's failings,
and grant us patience, kindness, cheerfulness,
and the spirit of placing the well-being of one another
ahead of self.

May the love that brought us together grow and mature
with each passing year.
Bring us both ever closer to You through our love for each other.
Let our love grow to perfection. Amen.



<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=73>

Catholic Schools Week Prayer

Almighty Father,
You sent forth your Son as a beacon of hope for all people.
As Teacher, he has given us the prime example
of the importance of education.
As disciples, we look to him for inspiration and strength.

Thank you for the man sisters, brothers, priests, and laypeople
who have dedicated their lives in service to our Catholic schools.
Thank you for the teachers and administrators who sustain our schools today.
Thank you for the parents who have given support
and witness to the importance of Catholic education in their daily lives.
Thank you for the students who work hard to further their education.

Bless this school and the many people who advance our mission.
May our building be a home for those who seek to grow
In faith, knowledge and service of others.
May our community always support one another
and exhibit hospitality to newcomers.

Fill our minds with knowledge and wisdom.
May our understanding of the world help us to grow in appreciation for it.
Fill our hearts with gladness. May we always turn to you in times of need.
Fill our hands with the tools we need to serve others.
May we show them your unceasing love through our actions.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us. St. John Neumann, pray for us. Amen.

<http://www.thereigionteacher.com/catholic-schools-week-prayer/>

A Family Dinner Prayer

Gracious Lord,
Thank you for family and friends.
Thank you for times like these
where we can gather together,
Share in food, drink and relax.

Please bless this meal
and all that it means.
May the food nourish us,
and the fellowship enrich our lives.

Most of all,
May we always invite you
into our homes and into our hearts.
Amen.

http://www.living-prayers.com/events/prayer_for_food.html

Save the Date!

Mark your calendar and save the date:

Archdiocese of Dubuque Women's Conference



Saturday, February 4, 2017

at St. Pius X in Cedar Rapids

Theme: "Beauty in Christ"

Keynote Speakers:

Leah Darrow and Kelly Nieto

Mass with Archbishop Jackels

Register at: <https://www.archwomensconference.org/registration/>

Plan now to attend this awesome conference, and bring a friend!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 2017:

- 13-14 Pre-Cana, Ames
- 27-28 Pre-Cana, Cedar Falls
- 29 Pre-Cana, New Hampton

February:

- 4 Archdiocesan Women's Conference
- 4 Pre-Cana, Dubuque
- 10-12 Engaged Encounter, AMRH-Cedar Falls
- 11 Pre-Cana, Cedar Rapids
- 11 Pre-Cana, Mason City
- 17-19 Worldwide Marriage Encounter, Ankeny
- 18 Two Become One, AMRH-Cedar Falls
- 25 Pre-Cana, Dyersville

March:

- 9-10 Radical Listening Workshop, AMRH
- 10-12 Engaged Encounter, AMRH-Cedar Falls

April:

- 1 Pre-Cana, Dubuque
- 7-9 Worldwide Marriage Encounter, Dubuque
- 21-23 Engaged Encounter, AMRH-Cedar Falls
- 22 Pre-Cana, Cedar Rapids
- 28-29 Pre-Cana, Ames



**ARCHDIOCESE
of DUBUQUE**

Mark your calendars for

The Art of Accompaniment: Radical Listening

This workshop will be held at
American Martyrs Retreat House
on March 9-10, 2017
(8:30 AM – 5:00 PM each day)

Facilitator: Barb Schwery

Executive Director of BeFriender Ministry

Participants will have the opportunity to:

- Increase awareness of their impact
- on ministry
- Enhance listening skills
- Receive facilitator training for Making Meaning Workshop

For more information:

<https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/family-life/>

Sponsored by the Family Life Office,
Archdiocese of Dubuque