

RESPECT LIFE MONTH: HOMILY HELPS

Suggested for use on Respect Life Sunday (October 3, 2021)

As we begin Respect Life month, it is good that the Gospel today focuses on the sacrament of marriage, which is a huge part of God's Plan for His people. We hear this in the first words of Scripture, the Book of Genesis: "Male and female he made them...be fruitful and multiply!"

God the Creator sets the stage for the importance of the family—what we call "the Domestic Church." It is the foundation of not just our culture, but virtually every known culture in history. The family must be defended and protected.

In this Year of Saint Joseph, we can see Joseph as the "model husband," the head of the Holy Family. He shows us what it means to be a man—more specifically, to be a husband. If you think about it, Joseph had one primary job: protect, defend and value both Mary and his foster Son, Jesus. What a job! What a responsibility! Can you imagine when the enormity of this task when it comes into focus? He's sitting on the back porch after a long day in the woodshop, maybe having a beer, and he thinks to himself: "Well, I've got to take care of both Mary AND Jesus! And he knew. Goodness! It must have been overwhelming to think about it.

It's not quite the same, but I know new fathers have shared with me the almost surreal experience of their wife giving birth. Now moms, THANK YOU for serving in this incredible role—bringing life into the world. And the focus is rightfully on you to not only give birth, but feed and nurture this new life, most particularly in those first few days of life.

And Dads, I know this is true because I've heard it from you, that there is a feeling of helplessness during that childbirth. And it's sort of exciting and fun and then...all of the sudden it's time for you to take mom and baby home and the hospital folks make sure you have a good baby car seat, and you get this new bundle of life into your car and you arrive home and...NOW WHAT? WHERE'S THE INSTRUCTION MANUAL!? HELP!

And of course there isn't an instruction manual, one, but you figure it out. And you are there to help your wife and do what you can. And you make sacrifices; you do those things that maybe you normally don't do.

And unlike Joseph, you've got a nice air conditioned SUV and not a donkey. And there isn't a King Herod trying to kill your son. So you probably don't have to flee to a foreign country like, heaven forbid, Missouri, but you do what you need to do to make life great for your wife and your son. And it's a lot, but you are made for this.

And so as you think about this plan of life, of marriage and the family—I want you to think for a moment about that mother who does not have a husband, but she is with child. And it's hard enough with a husband to help, but for whatever reason, there is no one there for some Moms. And the Evil One – the Abortion Industry -- starts whispering in her ear that things will be better—for her and that baby—if the decision is made to end that pregnancy. And that's why its called a crisis pregnancy. And the pressure is tremendous to grab that straw, that answer that is really not an answer—but it looks like it.

And we have in Kansas right now a situation where it's become more convenient and easier than ever for this false choice to look attractive. Our State Supreme Court has ruled, with the force of law, that abortion is unlimited and unregulated in Kansas. That even the path to taxpayer-funded abortion is open and all it takes is for us as a people to do nothing and it will almost certainly happen. And this is all happening right now. It is as real as you and I in this place together right now.

And fortunately we have the power to do something about it—and when I say "something" I mean many things.

First of all we can teach our children and make it known that no matter how life came to be in that mother's womb, it is precious beyond belief. And as individuals and as a parish family, we are going to support every mom—but most especially those moms who have no one else to help them—no father in the picture. And we want to help save that child and protect that mother—we value them both beyond words.

So maybe you are being called to serve in walking with mothers in need. Maybe you are being called to be a foster parent—there is a tremendous need. Overwhelming. There are kids tonight very likely sleeping in offices and other places in Kansas because the world does not seem to want them.

And there is something we can do with our law. It's called the **Value Them Both** state constitutional amendment for life. Value BOTH baby and mother! What it says is that abortion is not a fundamental right, and that we the people of Kansas can pass laws to regulate the practice of abortion. We can pass laws that say no to taxpayer-funded abortion. That say no to teens getting an abortion without parental knowledge and consent. That say yes to life.

You're getting to get a chance to vote yes on the Value Them Both next summer, but we are trying to get the word out now because the Abortion Industry does not want what we know to be good.

So I ask you to please fill out a volunteer card and provide your information so we can communicate with you about this important effort. There is A GOOD WEBSITE—VALUETHEMBOOTH-DOT-COM. Take some time and look it over and inform yourself. There's going to be a lot of confusion and misdirection coming from the Abortion Industry over the next year. Don't be fooled. Learn the facts.

Let us all—following the model of Saint Joseph—seek to protect both baby and child and show the world that we Value Them Both.