

FAMILY MATTERS

E-Newsletter of the Family Life Office, Archdiocese of Dubuque
1229 Mount Loretta, Dubuque IA 52003

March/April 2016

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Archdiocese of Dubuque

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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

Embracing the Season of Lent as a Family

The season of Lent is upon us. For some, this has become the time to "give something up." For all it is a time for cleansing the heart and soul. Families might embrace this season as an opportunity for spiritual growth through practices of fasting, prayer and almsgiving. In an interview with Lisa M. Hendey, Catholic author Meredith Gould suggests ways parents can share the beauty and importance of the season with their children:

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/liturgy/lent/embracing-the-lenten-season-as-a-family/>



Lent and Easter Activities for Your Family

- Are you looking for fun and faith-filled activities that focus on the true meaning and sacred traditions of Lent, the Triduum, and the Easter season? Build up and support strong Catholic family faith with these resources:
<http://www.catholicfamilyfaith.org/easter.html>
- March is National Craft Month. Celebrate with these crafty Lenten Activities for busy Catholic families:
<http://www.loyolapress.com/lent-at-home.htm> or
<http://catholicmom.com/kids/lenten-activities-for-children/>
- Enhance the faith development of the Domestic Church, the Catholic family, with these helpful guides to Holy Week, the Triduum and Easter:
http://www.catholicfamilyfaith.com/triduum_easter/
- The Easter season is celebrated far beyond just one Sunday of the year. The Church sets aside an entire seven weeks for us to rejoice in Christ's victory over sin and death. Celebrate the 50 Days of Easter with these family activities, and you'll be rejoicing long after the last jellybean is gone!
<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-religion/2710503/posts>



THE YEAR OF MERCY



The *Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy* is now in full swing, offering us many opportunities to receive God's mercy, especially by receiving the sacraments, and to show mercy to others through acts of kindness and forgiveness. Parishes in the Archdiocese of Dubuque are coming up with wonderful ways to practice the corporal works of mercy. Watch for stories about parish projects for the Year of Mercy in *The Witness*: <https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/witness/local-news/> and on the Archdiocese website: <https://www.dbqarch.org/yearofmercy/service-project/> During the week of April 10-16, works of mercy will focus on "Feeding the Hungry." How will your family develop lasting habits based on this act of mercy?

"Feed the Hungry"

Week of April 10-16

"For I was hungry and you gave me food..." Matt 25:35

Consider the following ways your family might embrace this corporal work of mercy:

- Learn about this First Corporal Work of Mercy: **Feed the Hungry**
<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/philip-kosloski/first-corporal-work-of-mercy-feed-the-hungry>
- Learn more about the problem of hunger in America: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kcoe_jQcU2g



Eleven Facts About Hunger in the U.S.: <https://www.dosomething.org/facts/11-facts-about-hunger-us>

Volunteer at a soup kitchen or food pantry - Community Renewal: Supporting a Local Food Bank
<http://www.serve.gov/?q=site-page/toolkits/food-bank/index-started>

- April is National Garden Month. **Plant a garden** and give produce to someone in need. Find out how community gardens can supply fresh food for the needy:
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2014/04/14/community-gardens-grow-food-poor/7723745/>

- **Avoid wasting food.** Watch this eye-opening 30-minute documentary:
Tossed Out: Food Waste in America: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLRjb6LdUFM>



- **Share leftovers with an elderly neighbor or someone in need.**
"Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor." Proverbs 22:9
Find out how people all over the world are sharing their leftovers and surplus food with those in need:
<http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/free-food-sharing-leftovers-surplus-local-popular>



- **Be especially mindful of gathering for meals as a family.**
Remember to give thanks for your food. Pray for those who will go without food today. Prayers for before and after meals: <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=887>

To Learn More

For more information about the *Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy*, see the following:

- Year of Mercy Message from Archbishop Jackels:
<https://www.dbqarch.org/yearofmercy/message-from-archbishop-jackels/>
- Archdiocesan Works of Mercy Projects, Activities, Media, Prayers, Music Resources and More:
<https://www.dbqarch.org/yearofmercy/>

PRAYERS AND REFLECTIONS

Prayer In Times of Hunger

God our Sustainer,
We ask you to pour your powerful Spirit
into all who are empty this day:
Fill the hearts of persons who are troubled.
Fill the minds of those who are confused.
Fill the stomachs of your children who are hungry.
Fill the souls of people who are feeling lost.
Fill the lives of all who need you,
but do not know you.

May your Spirit fill us all to overflowing,
and may we be inspired
to share our abundance with others,
so that there will be
no more empty hearts and minds,
stomachs and souls.

We pray all this in the name of Jesus Christ,
who fills our lives with your endless grace.
Amen.



~ from Bread for the World, www.bread.org, 2009

An Easter Prayer

Saving God,
The resurrection of Your Son
has given us new life
and renewed hope.
Help us to live as new people
in pursuit of the Christian ideal.
Grant us wisdom
to know what we must do in your Name,
the will to want to do it,
the courage to undertake it,
the perseverance to continue to do it,
and the strength to complete it.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
Your Risen Son
and our Redeemer.
Amen.



source: New Saint Joseph People's Prayer Book

An Easter Dinner Prayer
(a grace prayer before a meal)

Loving God,
As we gather together as family and friends,
we invite you once again into our lives.
May the hope of your resurrection
color our days.
May the promise of your spirit working in us
light up our lives.
May the love you revealed to us
shape our giving.
May the truth in your word
guide our journeys,
And may the joy of your kingdom
fill our homes.

As we gather together
under the banner of your love,
We thank you for all the wonderful food
we can now enjoy,
And we celebrate your glorious resurrection.

Thank you, Lord. Amen.

http://www.livingprayers.com/events/easter_prayers.html

Prayer for the Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has composed a special prayer for the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which will run from 8 December 2015 to 20 November 2016. In the prayer, the Holy Father entreats the Lord to make the Jubilee of Mercy a year of grace so that the Church, "with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind." For text of the Pope's Prayer for the Year of Mercy:
<http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-prayer-for-jubilee-year-of-mercy>

RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT

Practicing Works of Mercy As A Couple

Practicing the Works of Mercy can bring out the best in a marriage. In the book *Intimate Grace*, husband and wife authors Dominick Pastore and Teresa Tomeo help married couples to contemplate the mystery of mercy as a wellspring of joy in their vocation of marriage. Read a review of this book here:

<http://www.foryourmarriage.org/intimate-graces-how-practicing-the-works-of-mercy-brings-out-the-best-in-marriage/>



For Engaged Couples: Making a Commitment to Serve

Your wedding celebration begins your married life of service together. Find out how the choices you make about your wedding ceremony and reception also reflect your commitment to serve others as a couple:

<http://www.foryourmarriage.org/how-to-include-service-to-others-in-your-wedding-ceremony/>

Natural Family Planning

An updated list of Natural Family Planning (NFP) instructors of several NFP methods, including the Creighton FertilityCare System, Couple to Couple League Symptothermal Method, and Family of the Americas Ovulation Method can be found here :

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

If you know of someone who teaches, but is not on the list, please contact the Family Life Office.



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of DUBUQUE

"Living" the Lenten Season

Consider these ways of living in the spirit of the Lenten season as a couple and as a family:

- **Give** alms or **volunteer** time/talents in your parish or neighborhood
- **Fast** from T.V. or technology
- **Pray** the Stations of the Cross
- **Attend** Mass and Holy Week services together
- **Develop** family Easter traditions
- **Focus** on Corporal Works of Mercy

SAVE THE DATE

Catholic Men's Conference



Mark your calendars now for the chance to attend the Catholic Men's Conference coming Saturday, March 12, 2016 at Xavier High School in Cedar Rapids. Fr. Scott Courtney will be the keynote speaker. For more information, follow this link: <http://www.catholicmenonline.org/>

CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP
Archdiocese of Dubuque

Upcoming Events

March:

12 Catholic Men's Conference

April:

2 PreCana, Dubuque
8-10 Engaged Encounter, AMRH
9 PreCana, Cedar Rapids
16 PreCana, Mason City
22-23 PreCana, Ames
28-29 Radical Listening, Cedar Falls

May:

13-15 Worldwide Marriage Encounter, Dubuque
14 PreCana, Dubuque

June:

10-12 Engaged Encounter, AMRH
18 PreCana, Cedar Rapids

Radical Listening

April 28-29, 2016

All pastoral ministers of Archdiocese of Dubuque FFL, Youth Ministers, Mentor Couples, Pastoral Associates, Deacons, Priests, Principals, Parish Nurses, small group facilitators are encouraged to attend this program which will:

- Increase awareness of your worldview and assumption and the impact they have on your ministry
- Enhance listening skills for ministry
- Learn Making Meaning: a small group process for reflecting on your ministry experience
- Receive Facilitator Training for Making Meaning

The workshop will be held at American Martyrs Retreat House, Cedar Falls, from 8:30 AM-5:30 PM both days. Facilitator is Barb Schwery, Executive Director BeFriender Ministry.

Cost is \$110 for commuter, \$165 for overnight accommodations

Register online at www.DBQArchEvents.org



Additional Dates of Interest:

March 13 is National Good Samaritan Day. Practice an act of kindness toward a stranger today.

<http://www.examiner.com/article/it-s-good-samaritan-day-celebrating-compassion-kindness-of-strangers>



April 22 is National Earth Day: <http://www.earthday.org/earth-day-history-movement>

Celebrate the day by reading Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care For Our Common Home*

<http://www.usccb.org/about/leadership/holy-see/francis/pope-francis-encyclical-laudato-si-on-environment.cfm>