

BUILDING A CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

Official Family Newsletter of the Archdiocese of KCK



Body Literacy: Why NFP is not just for married couples!

BY ANNIE KYLE

As the Church, we know that charting the feminine cycle is not just for procreation but is an insight into a woman's emotional & physical health. Unfortunately these intended signals of the female body are often covered up or silenced all together, leaving women feeling like their bodies are something shameful. Young girls who experience cyclical-related problems such as acne, PMS, or headaches are normally prescribed the pill at the sign of their first period. However, the pill does not actually solve the root cause of their issues but rather uses synthetic hormones to mask them. They then often find that these problems (as well as other pill related symptoms) resurface during and after taking it, leaving them just as lost and confused as when they began. Thus repeats the horrible cycle of suppressing the natural and good signs that our body tells us when something needs our attention.

But what if we did not silence our bodies? What if we listened instead?

Christina Valenzuela, the owner and founder of "Pearl & Thistle" defines Body Literacy as, "knowing the language of our bodies as designed by God". In fact, Christina cares so much about this issue that she has made it her life's mission to provide classes, resources, and materials for young girls (7+) and women of all ages to better understand their menstrual cycle, what it says about their health, and their identity as a woman. On her website she offers English/Spanish classes and resources for families to learn and teach their daughters about women's healthcare and their personal feminine genius. It is our hope that spreading this news will further encourage our daughters and women of all ages to dive into a deeper understanding and love of their bodies as well as to reclaim true feminine empowerment.

You can find out more about Body Literacy and "Pearl & Thistle" [here!](#)

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CONSECRATING OURSELVES TO OUR LADY

BY BRAD DUPONT

“Hold hands in the parking lot.”

When our daughter Maggie was little, this was a constant refrain as we headed to our van, since her temptation was always to dart full speed ahead into the vast expanse of cars. Could Maggie make her way to our van in the midst of the busy parking lot? Perhaps, but even if she did not get hit by a car, she would probably have gotten lost, and we didn't like either of those options. The safest, quickest, and surest path back home was for Maggie to allow mom to guide her.

This is exactly what Marian consecration is all about. We take the outstretched hand of Mary and let her guide us safely to our eternal home in heaven. In other words, we entrust the entirety of our life to Mary, the Mother of God, and she keeps us safe from spiritual harm so we do not lose our way.

Consecrating ourselves and our families may sound like a difficult thing that requires a great level of already-attained holiness, but actually the opposite is true. It is a simple journey for anyone who simply wants to be holy. Here are three reasons to consider it:

1. It's efficient. As Americans, we place a high value on maximizing our effort. We have built some of the greatest factories that have mastered the way to bring about the standardization of quality products in the shortest amount of time.

With Marian consecration, Mary is the factory that turns all of her devoted children into “little Christs.” Mary accomplishes this much quicker than we can on our own because she knows the end result much better than we do. The mother knows the Son, and knows how to help us be more like Him.

2. It's a good deal. With Mary, what is the great deal we receive, and what does it cost us? We receive the promise of the sure guidance of the Queen of Heaven! In exchange, Mary simply asks us to place our trust in her. My little act of trust and commitment to the Mother of God gains me her prayers and maternal love. It would be crazy not to accept that deal!

3. It's a guaranteed return on investment. With Mary, we have the guarantee from the Spouse of the Holy Spirit that she will honor the gift we make of ourselves and transform us into who God created us to be--and frankly, who we desire to be. Her track record is pretty good. To name a few, she multiplied the investment of four important saints in the recent history of the Church: St. Louis Marie de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Bl. Teresa of Calcutta, and St. John Paul II.

I choose these four saints because they are the focus of Fr. Michael Gaitley's book, *33 Days to Morning Glory*. In his book, Fr. Gaitley takes the writings and insights of these saints and translates them into a common language for all of us to understand and implement into our daily lives. I highly encourage you to begin this school year by consecrating your family to Mary!

“Never be afraid of
loving the Blessed
Virgin too much.
You can never love
her more than
Jesus did.”

ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE





"Let us run to Mary,
and, as her little
children, cast
ourselves into her
arms with a perfect
confidence."

SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES

WHILE YOU CAN MAKE A CONSECRATION TO MARY AT ANY TIME,
MANY PEOPLE LIKE TO CHOOSE TO FINISH ON A FEAST DAY.

HERE'S A FEW COMING UP:

CONSECRATION DATES & DEVOTIONS

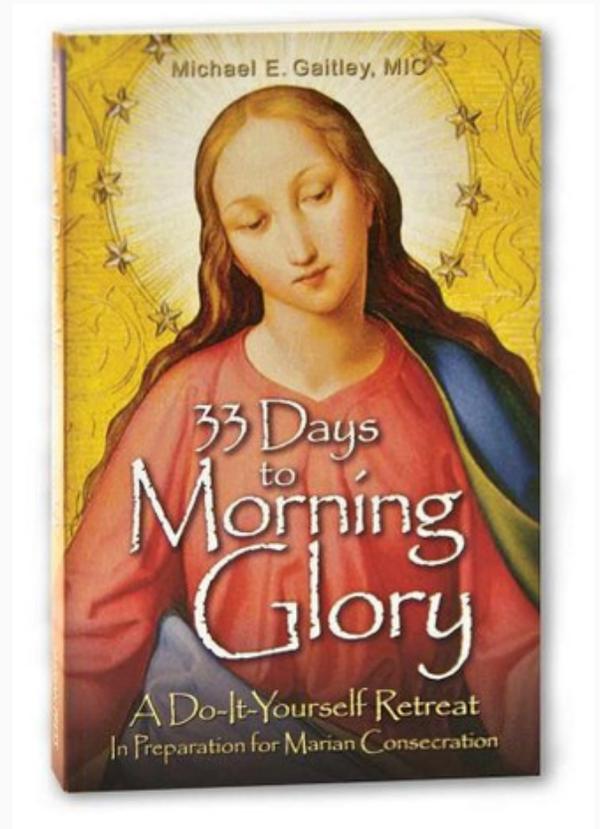
<u>FEAST DAY</u>	<u>WHEN TO START</u>	<u>WHEN YOU'LL FINISH</u>
NATIVITY OF MARY	AUGUST 6	SEPTEMBER 8
HOLY NAME OF MARY	AUGUST 10	SEPTEMBER 12
OUR LADY OF SORROWS	AUGUST 13	SEPTEMBER 15
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY	SEPTEMBER 4	OCTOBER 7

MORE INFORMATION: [33 DAYS TO MORNING GLORY INTRODUCTION](#) | [THE DIVINE MERCY](#)

THE MEMORARE

REMEMBER, O MOST GRACIOUS VIRGIN MARY, THAT NEVER WAS IT KNOWN THAT ANYONE WHO FLED TO THY PROTECTION, IMplored THY HELP, OR SOUGHT THINE INTERCESSION WAS LEFT UNAIDED.

INSPIRED BY THIS CONFIDENCE, I FLY UNTO THEE, O VIRGIN OF VIRGINS, MY MOTHER; TO THEE DO I COME, BEFORE THEE I STAND, SINFUL AND SORROWFUL. O MOTHER OF THE WORD INCARNATE, DESPISE NOT MY PETITIONS, BUT IN THY MERCY HEAR AND ANSWER ME.
AMEN.



ORDER "33 DAYS TO MORNING GLORY" [HERE!](#)



LIVING INTENTIONALLY

BY LIBBY DUPONT

It's so easy for the most important things in our lives to get swallowed up by the most urgent. Most of us would say God and family are our biggest priorities, but if you're like me, you might find you are consistently giving your favorite people your "leftover" time and energy. A simple way to change that this school year is to pull out your calendar and block off a few dates before they get booked with something else. There's only two "rules" here. First, choose only as many dates as you can reasonably commit to. Then, just schedule around them! If there is a conflict that absolutely can't be overcome, you may move a date, but not cancel it altogether! Here's three kinds of dates to reserve now:



DATE NIGHT

For married couples, keeping our marriages strong is the single best gift we can give our kids, and to do that we need intentional time together. Date nights don't need to be expensive, or even very long. They don't even have to be nights!

- Save the date for any dates or enrichments offered by your parish.
- Pick up a great book on marriage and read/discuss a chapter over a beverage after the kids go to bed.
- Let the kids eat pizza in front of a movie while you cook and eat a meal together.
- Grab coffee while your kid is at soccer practice.

SINGLE PARENTS

Single parents, you aren't off the hook here! Your job is not easy, and you need support to do it well. Whether it's a book club, bible study or regular coffee with a good friend, these dates should go on your calendar first!

FAMILY TIME

For most of us, if we don't schedule intentional time together as a family, it simply won't happen. But just like date night, it doesn't need to be complicated or stressful.

- Family meal followed by a read-aloud. (Even teenagers can be read to!)
- A few times a year, block off a "2020 weekend" where everyone stays home with no agenda.
- Plan a bonfire, game night or bike ride.
- Get one-on-one time with your kids by rotating who comes on errands.

TIME FOR GOD

Giving God our time is the best way we can grow in friendship with Him, which in turn makes every other area of family life better! More ideas:

- Plan your weekend around Mass. Follow it with some fun family time.
- Say a decade of the rosary daily on the way to school... you'll get one in every week!
- Take time daily as a parent and a couple to pray for your family.
- Observe First Saturday devotions as a couple or family, perhaps including a special breakfast afterwards.

Back to School Anxiety

BY ANNIE KYLE



It's that time of year again! Summer is at a close and the school year is beginning. While this can bring joy and excitement to many students, going back to school can also bring on new anxieties and worries. Going to college, dealing with homework, and even something as simple as starting a new grade can all be very daunting for a student regardless of their age. Here are a few things to remember when checking in with your child about the upcoming school year!

1. VALIDATE THEIR FEELINGS & TRULY LISTEN

It can sometimes be easy for us as adults to brush off the fears of those who are younger than us. Not because we do not care but simply because we have already lived through the experience and know that it turned out alright. Be sure to truly listen to your child's concerns and validate them in their feelings even if they seem silly. Sometimes allowing a child to process how they feel is all they need to work through it and feel better. Plus they will feel comfortable to bring problems to you in the future!

2. HELP THEM CREATE A ROUTINE

Sometimes all it takes to put a student's mind at ease is to give them a good routine to abide by during the school year. This can be as simple as setting out clothes and making a healthy lunch the night before so they do not need to scramble in the morning. Good conversations or praying together on the way to school are also great ways to prepare your younger children for the upcoming day. Regardless of what you do be sure to help them balance their activities. Making time for school work as well as time for playing and relaxation. We often forget that kids need this just as much as adults!



3. SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

There might be cases where a student's struggle with anxiety goes beyond butterflies on the first day of class. For these students it may be best to reach out to professional help to seek more insight into what is troubling them. Letting your child know that it is okay to ask for help is a huge component in them dealing with their anxiety in a healthy way. Therapy should never be seen as something taboo or something to be ashamed of. Rather it is a beautiful way to understand how we are intentionally created by God.

The Marriage & Family Life Office believes in the mission of devout Catholic Counselors so much that we have compiled a list of approved Catholic Counselors who serve the Archdiocese of Kansas City Kansas. Feel free to take a look and see if any of them suit you and your child's needs!

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE ARCHDIOCESE OF KCK CATHOLIC COUNSELOR LIST](#)

KEEP THE FEAST!

"They saw God,
and they ate
and drank."

EXODUS 24:11

August 4th, St. John Vianney

- St. John Vianney is the patron of priests. Consider celebrating his feast day by inviting your local parish priest to join you for dinner in your home or by bringing them fresh baked goods!

August 6th, Transfiguration

- A Transfiguration tradition which dates back to apostolic times (and is still celebrated by many Eastern Catholics) included bringing fruit to be blessed. Because the feast is in late summer when the "first fruits" are harvested, this tradition reminds us to bring our own first fruits to God. Celebrate with your family by eating fresh seasonal fruit or fruit pies after dinner.

August 9th, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

- St. Teresa Benedicta died as a martyr in Auschwitz in 1942 when she was arrested with other Jews who converted to Christianity. Celebrate her feast by eating traditional Jewish food like [Challah Bread](#), [Latkes](#), or [Jewish Apple Cake](#).
- Offer up prayers for the end of religious persecution, especially against our Jewish brothers and sisters.

August 10th, St. Lawrence

- St. Lawrence was bravely martyred for his faith when he was roasted alive on an iron grill. He is traditionally mentioned to have kept his joy and humor when he said to the judge before he died, "Turn me over! I'm done on this side!" Celebrate this humorous saint and martyr by having a cookout with friends and family!

August 14th, St. Maximilian Kolbe

- Celebrate this devout Polish martyr by making traditional Polish foods like [Pierogis](#) (Polish dumplings) or [Kolaczki](#) (Polish cookies)

August 15th, Assumption of Mary (**Holy Day of Obligation**)

- Bake "Marian Blue" goodies to represent Our Lady! Try recipes like these [Blueberry Cookies](#), [Blueberry Lemon Pound Cake](#), or [Blueberry Strawberry Cobbler](#)!

September 14th, Exaltation of the Holy Cross

- Venerate a cross in your own home! Check out ways to venerate the Cross on [Catholic All Year!](#)
- Cook something with basil in it! Legend says that St. Helen found the true cross hidden under an overgrowth of basil! Try making fresh [Pesto](#), [Caprese](#), or any of these yummy [basil recipes!](#)

September 17th, St. Hildegard of Bingen

- Did you know St. Hildegard wrote her own recipes using holistic and natural remedies? One of these recipes is a spice cookie called [Hildegardplätzchen](#) which she created to "calm the nerves" and bring joy! Try them in her honor!

September 23rd, St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina

- Eat an Italian meal as a family! Pray for Padre Pio's intercession before you eat!
- Make Cappuccinos or this [Cappuccino Mousse](#) recipe in remembrance of Padre Pio's Capuchin order.

September 29th, Michael, Gabriel & Raphael, Archangels

- Celebrate Michaelmas by having a party with your closest friends! Add some fun for the kids by making or buying a [piñata devil](#) that can be beaten with wooden swords!
- Eat Blackberries! A tradition which is observed due to an Irish legend which suggests that when Lucifer was banished from Heaven, he fell onto a blackberry bush and spit on them making them unfit to eat. So as a fun tradition people would eat all the blackberries they could before they went bad the next day! Try this [Blackberry Crisp](#) for something sweet!

The Striving Saint: Resources that Inspire the Road to Sainthood



FEATURED PODCAST

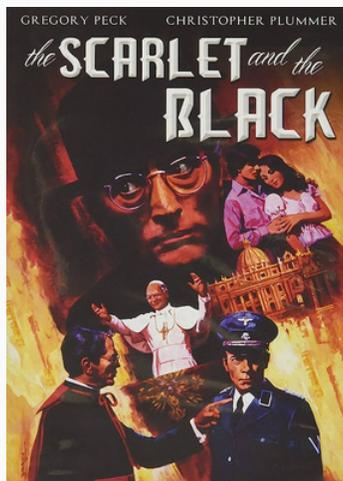
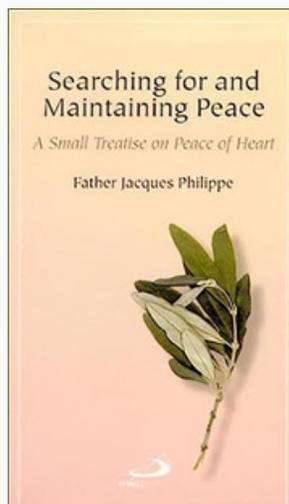
CONVERSATIONS WITH JACKIE & BOBBY

"Jackie and Bobby Angel are authors, speakers, musicians, and evangelists for the Catholic faith. We are launching this channel to bring you into our conversations with people we think will provide you with insightful perspectives on human & spiritual formation."

FEATURED BOOK

SEARCHING FOR AND MAINTAINING PEACE

"How can we learn to place all our confidence in God and abandon ourselves into his loving care? This is what is taught in this simple, yet profound little treatise on peace of heart. Taking concrete examples from our everyday life, the author invites us to respond in a Gospel fashion to the upsetting situations we must all confront. Since peace of heart is a pure gift of God, it is something we should seek, pursue and ask him for without cease. This book is here to help us in that pursuit."



FEATURED MOVIE

THE SCARLET AND THE BLACK

(Parental Discretion Advised for depictions of war & violence)

Based on the astonishing and heroic true story, "The Scarlet and the Black" stars Gregory Peck as Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, the man who led thousands in a daring escape to freedom - right under the nose of the Gestapo.



FEATURED PODCAST

SAINT STORIES FOR KIDS

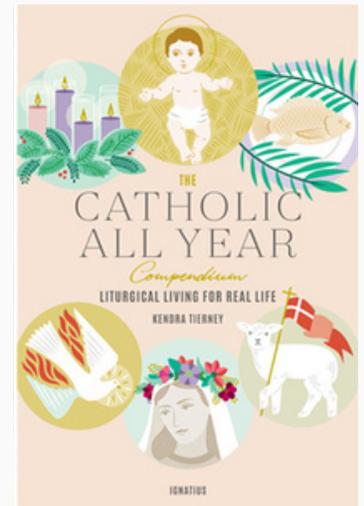
"Chantal Baros, hosts a weekly podcast that brings the stories of saints right to your child's headphones. Saint Stories for Kids offers charming and informational 5-minute episodes that allow children and parents to learn from the "holy men and women who have come before us." The episodes are timely (usually occurring around the saint's feast day) and encourage children to embrace the rich tradition of the Catholic Church."



FEATURED BOOK

THE CATHOLIC ALL YEAR COMPENDIUM: LITURGICAL LIVING FOR REAL LIFE

"If you have been wondering how to bring the rich traditions of the Catholic Church's liturgical year into your family life, this is the book for you. With wisdom and humor mother and blogger Kendra Tierney shares how her family celebrates Catholic seasons and feasts—from Advent and Christmas, through Lent and Easter, to Pentecost and beyond. She provides ideas for stories, activities, foods, and decorations that will help you to celebrate your Catholic faith with your family and friends without expertise or much advance planning."



FEATURED SHOW

SUPERBOOK (CHRISTIAN BASED)

Superbook teaches children timeless moral truths and life lessons through the captivating, Bible-based adventures of two time-traveling children and their robot friend. Travel back with Chris, Joy, and Gizmo and get ready for the journey of a lifetime! Be sure to visit the [Superbook Kids Website](#) or download the free Superbook Bible app to play fun games and watch more Superbook episodes! You can also watch on [Youtube](#), [Amazon Prime](#), & [Pure Flix](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS



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- ♥ **RETRouvaille MARRIAGE WEEKEND**
September 1st-3rd, 2023
Registration Ends August 29th
[Register Now!](#)
- ♥ **WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER KANSAS CITY**
Sept 22-24, 2023
<https://wwme.org/>
- ♥ **MARRIAGE MINI-RETREATS**

-SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023
AT PRINCE OF PEACE, OLATHE
For more information, contact Larissa Smith:
lsmith@popolathe.org

-SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2023
AT ASCENSION, OVERLAND PARK
For more information contact Marissa Brown:
mbrown2@kcascension.org

-SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023
AT HOLY SPIRIT, OVERLAND PARK
For more information contact Jennie Punswick:
jpunswick@hscatholic.org

- ♥ **MASS OF INNOCENTS - OCTOBER 15, 2023**
AT HOLY SPIRIT, OVERLAND PARK, 1PM
Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann celebrates the lives of children who died before or shortly after birth in this annual Mass open to everyone. No RSVP required, fulfills Sunday obligation, light reception to follow.
Questions? Brad DuPont bdupont@archkck.org