

# BUILDING A CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

Official Family Newsletter of the Archdiocese of KCK



## OUR LADY OF SORROWS: A MOTHER'S HEART

BY ANNIE KYLE

"I'm so relieved that I made it to 8 weeks. . ." I told my husband as I held the ultrasound picture in my hands, "but I am going to feel so much better when I am done with the first trimester." My husband laughed in agreement as he drove the 'three' of us home from our very first prenatal appointment. "But I probably won't feel true relief until I'm holding this baby in my arms," I continued, "And THEN you have to worry about them sleeping in their crib safely and driving them around!" I let out a groan of frustration just thinking of the unknown. "Ugh! When am I going to finally stop worrying?" My husband chuckled and answered, "Oh probably not for another 18 years!"

These past 15 weeks of my very first pregnancy I have found this bittersweet paradox revolving in my head and heart almost daily. First, the utter joy and awe of the inconceivable notion that God has bestowed this immortal soul under my protection and care. . . quickly accompanied by the infinite weight of suffering that I know will inevitably affect my heart. However, these complex feelings of intense love and pain has called me deeper into understanding of Our Lady's own heart, especially Our Lady of Sorrows. Almost immediately after seeing that positive pregnancy test, I heard the Lord turn to me as well and say:

"A sword shall pierce your heart."

How stunning Our Lady of Sorrows is as a witness to parents like me striving to accept this calling to great love. From the moment of her 'fiat' Mary knew she was saying yes not only to the joy felt by the manger but to the intense pain she would endure under the cross. She who kissed and cleaned his pierced wounds, would have had to first kiss and clean the small scrapes and scratches on his small toddler hands and feet. Our Lady of Sorrows is therefore not someone to fear or be intimidated by. Rather, this beautiful title shows us a Mother who fully understood the price which great love and vulnerability ultimately brings. Her heart was deeply pierced only because she first fully opened it to the greatest capacity of love that any human on this earth has ever accepted. Is this not also how we are called to live as parents and Catholics? This September as we celebrate the month of Our Lady of Sorrows let us too ask God for the capacity of a love like our Heavenly Mother's. A love that is willing to be pierced. A love that is open to the Cross and the Resurrection!

## This issue:

Our Lady of Sorrows:  
A Mother's Heart  
PAGE 01

"Rebuild My Church"  
PAGE 02

Carlos: A Saint  
for Our Times  
PAGE 03

Parenting the "Little Way"  
PAGE 04

Fasts & Feasts  
PAGE 05

The Striving Saint:  
Resources  
PAGE 06 & 07

# “REBUILD MY CHURCH”

BY LIBBY DUPONT

“The deeds you do  
may be the only  
sermon some persons  
will hear today.”

-SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI



The Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy is very unique, as it completely surrounds the tiny chapel in which St. Francis received his famous marching orders from God: “rebuild my Church!” He began to restore the little church, called the Portiuncula, before it became clear that Jesus was calling him to be a saint, not a contractor.

I had the honor of visiting this beautiful Church this summer. Since we were in Italy attending a conference and retreat about marriage, a few striking realities about marriage and family hit me as I contemplated this Church.

**Sacred and not alone.** This church-within-a-church is the perfect image of our families. Although it’s very easy to forget in the midst of the chaos of everyday life, Jesus dwells in the center of our families. He is present wherever two or three are gathered in his name, and especially through the Sacrament of Matrimony. This makes our homes sacred places (even if there’s a pile of shoes in the entryway)! Further, our domestic churches are surrounded and protected by the universal Church. Our parishes are meant to support us in our path to holiness through sacraments and community, and the larger church guides us with her wisdom. We also have the whole Communion of Saints rooting us on.

**We are called to rebuild the Church.** The call on St. Francis to “rebuild the Church” is the same call on our little domestic churches, and our methods are the same. As we strive together toward holiness, we give witness to our unique and unrepeatable experience of God’s mercy. To paraphrase Francis’ often-quoted axiom, we “preach the Gospel at all times” by how we live, and through his grace we “use words when necessary.” It’s important to note here that though there are many wonderful ways that families can and should reach out to others in service, parents are about the most important work of evangelization, as they spread the faith not to distant countries, but down through generations.

**We are under construction.** To prepare for next year’s jubilee, the Portiuncula was undergoing renovations. While this was disappointing for pilgrims, they all understand that any 800-year-old structure occasionally needs some maintenance. This is true of our domestic churches as well. If we are going to live up to the splendor of our calling, we need to take time frequently to do the difficult but practical work of things like reconciling hurts and improving communication. Learning new relationship skills or even seeking counseling can feel awkward sometimes, but it’s nothing to be ashamed of. On the contrary, it’s the mark of a family that understands that their dignity calls them to be as strong, clean and beautiful as they can be.

# CARLOS: A SAINT FOR OUR TIMES

## BY ANNIE KYLE

When we think of saints who do we envision? Brave and courageous individuals who were tortured and martyred for their faith often come to mind for me. We may even think of pious priests and nuns who prayed so devoutly that they experienced great visions of ecstasy. Or perhaps our minds go to men and women who are attributed with great miracles such as bilocation, the stigmata, or the ability to hear and talk to their guardian angel! What would we say then about the future canonization of a 15 year old boy who loved video games, wore jeans, and played soccer? We may at first glance wonder if it could be true! However, Carlos Acutis is truly proof that the saints of our times are finally here!

On July 1st 2024, The College of Cardinals voted in favor of the canonization of Blessed Carlos Acutis following the recognition of a second miracle attributed to him, in which a young woman was miraculously healed of a severe head injury that the doctors believed to be fatal. Desperate for a miracle, the girl's mother traveled on pilgrimage to Assisi where Carlos' body is buried, leaving a note at his tomb. That same day her daughter began to breathe on her own again and soon regained the ability to use her upper limbs. She was discharged from the hospital merely ten days later and further tests showed that the hemorrhagic right temporal cortical contusion in her brain had disappeared entirely. This was the final miracle needed for Carlos' canonization, which is set to be held during the Jubilee year in 2025!



My friends, what a privilege it is to live in a time where our children are able to see saints who look and act like them. Saints like Carlos who surfed the internet, hung out with friends, and even enjoyed the Star Wars franchise! His witness is truly a gift to our generation and our children's generation who often still question whether we are capable of being saints. By looking at Carlos Acutis we can clearly see that the answer is a resounding **yes!** But it must be noted there is a small catch.

Like Carlos, we must teach our children that while they live IN the world they must never be OF the world. What makes Carlos so inspiring is actually his radical lifestyle while living in the 21st century. He prayed the rosary, attended daily mass, volunteered at soup kitchens, spread his love of the Eucharist online, and ultimately wanted to live a life that was entirely devoted to Christ. In his final days he said, "I'm happy to die because I've lived my life without wasting even a minute of it doing things that wouldn't have pleased God." Do we have this same view of our short time on earth or do we let the distractions of the world possess our heart? Take courage friends! Carlos has shown us that with God's grace, Our Lady's intercession, and the sacraments of the Church, we too can be great saints someday- and we can do it in jeans!

## TIMELINE OF CARLOS ACUTIS

1991

- Carlos is born and baptized in London to Italian parents. His parents would then move their family back to Milan, Italy.

1995-1998

- From a very early age Carlos yearns to attend daily mass and invites his unreligious parents to attend with him.

1998

- Carlos receives his First Holy Communion when he is 7 yrs old.

2002

- Carlos receives the sacrament of Confirmation and begins teaching catechism at the young age of 11.
- Carlos begins visiting Eucharistic Miracle sites around the world with his parents in order to catalog them online.

2005

- Carlos completes his website that contains 187 Eucharistic miracles. This website is still active today.

2006

- Carlos is diagnosed with an aggressive form of Leukemia when he is 15 years old. On October 12, 2006, Carlos passes away after slipping into a coma.

2012

- On the 6th anniversary of his death, The Archdiocese of Milan open the cause for the canonization of Carlos Acutis.

2019

- Carlo's body is exhumed, and his remains are transferred to St. Mary Major Parish in Assisi. While his remains were not considered incorrupt, his body was in excellent condition.

2020

- Carlos is beatified by Pope Francis on October 10, 2020.

2025

- Carlos will be canonized as the first millennial saint!

# PARENTING THE “LITTLE WAY”

BY ANNIE KYLE

I remember reading a story once about a mother raising her youngest daughter when she was just a toddler. The story goes that while the mother would be tending to her daily tasks throughout the house, her toddler would call out to her from their staircase on each step. In the story the mother recalls, “I hear the baby calling me Mama! as she goes down the stairs. On every step, she calls out Mama! and if I don’t respond [‘Yes my child’] every time, she remains there without going either forward or back.”

I can only imagine the patience it must have taken this mother to call out with tenderness and love each time she heard her little one’s cry. This story of course was not written by any ordinary mother but is from the writings of St. Zélie Martin while raising her daughter, and well known saint, Thérèse of Lisieux. Though quite sensitive as a young girl, Thérèse would grow up to not only become one of the greatest saints of all time but would be declared a Doctor of the Church for her radical ‘Little Way’ of living. After reading this story, however, I had to wonder, if the person we really owe the inspiration of this ‘Little Way’ to is in fact her devoted mother, St. Zélie.

The ‘Little Way’ came to St. Thérèse when she realized that she was not and would never be capable of doing great sacrifices or devotions like the saints who had gone before her. Instead, she found comfort and joy in her childlike nature and decided that if she could not do great things she would instead devote her life to doing small acts with great love- relying instead on the strength of her heavenly Father.

Thérèse once wrote, “I am too small to climb the rough stairway of perfection. I searched, then, in the Scriptures for some sign of this elevator, the object of my desires.” Connecting this with the story from her childhood, in my opinion, makes this way of thinking so much more endearing. How precious it is to know that Thérèse first witnessed her littleness so long ago on those stairs as she called out to her mother for reassurance and guidance. How fitting it is that her mother would respond faithfully each time - surely restoring faith in Thérèse’s heart of the even greater love her Heavenly Father must have for her.

Much like Thérèse, our children too need patience as they grow. Their little hands are not as agile as ours, their legs are much shorter and a bit wobblier, and their fragile hearts are in need of constant reassurance that we will always be there. For many of us, however, it is easy to dismiss this littleness, often forgetting what the heart of a child goes through during the day. We find that frankly it is easier not to let the toddler put on his own shoes or help bake the brownies because it will take much longer and likely make a bigger mess. But what if instead we decided to think of Thérèse, her mother, and her Little Way.

The time that we have with our little ones in our life is truly so precious. Before we know it, we will surely be wishing they would call us for help every once in a while. Let us then allow the littleness of our children to impact the way we ourselves live. Let us bask in the joy of simple things, childlike wonder, and the trust our children place in us. We may find that this Little Way will not only help us grow in tenderness for our children and their experiences, but rely more on the goodness and patience of our heavenly Father who always responds to our call!

# 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

## September 8th, Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary

- Have a heavenly tea party in honor of our Lady's birthday! Decorate the house with flowers and pick teas fitting of a Queen (Some of our favorites would be Lady Grey, Raspberry Royale, or this "[Blessed Mother](#)" [Chamomile Lavender tea](#) sold by Sacred Heart Tea). Invite close friends to join you and begin your time in prayer or by reciting the rosary together and sharing intentions that you would like to leave in the hands of our Lady. Then celebrate with scones, cookies, and your favorite finger sandwiches!

## September 17th, St. Hildegard of Bingen

- Love all things Pumpkin Spice? You and St. Hildegard have that in common! This Doctor of the Church was a well know herbalist among many things and is attributed with writing that a combination of nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon "...softens the bitterness of the body and mind, opens the heart, sharpens the blunt senses, makes the soul joyful, and diminishes harmful moods." In other words she finds pumpkin spice to be "spices of joy". Celebrate this brilliant saint with a [Pumpkin Spiced Latte](#) or these decadent [Pumpkin Spice Cookies](#)!

## September 21st, St Matthew, Apostle

- Celebrate this reformed tax collector and patron of bankers by making your own chocolate coins! Try this [recipe](#) that can be decorated with fun toppings! You can also take time to read the scripture verse of the [Calling of Matthew \(Mt 9:9-13\)](#) or by watching the [scene](#) from The Chosen.

## September 28th, St. Jerome

- Known as a great scholar and defender of the faith, legend also recalls about how St. Jerome once saved a hurt lion with a thorn in its paw. Honor this saint by making [Lion Paw Rice Crispy Treats](#) with your children!

## October 1st, St. Thérèse of Lisieux

- Therese was known for her "Little Way" of doing small acts with great love. Take time on her feast to perform acts of kindness for those around you. Make time for a coffee date with a friend, take the kids out for an ice cream or do an activity they enjoy, donate extra to charity, or even take a moment to smile and ask the cashier how their day is going while at the store. You can even enjoy Thérèse's favorite little treat of mini éclairs as a family for a dessert after dinner!

## October 4th, St. Francis of Assisi

- Did you know that St. Francis had a dear friend named Jacoba who is not only reported of being at his deathbed but also brought him his favorite type of cookie? Honor this saintly friendship by making [Blessed Jacoba's Honey Almond Cookies](#). You can even bring a plate of these to someone who is going through a tough time or could use a pick me up!

## October 7th, Our Lady of the Rosary

- Commemorate Our Lady and the Month of the Rosary by praying the rosary each day in October. Set aside time in the car, after dinner, or before bed when the family can gather together and pray for each others intentions. You can even put out an image of Our Lady to pray before or bring roses to a statue at a Church to honor her.

## October 22nd, St. Pope John Paul II

- While JPII is known for many courageous and brilliant accomplishments in his life, he is very well known for never losing his love of the simple things in life. In fact he was known to sneak out of the Vatican from time to time to go skiing and hiking in the mountains. He was a lover of good times and good Polish foods that reminded him of his home. One of his favorites is the Paczki which is basically a polish donut stuffed with jam or fruit curds. Try this [recipe](#) [here](#)!

# The Striving Saint: Resources that Inspire the Road to Sainthood

## FEATURED VIDEO



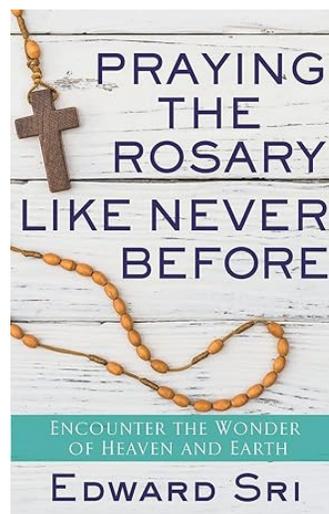
### “IVF? WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?”

Curious about the Church’s stance on IVF? Check out this 3 minute video presented by Chris Stefanick and Father Mike Schmitz on this recent trending topic.

## FEATURED BOOK

### PRAYING THE ROSARY LIKE NEVER BEFORE

This compelling book by Edward Sri offers practical suggestions that come from the rosary’s tradition to experience Jesus and Mary more in your prayer and easily incorporate it into your life. It will allow the rosary to become a perpetual companion through the seasons, important moments, and challenges we will inevitably face. These prompts will not only help those who need help with incorporating the rosary into their everyday life but also to those who are deeply attached to get their relationship deeper with the Lord.



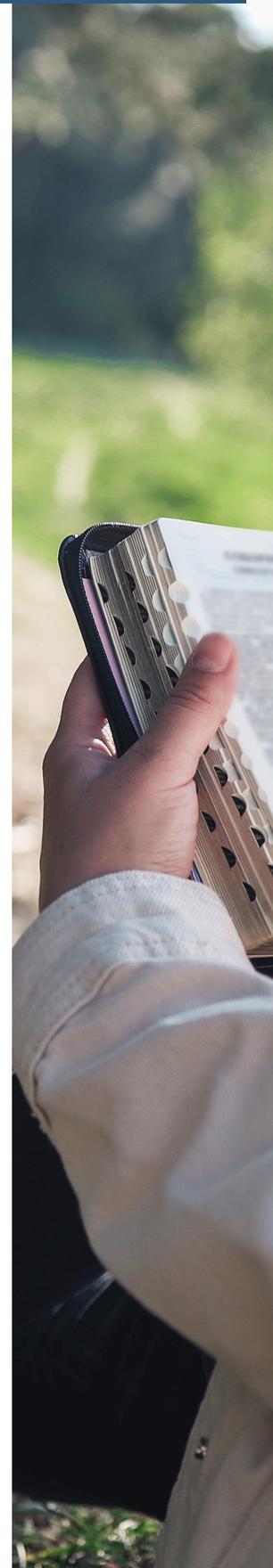
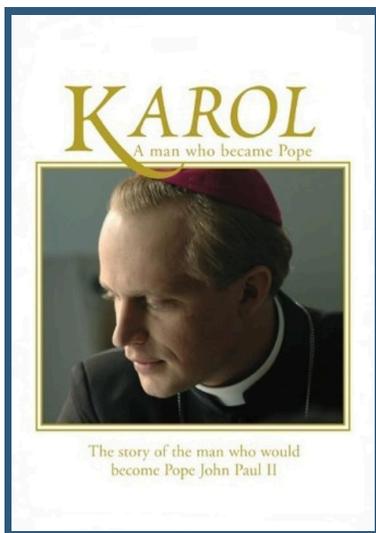
## FEATURED MOVIE

### KAROL: A MAN WHO BECAME POPE

The life of the pope John-Paul II, from his youth as a writer, actor, and athlete in war-torn occupied Poland to his election as Pope at the age of 58.

You can watch this movie for free on [YouTube!](#)

\*This film is Not Rated but Parental Discretion is advised. Some intense and violent war scenes may not be suitable for young children.





## FEATURED ACTIVITY

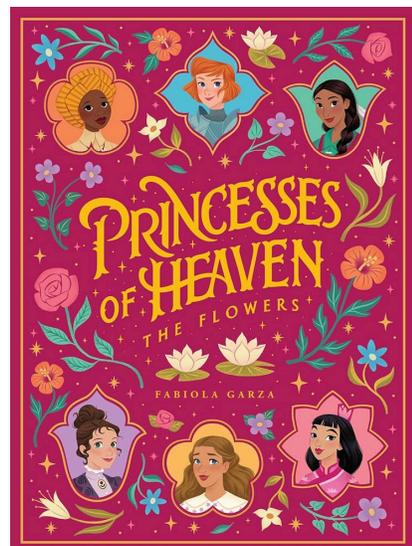
### SAINT-O-LANTERNS

Check out this Catholic twist on the classic tradition of carving pumpkins by Catholic Cuisine! She and her family choose to carve Saint-O-Lanterns each year in order to encourage creativity and their faith to others! Check out her page [here!](#)

## FEATURED BOOK

### PRINCESSES OF HEAVEN

“Princesses of Heaven is a picture book for young girls ages 3–8 written and illustrated by Disney artist Fabiola Garza. This breathtaking book shares the stories of St. Joan of Arc, St. Josephine Bakhita, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, St. Narcisa de Jesus, St. Lucy Yi Zhenmei, and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, presenting them each as a princess in heaven with a shining crown. Their stories of faith, hope, and love will inspire every girl to become a saint!”



## FEATURED VIDEO

### THE HOLY ROSARY, FOR KIDS!

Help your child understand how to pray the Rosary with this short video from Spirit Juice Kids- a company who “makes high-quality multimedia resources available to Catholic parents to help their children begin to understand their faith and get excited about it.”



Watch it [HERE!](#)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## HEAR WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID ABOUT OUR LEAD COUPLE TRAINING & INVOLVEMENT

“ We were in misery when we went on our Retrouvaille weekend. We could not talk without arguing. Our three teenagers lived in a war zone. At the Retrouvaille weekend we were able to reconnect and found hope. Eventually, our marriage entered a second honeymoon. ”

### THE OFFICE OF MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE



**BRAD DUPONT**  
LEAD CONSULTANT  
bdupont@archkck.org  
913-647-0301

**LIBBY DUPONT**  
CONSULTANT  
ldupont@archkck.org



**SR. MONICA BERNADETTE ARGUELLO, SGTJM**  
CONSULTANT  
marguello@archkck.org  
913-647-0329  
(Habla Español)



**ANNIE KYLE**  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
MFLadmin@archkck.org  
913-647-0345



**FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM!**  
[@MARRIAGEANDFAMILYLIFEKCK](https://www.instagram.com/marriageandfamilylifekck)

♥ **-SCHOOL OF LOVE AMORE GALA 2024**  
SHERATON, OVERLAND PARK, AT THE CONVENTION CENTER  
SEPTEMBER 21ST - COCKTAIL HOUR BEGINS AT 6:30 PM  
We are very excited to bring you what we anticipate to be, by far, our biggest and best gala to date. It is our goal to make Amore the single greatest gala for married couples in the region. So this year we're adding even more pizzazz than before. We're continuing to add both fun and meaningful elements to our array of unique offerings, including: available couples seating, champagne bar, dessert bar, music and dancing, a marriage blessing, and an entire afterparty designed specially for you! Get your tickets [HERE!](#)

♥ **-EVERMORE IN LOVE MENTOR TRAINING- ZOOM MEETINGS**  
OCTOBER 9TH - NOVEMBER 20TH (WEDNESDAYS)  
This course will train couples to mentor the engaged using EverMore in Love Marriage Preparation. It will be live on Zoom, and couples are asked to attend live as much as possible in order to have the most interactive experience. However, if couples need to miss a session or two they can make it up during the week (using the recording) to stay current with the class. Sign up [HERE!](#)

♥ **-MASS OF INNOCENTS**  
HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC PARISH, OVERLAND PARK  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20TH @1PM  
This Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, recognizes the value of children who died before or shortly after birth, as well as the grief felt by their parents, grandparents and loved ones. Whether or not you have personally experienced this loss, you are welcome to come commemorate these little ones and offer prayerful support to their families. Light refreshments to follow. No RSVP necessary. Questions? Brad DuPont [bdupont@archkck.org](mailto:bdupont@archkck.org).

♥ **-RETROUVAILLE KC MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT WEEKEND**  
FRIDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25-27, 2024  
Retrouvaille is a lifeline for marriages...to help couples heal and renew their hurting marriages. It's a practical program to improve communication, and help couples reconnect. Presenters are not marriage counselors, but rather couples sharing their personal stories of marital struggles and the tools they used to rediscover their love. It's Catholic in origin, but all faiths are welcomed. Registration closes October 24th! Register [HERE!](#)

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

