

BUILDING A CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

Official Family Newsletter of the Archdiocese of KCK



WALKING TOWARDS CALVARY WITH KIDS

BY ANNIE KYLE

Holy Week can be a time of beautiful reflection, sacrifice, and love. However, in the stage of caring for children it can also bring excessive stress and to-do-lists as we prep for Easter Sunday. In some cases, by the time everything is said and done, it is easy to feel like the Lord has come and passed us by while we were too busy cleaning up cheerios, driving teens to practice, and trying to make it through the day without a meltdown from the kids or ourselves! This stage of caring for multiple children can certainly feel like the trenches and often makes us wonder if we are truly doing enough.

I am here to remind you that regardless of where you find yourself this Lent and Holy Week, our Lord is walking beside you and invites you to join Him as He walks toward Calvary. He only asks for the gift of your heart.

As a parent, it is often difficult to find time to sit and reflect on this beautiful season. You may even think that you have not had time to pray at all! If this feels like the case, I would invite you to bring Christ into your day and combine your Calvary to His. Every late night rocking a fussy baby or waiting for your new driver teen to come home is hours spent in the Agony of the Garden. Every hit from a toddler or heated words after a long day is a lash humbly taken. Every tear wiped away is blood and sweat wiped from our Saviors weary head. In everything we do, there is always purpose and opportunity to offer our lives up to relieve some of our Lord's suffering. Above all, while we reflect on the Lord's heavy cross, He in turn gladly helps carry our own. There is truly no burden that He has not already known. No worry He has not already felt.

This Holy Week, let us unapologetically bring ourselves and our children as we are to the foot of the cross to adore our Savior. I highly encourage you to bring your children to mass even if you know they may cry or not pay attention. Speak to them about what Jesus did for them. Read the story of Easter and make the messy dyed eggs! Above all, ask Jesus to join you during this time regardless of how chaotic it feels. In Him, our burdens are always lighter and we can be certain that in time a Resurrection will come! Be assured of our prayers!

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WORKS OF MERCY IN THE HOME

BY BRAD & LIBBY DUPONT

Easter begins the season of Mercy! Practicing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy is an integral part of putting our faith in action. As a busy parent, does this make you sigh and think, “Oh, no! Not another thing we need to try and do!”? If so, be at peace. While Catholic families are certainly called to go beyond the walls of their own home to practice works of mercy, our own households are the primary place where God entrusts us with this noble task. Take a look at the ways you are already living this important tenant of our faith!

Corporal Works of Mercy:

- Give Drink to the thirsty: ever give your child a cold lemonade on a hot day?
- Feed the hungry: ever prepare dinner for the family?
- Visit the imprisoned: ever visit your child while he is in time out?
- Visit the sick: ever check on your sick kid at 3am to make sure she is ok?
- Shelter the homeless: ever make a mortgage payment to provide the house you live in?
- Clothe the naked: ever give a baby a new diaper or gone back-to-school shopping?
- Bury the dead: ever make sure a loved one receives proper burial?

Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- Admonish the sinner: ever disciplined your child?
- Instruct the uninformed: ever teach your child a prayer or what Christian dating looks like?
- Counsel the doubtful: ever helped a teenager wrestle with difficult questions?
- Comfort the sorrowful: ever helped a child through bitter disappointment?
- Be patient with those in error: ever loved a child through a challenging phase?

Know that as you participate in these seemingly mundane tasks of everyday life, you are extending the mercy of God to the people you love the most. Embracing this call is the beginning of great holiness!

“Extend your mercy towards others, so that there can be no one in need whom you meet without helping. For what hope is there for us if God should withdraw His Mercy from us?”

- SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL



FAMILY WEEK AT BENEDICTINE COLLEGE

BY PAUL BURGHART

It is easy to look around and think that American families are in bad shape. And there are plenty of statistics to back that up: 40% of all births in the United States occur outside of marriage, over half of children born in the U.S. reach their 17th birthday without a married mom and dad in the home, sacramental marriage is under attack, and the very notion that family life can be fulfilling is contradicted daily by popular culture and the media. However, responding negatively to the bad news will not help.



What will help is building up healthy marriages and families that live out God's call to share the fruits of their sacramental marriage. That is precisely why the Center for Family Life at Benedictine College started Family Week, a week-long family enrichment retreat hosted on Benedictine's beautiful campus. This year, Family Week will be May 26-31, 2024. Couples and families come to Family Week for a unique retreat experience that explores the "why and how" of marriage through a Catholic lens. The week serves to strengthen



families and inspire them to live out their mission in a community of other strong, Catholic families.

The week includes deep formation as well as lots of time for families to have fun together. The formation sessions are led by the Disciples of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, whose special charism is to serve as priests for the family, taking their inspiration from St. John Paul II.

Children and young adults receive formation in age-appropriate theology of the body lessons. Every afternoon and evening is full of fun and formative activities that will leave your family inspired.

To learn more about and register for Family Week, please visit:

www.Benedictine.edu/FamilyWeek

Full and partial scholarships are available for those who need them.

THIS IS MY BODY: A CALL TO DEEPER LOVE THROUGH THE EUCHARIST

BY ANNIE KYLE

When I was in sixth grade, I remember being told to pray for my future husband. The next mass I attended, when I saw the priest lift up the chalice of the precious blood I found myself uttering under my breath, “Oh most precious blood of Christ, I offer up to you my most beloved future spouse. Protect and guide him all the days of our life.” From that day forward I said this prayer each and every mass I attended and would ask the Lord to look after my future husband during every consecration. This did not change until my wedding day when I was finally able to pray this prayer fully by inserting my husband’s name! While my understanding of the profoundness of this prayer eventually grew over time, I still to this day do not know what inspired my original deliverance of these words. I can only attribute it to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and His deep desire for me to understand the sacred meaning and relation of these two sacraments.

As a middle schooler, I had no real grasp of the correlation between the sacrament of Marriage and the Holy Eucharist. There was frankly no connection in my head that one day, my husband and I would give ourselves to one another, just as Christ does in every mass when the priest proclaims “This is my body...given up for you”. While my understanding grew with age, it was not until I got married that I truly began to unfold the resplendence that is the mystery of the Holy Eucharist and just how blessed each of us is to receive His body, blood, soul, and divinity. Freely given. Unconditional. Every. Single. Mass. How many of us have let this truth penetrate our hearts? How many of us have truly reflected on what this means regarding who we are in relationship to the Lord, let alone how He is calling us to love our spouses? Do we fully comprehend our vows?

When we consume Our Lord in the Eucharist we are not only meant to receive Him but to in turn give ourselves fully to Him as well. This intimacy with God is and always will be the greatest love story ever told. A story, which for married couples, calls each of us to lay down our life for one another with the same fervor, sacrifice, and devotion as Christ has done for His own beloved, the Church. However, marriage while beautiful, is not easy. Days spent together can become mundane and if we are not careful we will lose sight of what is before us. The reality that the person we have vowed to love, while imperfect, has been created in the image and likeness of the God of the Universe. Do we take time to contemplate and delight in the beauty of our spouse as Christ in the Eucharist does for us, regardless of the season we are in? Would we not then find ourselves in the same awe and wonder we felt for our spouse on our wedding day?

This April, during the month dedicated to the Holy Eucharist, I encourage all married couples to grow in their love for one another through deeper reverence of the Blessed Sacrament. Attend mass together more frequently. Sign up for a Holy Hour in Adoration. Recite the Divine Praises or Anima Christi. If we take time to seek the God who is willing to be vulnerable and intimate with us in the Real Presence, then we will truly begin to comprehend His deep love for us and His son or daughter that is our spouse. Only then will our marriages be transformed by the radical, boundless love we find in the host.

APRIL IS THE MONTH OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST!

Want to grow closer to Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist this April? Consider the following options to fall more in love with the True Presence:

- Prepare your Body, Mind, and Soul for Holy Communion. Receive the sacrament of Confession frequently and offer a heartfelt examination of conscience before receiving. Be aware of welcoming Our Lord with reverence in our body and hearts.
- Attend Daily Mass as much as you are able. If you cannot make it, pray an Act of Spiritual Communion!
- Visit Our Lord in Adoration frequently. Use this time to discern the Real Presence of Our Lord.
- Research the Eucharistic Miracles of the Church. This website features the exhibition created by Blessed Carlo Acutis.
- Prayerfully discern attending the upcoming National Eucharistic Revival! Click Here for Details!

FASTS & FEASTS!

"ON THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS CONSIDER THEIR VIRTUES, AND BESEECH GOD TO DEIGN TO ADORN YOU WITH THEM."

-ST. TERESA OF JESUS

March 3rd, St. Katharine Drexel

- St. Katherine had a heart for the Native American and Black community. She was so appalled by their mistreatment that she took it upon herself to use her family fortune to open schools and missions to help them all over the United States. Celebrate this saint by making traditional [Indian Fry Bread](#) or [Three Sisters Soup](#)!

March 7th, St. Perpetua and Felicity

- Perpetua and Felicity were two mothers who were martyred in public games where Christians were put to death for refusing to renounce their faith. Celebrate these martyrs by making traditional [Tunisian Mint Tea](#) with [Tunisian Doughnuts \(Yo-Yos\)](#)

March 17th, St. Patrick

- Celebrate this Catholic bishop by sharing in a traditional Irish meal with your family. [Irish Stew](#), [Bangers and Mash](#), and freshly baked [Irish Soda Bread](#) are a few to consider. The adults can then enjoy [Irish Coffees](#) while the kids drink these [St. Patrick's Green Floats](#)!

March 19th, St. Joseph

- Invite friends this year to join in making a St. Joseph's table! The tradition of the St. Joseph's Table originates from Sicily, Italy. Believed to have begun after the end of a devastating drought in the Middle Ages answered by St. Joseph, this tradition is still widely celebrated and is meant to feed family and friends as well as the poor or those who are unable to afford their own table. Find out more about this tradition [HERE](#)!

March 25th, Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

- Honor Our Lady and the announcement of Christ's birth by volunteering or donating to a crisis pregnancy center. Make a meal for a friend who is pregnant or offer to babysit for a night! Make this [Almond Ring Coffee Cake](#) to celebrate the moment Christ's divinity entered the human womb of Our Lady. The almond is an early Christian symbol of the Virgin Mary due to its shape being the union of two circles, humanity and divinity. The almond's seed concealed behind a hard shell also symbolizes Mary's purity and the hidden godliness within the human shape of Jesus.

March 29th, Good Friday (Day of Fasting)

March 31st, Resurrection Sunday

April 7th, Divine Mercy Sunday

- Divine Mercy Sunday is a beautiful way to reflect on the Lord's infinite mercy and his revelations to St. Faustina about His love for us. Consider praying the divine mercy chaplet novena (beginning on Good Friday) and ending today! Not only can you gain a plenary indulgence (see [how here](#)) but you can use this time to grow in prayer as a family. Make a meal or dessert with red and blue foods to symbolize the blood and water which sprung forth from our Lord's heart when it was pierced. These [Divine Mercy Pancakes](#) are one of our favorites!

April 12th, St. Teresa of Los Andes

- Honor this first Chilean saint by making these traditional [Empanadas de Pino \(Chilean Beef Empanadas\)](#). While the ingredients may not be anything you have ever tried before, there is a reason this is the most ordered empanada in Chile!

April 23rd, St. George

- Consider buying and reading the tale of [St. George and the Dragon](#) to your little ones! Make a fancy traditional British meal to celebrate the patron saint of Britain! Try a [Beef Wellington](#) or a [Cottage Pie](#) alongside [Mini Victoria Sponge Cakes](#)!

April 25th, St. Mark the Evangelist

- Legend has it that on St. Mark's Feast Day, the pope at the time, St. Gregory the Great suddenly had a great craving for cherries. However, his servants did not know what to do since the cherry trees had not yet produced fruit. It is said St. Mark appeared to the gardener and blessed one of the trees making it covered in ripe red cherries. Celebrate by making these [Cherry Pie Turnovers](#).

April 28th, St. Gianna Beretta Molla

- St. Gianna was devoted wife, mother, and doctor and gave her life for her unborn child. Honor this prolific saint and her Italian heritage by making these [Cannoli's](#)! Serve with espresso or your favorite type of tea and enjoy!

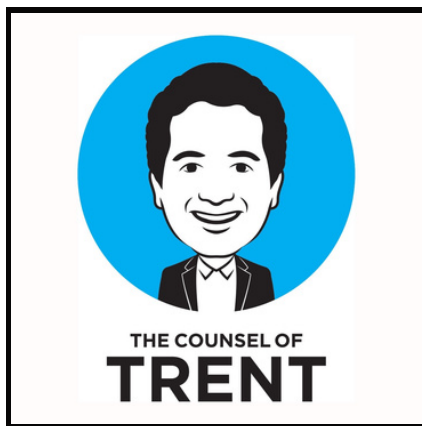
April 29th, St. Catherine of Siena

- Celebrate this doctor of the Church by making [Paglia e Fieno](#), a traditional Siena dish, or [Pasta Santa Caterina](#) with lily shaped pasta. Lilies are a symbol of St. Catherine's purity and chastity and she is often depicted holding them!

The Striving Saint: Resources that Inspire the Road to Sainthood

FEATURED PODCAST

THE COUNSEL OF TRENT

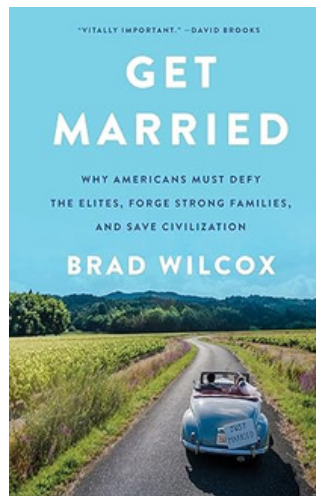


“The Counsel of Trent is Trent’s weekly podcast where he helps Catholics answer the toughest objections against our faith. Every episode of The Counsel of Trent provides listeners with a “conversation roadmap” that will help them share their Catholic faith with anyone. They contain entertaining, informative, and practical explanation of the Faith as well as interviews with the best Catholic writers and speakers in the world today.”

FEATURED BOOK

GET MARRIED: WHY AMERICANS MUST DEFY THE ELITES, FORGE STRONG FAMILIES, AND SAVE CIVILIZATION

“What’s the recipe for happiness? If you listen to liberal elites or red pill influencers, you’d say it’s making money, living for yourself, and staying single without kids—and you’d be wrong. Nothing predicts happiness better than a good marriage.”



FEATURED MOVIE

RISEN

“In 33 AD, a Roman Tribune in Judea is tasked to find the missing body of Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead.”

(Rated PG-13 for Biblical violence including some disturbing images)





FEATURED EASTER ACTIVITY



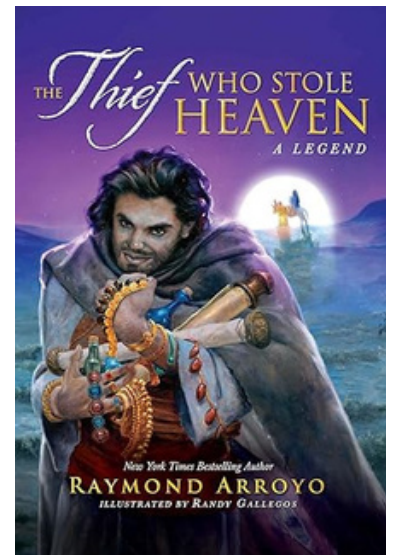
RESURRECTION GARDEN

“Celebrate Christ’s resurrection with this beautiful and fun Easter activity! Begin this project early during Lent so that by Easter the grass is fully grown when you and your children roll the stone away and announce that “He is Risen!”. Find examples from [Catholic Icing](#) or [We are that Family](#) for two different takes on this project!

FEATURED BOOK

THE THEIF WHO STOLE HEAVEN

“Once again, bestselling author and broadcaster, Raymond Arroyo provides readers with a cinematic, adventurous holiday story based on ancient legends filled with deeper themes. The Thief Who Stole Heaven introduces audiences to the largely hidden character of The Good Thief. Bridging the gap between Christmas and Easter, this unique story brings to life a compelling redemption story that is destined to be treasured and revisited year after year.”



FEATURED MOVIE



HE IS RISEN

RATED G

“He is Risen is the story of the greatest miracle of all, the resurrection of Jesus. Sorrow and despair at the Lord's crucifixion become complete joy and love as the disciples behold their resurrected Master three days later. The events of the real story of Easter teach of the atonement and resurrection, providing hope to Christians around the world.”

Available on [Vimeo](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

HEAR WHAT OTHERS SAID ABOUT OUR EVERMORE IN LOVE WEEKEND IMMERSION

“Marriage is an outward sign to the world of God’s covenant love for us! We have a part to play in salvation history in our very own marriages. WOW!!! I am excited to move forward with my husband, using the knowledge we’ve gained and the tools we learned on our weekend.”

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FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM!
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♥ **-BUILDING A EUCHARISTIC MARRIAGE**
ST. MARY'S IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - VALLEY FALLS, KS
COURSE BEGINS APRIL 7-MAY 19.
The in-person sessions will meet at the church on Sunday nights from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. An on-line session will also be available. Contact the parish office for details -sj.ic.cc.parihofice@gmail.com or (913) 886-2030

♥ **-MARRIAGE SUMMIT**
SACRED HEART - SHAWNEE, KS
APRIL 12, 2024
National speaker and author JP de Gance, Brad Wilcox, and Mark Regnarus speak about the importance of marriage for the life of the church. Save the date! Details to follow.

♥ **-MARRIAGE MINI-RETREATS**

♥ **MARCH 23, 2024 @ ST. JOSEPH, SHAWNEE**
Spend a Saturday learning to love your spouse smarter, (not harder!) This day will present Session 1 & 2 of EverMore in Love’s EveryDay Skills course. Register [here](#).

♥ **APRIL 13, 2024 @ HOLY SPIRIT, OVERLAND PARK**
This Saturday will teach you how to communicate for connection and plan for success in marriage! It’s Sessions 3&4 of EverMore in Love’s EveryDay Skills Course. Registration coming soon.

♥ **-FAMILY WEEK AT BENEDICTINE COLLEGE - ATCHISON, KS**
May 26-31, 2024
Join other families and couples from all over the Kansas City area for an inspiring Catholic marriage and family retreat on Benedictine College’s beautiful campus in Atchison, Kansas. Couples and families come to Family Week for a unique retreat experience that explores the “why and how” of marriage and family through a Catholic lens. It’s a dynamic five days of deep and engaging talks, fellowship, prayer, and fun activities for the whole family. Register by March 1 for 10% Early Bird Discount! Register [HERE!](#)

♥ **-50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS WITH ARCHBISHOP**
CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY - LEAWOOD, KS
JUNE 2, 2024 FROM 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann will celebrate a Mass honoring all those celebrating 50 years of marriage in 2024, with a light reception to follow. If you would like to receive an invitation, please contact the administrative assistant for Marriage and Family Life: mfladmin@archkck.org.

**SIGN UP FOR OUR
FAMILY NEWSLETTER
AND OTHER EMAIL LISTS
ON OUR FLOCKNOTE!**

