

BUILDING A CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

Official Family Newsletter of the Archdiocese of KCK



FOCUS ON FORGIVENESS THIS LENT

BY LIBBY DUPONT

Forgive us our trespasses, *as we forgive those who trespass against us.* This could be the most challenging line in the Gospels! In Lent, we focus on Jesus' Passion and death which freed us from our own sins. But we can't forget that he also desires to free us from the sins that others have committed against us, as well. In our fallen world, every family needs to practice forgiveness in order to live the fullness of life God wants for us!

What forgiveness is, and what it isn't. Forgiveness isn't condoning or forgetting. The very fact that something needs to be forgiven means that it was wrong and hurtful. The act of forgiving doesn't negate this fact, it just frees us from bitterness and resentment.

Forgiveness isn't reconciliation. Reconciliation means the restoration of relationship. It's ideal that forgiveness between spouses, parents, children and siblings would also include reconciliation. Unfortunately, though, some relationships require healthy boundaries in order to continue, and in other cases, we may need to distance ourselves from someone who is manipulative or abusive. Whether reconciliation is possible or not, we can always forgive.

Forgiveness is about you. It's been said that unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping the other guy will die. We can and should forgive everyone who has hurt us, since forgiveness is ultimately about setting us free to be the most loving family member we can be. It is a participation of Jesus' prayer from the cross: "Father, forgive them..."

Tips for forgiving.

- Share the hurt with a trusted mentor, counselor, family member or spouse. This doesn't have to be the person who hurt you, and it's never done to gossip or "vent." But having someone understand the nature of the hurt can help you release it.
- Be specific about the injuries you are forgiving. Write or say, "(NAME), I forgive you for..."
- Pray that God will lift the hurt from your heart.
- Pray that God will bless the person who hurt you with good things.
- Forgiveness is an act of the will. The feelings will follow in time, but you don't have to "feel forgiving."
- Bring any part you have played in the situation to sacramental Reconciliation.

Become a forgiving family.

- As spouses, learn strategies to forgive well. Let your kids see you forgive one another.
- As parents, humbly ask your children for forgiveness when you hurt them or let them down.
- Adopt a structure in your family to forgive well, such as: "Please forgive me for ____ . It probably made you feel ____ . Next time, I will try to do ____ instead."

This issue:

Focus on Forgiveness
[PAGE 01](#)

[Holy Week, Holy Family](#)
[PAGE 02](#)

Pilgrims of Hope
[PAGE 03 & 04](#)

[Running Towards
Heaven Together:
Featured Married
Saint of the Month](#)
[PAGE 05](#)

The Striving Saint:
Resources
[PAGE 06](#)

HOLY WEEK BEGAN WITH A HOLY FAMILY

BY LIBBY DUPONT

In Lent, we meditate on the life and death of Jesus, and the great sacrifices He made to save us, but do we ever think about the decades he spent with Mary and Joseph? On a human level, his time at the little home in Nazareth prepared him for his mission, and I think it has a lot to teach us as parents and grandparents this Lent!

Affirmation. I have often marveled at the way that Jesus is able to bear the heartache and betrayal of being denounced by the religious leaders he entrusted with the task of preparing his people for his coming. The physical pain of his Passion could not have compared to hearing the crowd shout for his death, or the brutal mockery of the soldiers. How could he stand it? In his humanity, I think Jesus could endure because at his core, he knew who he was. Mary and Joseph would have flooded him with affirmation as he was growing up. I don't mean superficial flattery or positive thinking, but that they would have always reflected back to him the fact that he was a Beloved Son of his Father in Heaven, and of them. They would also have reminded him of his great mission and expected him to live up to that incredible dignity.

How can I better affirm the dignity of my children? Help them see the great mission to which they are called and show them how beloved they are?

Prayer. Because Jesus is God, we can take it for granted that he knows how to pray, and certainly his union with the other two members of the Trinity are crucial. But it was Mary and Joseph who helped him memorize the psalm he recites from the cross. When he asks for the Father's will to be done in the Garden, could he not help thinking of the thousands of times he watched his mother do the same?



Do my children see me pray? Have I taught them to pray? If no one ever taught me, can we learn together?

Sacrifice and Generosity. God the Father did not give his only Son an easy life. Born in a stable, he lived the first few years of his life in exile, then watched his parents scrape together a living in a poor, remote village. On a human level, I imagine that much of Jesus' compassion for the crowds of sick and hungry people came from his own experience of poverty. I don't think it is a stretch to think of him watching Mary and Joseph go without food to offer hospitality to others, or to be the first in the village to volunteer to stay up long nights with a dying neighbor. Certainly the example of his earthly parents, and the opportunities he had growing up to push himself in service of others was part of the preparation his heavenly Father used to prepare him for his salvific mission.

How can I offer my children a better example of compassion in action (or even better... involve them?) How can I better help my children embrace their difficulties, especially if my first instinct is to clear them away?

This Lent, let's ask the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph to help us raise children who will be unafraid to accomplish the great mission God has for them!



BECOME A PILGRIM OF HOPE!

BY SISTER MONICA BERNADETTE ARGUELLO

Pope Francis has designated the 2025 Holy Year as a time to renew ourselves as "Pilgrims of Hope." The jubilee year was initiated with the opening of the 5 Holy Doors in Rome, which first started on Christmas Eve at St. Peter's Basilica. There are 5 doors that opened, and one for the first time will be at a prison in Rome. The 5 doors in Rome represent the Heart of Christ. The gesture of opening the doors is a deeper calling for our families to enter into the most merciful and Pierced Heart of Christ. Pope Francis explains in the bull of Indiction "Hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the Pierced Heart of Jesus upon the Cross." (Spes non confundit 3)

The Holy Father encourages us as pilgrims to walk and advance deeply in our hearts, into the ultimate purpose of our lives: He explains: "Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life." (Spes non confundit 5).

Below are the many opportunities to celebrate this ordinary jubilee year and experience the Lord's love and mercy He desires to bestow upon our hearts and of our family members:

The Sacrament of Confession

"Let us rediscover the beauty of this Sacrament of healing and joy, the beauty of God's forgiveness of our sins! In this Jubilee Year, may no one be deprived of the opportunity to receive God's forgiveness and consolation." (Spes non confundit, 23)

Works of Mercy

"Works of mercy are also works of hope that give rise to immense gratitude." (Spes non confundit, 11)

Plenary Indulgences

"The jubilee indulgence is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy, of the fullness of God's forgiveness, which knows no bounds." (Spes non confundit, 23).

The Jubilee calls us to spiritual renewal and commits us to the transformation of our world, so that this year may truly become a time of jubilation.

POPE FRANCIS

CHRISTMAS EVE, 2024

What is a Plenary Indulgence?

"An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints".
(CCC 1407)

Imagine that a kid breaks a window on purpose. He repents and his dad forgives him, but the window still needs to be repaired.

When we sin, it causes damage to ourselves and others. We need to repent and be forgiven, but the window still needs to be repaired. This is what God does with us in Purgatory. He repairs the damage of our sin, breaking its hold on us and preparing us for heaven.

A Plenary Indulgence is an incredible mercy whereby God removes all of this punishment for sin-- he repairs the broken window.

We can apply an indulgence to ourselves, to a specific person who has died, or we can offer it to God for a soul who needs it. Offering an indulgence is a supreme gift of mercy, as it allows that person to quickly enter heaven.

Let's take advantage of this opportunity to bless our departed friends and family!

How to obtain a Jubilee Indulgence:

- **Make a pilgrimage to one of the Jubilee Churches.** The Cathedral of St. Peter and all the churches in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are pilgrimage sites.
- **At the Jubilee Church, devoutly participate in any of the following:**
 - Celebration of the Holy Mass
 - Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - Mass of Sacraments of Christian Initiation
 - Anointing of the Sick
 - Liturgy of the Hours Office of Readings, Lauds, or Vespers
 - Stations of the Cross
 - Marian Rosary
 - Eucharistic Adoration

A plenary indulgence may be applied to oneself or to a soul in purgatory. In order to obtain one, the normal conditions for an indulgence must be met (listed below) as well as doing one of the many ways to obtain an indulgence during the Jubilee:

- Pray for the intentions of the Pope
- Truly repentant and free from any affection for sin
- Receive Holy Communion
- Confession 20 days before or after
- Moved by a spirit of charity

May we be pilgrims of Hope, as we know Hope does not disappoint! (Rom 5:5)

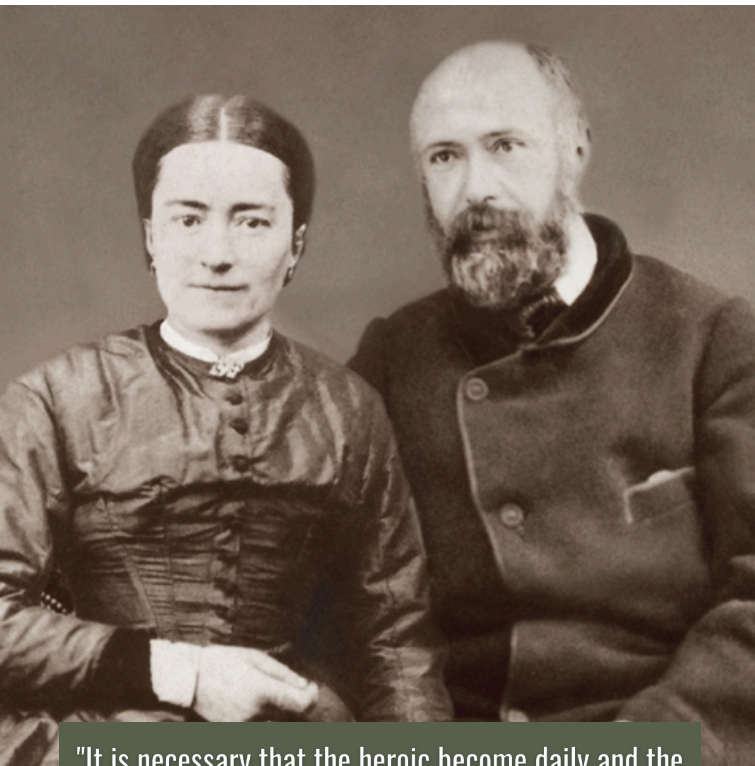
To read the bull of Indiction of Spes non confundit, please click on the link below:

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509_spes-non-confundit_bolla-giubileo2025.html



RUNNING TOWARDS HEAVEN TOGETHER: FEATURED MARRIED SAINT OF THE MONTH

Sts. Louis and Marie-
Azélie Guérin Martin



"It is necessary that the heroic become daily and the
daily become heroic."

-ST. ZELIE MARTIN

Born into a military family in Bordeaux, Louis trained to become a watchmaker. His desire to join a religious community went unfulfilled because he didn't know Latin. Moving to Normandy, he met the highly-skilled lace maker, Zélie Guérin, who also had been disappointed in her attempts to enter religious life. They married in 1858, and over the years were blessed with nine children, though two sons and two daughters died in infancy.

Louis managed the lace-making business that Zélie continued at home while raising their children. She died from breast cancer in 1877.

Louis then moved the family to Lisieux to be near his brother and sister-in-law, who helped with the education of his five surviving girls. His health began to fail after his 15-year-old daughter entered the Monastery of Mount Carmel at Lisieux in 1888. Louis died in 1894, a few months after being committed to a sanitarium. The home that Louis and Zélie created nurtured the sanctity of all their children, but especially their youngest, who is known to us as Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Louis and Zélie were beatified in 2008, and canonized by Pope Francis on October 18, 2015. The liturgical feast of Saints Louis Martin and Zélie Guérin is celebrated on July 12.

Courtesy of [Franciscan Media](#).

SPEAKING OF ST. ZELIE...

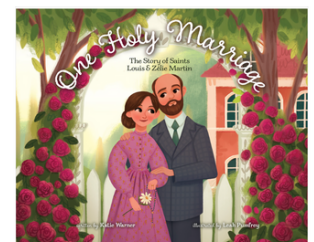


The Office of Marriage and Family Life is overjoyed to announce the birth of Zelie Marian Kyle, first daughter of Annie and John Kyle. Annie is our administrative assistant (and the normal newsletter editor). Thanks for your patience with our office in her absence!

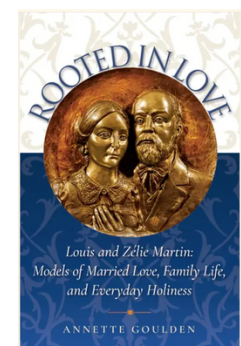


Zelie Marian Kyle
Born
February 7, 2025
5 lbs, 13oz
Daughter of
John and Annie

Read more about the
Martins...



For kids: One Holy Marriage
by Katie Warner



For
adults:
Rooted
in Love
by
Annette
Goulden

The Striving Saint: LENTEN RESOURCES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!



LENT FOR LITTLES

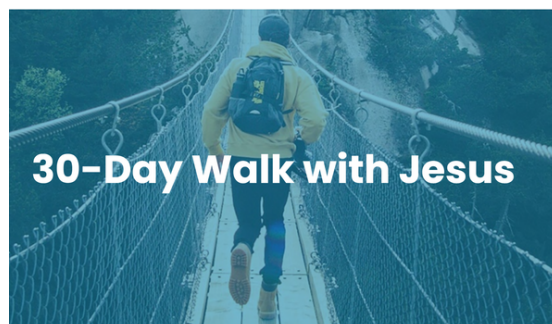
HOLY HEROES LENTEN ADVENTURES!

You'll receive regular emails linking you to daily activities, fun video & audio selections, activity downloads, coloring pages, word searches, and much more! Everything you need to make this the best Lent yet for your 5-12 year-old kids! (Plus, it's all FREE!)

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL

30-DAY WALK WITH JESUS BY YDISCIPLE

Can 5 minutes a day change your life? Find out! Perfect for Lent, this simple resource offers teens a scripture every day as a means to establish a habit of prayer. Moms and dads can join in, too!



MARRIED COUPLES

SMART LOVING ONLINE BY EVERMORE IN LOVE

Lent is about learning to love more generously! This self-paced, online course gives couples practical strategies to love their spouse better. Use promo code LENT40 for a 40% discount!

FAMILIES

PIER BY SCHOOL OF LOVE

Have you ever thought you should start praying as a family but it just seemed too complicated? PIER removes all the obstacles! This free resource is a great way to establish the habit of prayer this Lent.



UPCOMING EVENTS

“SMART LOVING” COURSE
HEAR WHAT A PARTICIPANT SAID ABOUT
THIS COURSE GIVEN AS A MINI-RETREAT
IN FEBRUARY IN SHAWNEE:

“ This was a great opportunity for my husband and myself to connect with each other and reminder to put God at the center of our marriage. I appreciated the time with him and our speakers and I’m excited for our marriage to continue to grow. ”

THE OFFICE OF MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE



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@MARRIAGEANDFAMILYLIFEKCK

- ♥ **DR RAY GUARENDI AT CHURCH OF ASCENSION**
THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2025 AT 6:30PM
Dr. Ray Guarendi will be speaking at Church of the Ascension on “Standing Strong as a Parent and Grandparent.” Admission is free. Dr. Ray is a Catholic father of ten adopted children, a clinical psychologist, author, professional speaker, and national radio and television host.
- ♥ **SCHOOL OF LOVE DATE NIGHT**
SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025 IN WESTPORT
Come ask your questions about marriage to a panel of experts. Bring your non-Catholic friends! More info [HERE](#).
- ♥ **CALLED TO LOVE AGAIN DIVORCE SUPPORT MINISTRY**
FORGIVENESS PRESENTATION: MARCH 29, 2025 ASCENSION
More info and register [HERE](#).
SUPPORT GROUP: More info email info@thecall2love.com
- ♥ **FORGIVENESS INSTITUTE KC**
ON-DEMAND COURSES. More info [HERE](#).
- ♥ **WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND**
KANSAS CITY, KS MARCH 28-30, 2025
More information and register [HERE](#).
- ♥ **BENEDICTINE COLLEGE CENTER FOR FAMILY LIFE**
SYMPOSIUM ON MARRIAGE & FAMILY: MARCH 21ST-22ND
The theme is “Marriage on the Peripheries”. Register [HERE](#)!
FAMILY WEEK: MAY 25-30, 2025
World-class speakers on marriage, formation for the kids, amazing time for fellowship and practical take-home strategies to better live family life. More info [HERE](#).
- ♥ **50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**
June 1, 2025. To request an invitation, click [HERE](#).

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

