

**Natural Family Planning Week
July 22 –28, 2007**

Last November the Catholic Bishops of the United States issued a Pastoral Statement entitled *Married Love and the Gift of Life* (<http://www.usccb.org/laity/marriage/MarriedLove.pdf>) This booklet, in question and answer format, addresses the intimate and essential link between the way in which married couples welcome each other into their lives each day and the way in which they welcome children. Essential to married love is the gift of hospitality.

Today's scripture speak to this gift of welcome. First, there is the welcome of Jesus by Martha and Mary. The former is very concerned with details and may be seen as the typical pragmatic American; the latter, giving her full attention to the Lord on His visit. Mary puts aside things to concentrate on the person, in this case the Person of Jesus. Essential to the Lord's praise of Mary's priorities is this focus on the deeper nature of hospitality and welcome.

In Genesis 18 Abraham graciously hosts the stranger and finds that a gift is given, one for which he long had prayed, to the point of almost losing hope...the precious blessing of a child. The visitor announced as he was about to leave that within a year a great blessing would be granted them: Sarah would be with child. In the days of Abraham and Sarah, seeing children as a blessing was so simple. Culture and faith supported this as obvious. However, in our own age, the responsibilities of bearing and raising children, true to be sure, have overwhelmed talk of blessing. Even beyond this, as we reflect on the marriage of man and woman, in our culture there is rarely talk of marital love beyond a private matter between individuals. One might say that today marriage is what each couple wants of it. Devoid of openness to God's plan, unwittingly selfishness can creep in and before you know, problems. The great gift of marriage becomes not a blessed occasion for hospitality (of spouses for each other and together for children) but for a concentration of one's needs and whether these needs are being met.

Today begins the annual celebration of "Natural Family Planning Week." The Pastoral statement of the Bishops rightfully explains the gift of natural Family Planning and its blessings as well as its morally sound use within marriage. NFP is a natural means to enhance the possibility of conceiving a child as well as, with the proper intention, spacing children. Yet it is a gift largely not known or, even worse, misunderstood by the average couple. This would be a great week to get more information. Rather than attempt to explain, allow me to mention the benefits of NFP. These quotes of actual couples who have discovered the blessings are excerpts from the pastoral statement, *Married Love and the Gift of Life*. One couple states:

"(Natural Family Planning) has become more that a totally safe, healthy, and reliable method of birth regulation to us. The essential qualities of self-restraint, self-discipline, mutual respect, and shared responsibility carry over to all facets of our marriage, making our relationship more intimate." (Faithful to Each Other Forever,44)

Another speaks of the two essential elements of true hospitality: communication and commitment: *"NFP does require communication and commitment, but isn't that what marriage is all about? We have gained so much by using NFP and have lost nothing."* (Natural Family Planning Blessed our Marriage, 18)

Couples who practice NFP have also found that it leads them to show greater attentiveness to and respect for each other *"NFP has*

helped me mature, though I have a long way to go... It has called me to cherish my wife rather than simply desire her." (Faithful to Each Other Forever, 45-46)

Finally, the unselfish nature of the one who welcomes, seen in today's readings in Abraham and in Mary and Martha is at the core of those who practice NFP. One spouse said: *"NFP mad our union different, more of a total giving... Because we're open to life, we're giving everything."* (Natural Family Planning Blessed our Marriage, 64)

This day we pray that married couples will seek to be men and women who welcome Christ into our lives as did Abraham and Mary and Martha. We also give thanks for married couples who show this unselfish welcome in their love of spouse and openness to children.

Let us pray for teachers of Natural Family Planning, that Christ the teacher will work through them to touch the minds and hearts of the couples they work with.

Choose Life ☺

Speaking to a Los Angeles rally protesting the threatened passage of an assisted suicide bill by the California legislature, Rabbi Louis Feldman asserted that the victims of physician-assisted suicide will be "the poor and disabled, ill-insured, vulnerable and lonely people...We must remember that the road to Auschwitz was paved with a euthanasia program. Once you negate the inviolability of human life, anything is possible." (The Southern Cross, 4/12/07)

May the Holy Spirit inspire in each of us the courage to defend the right to life in whatever situation we find ourselves.

The following items are needed to help replenish the pantry for our St. Jerome's Café: heavy duty/foam lunch plates (9"), 18 oz iced



tea cups, spaghetti sauce in jars, parmesan cheese, black pepper, small containers fruit juice, large bottles fruit juice.

SUMMERTIME REMINDER The St. Jerome's Café operates year-round.

We need temporary servers to help staff the café during the summer vacation months. If you can help once or twice or more, please sign up at the Outreach Table. If you are interested in joining a permanent Café Team (once every five weeks) please let us know! We also need bagged lunches in the summertime!

Gabriel Network

The Gabriel Network is Growing! We are looking for men and women who week to live their faith through service to women and families facing unexpected pregnancies. Those with interest, skills or experience related to volunteer management, social work and development are strongly encouraged to inquire about current openings. You, or someone you know, can submit your resume via email to office@gabrielnetwork.org, via fax to 301/262-5389 or via mail to P O Box 2116 Bowie, MD 20718-2116.



During the summer months our parish expenses still continue for our parish repairs and maintenance. Regular contributions are needed in order to meet these obligations. For those parishioners who go on vacation this summer, may you return to us refreshed, relaxed and renewed. May God bless you and keep you safe

The kingdom of heaven is at hand...heal the sick."

Matthew 10:7

Healing Mass

Sunday, August 5th at 4:00 p.m. St. Jerome's Church

Father Jim Stack, Celebrant

Levels of Healing – Physical, Spiritual, Emotional, Psychological, Relational. In addition to the regular Sunday Liturgy, there will be laying on of hands and anointing after Communion.

"...only say the word and I shall be healed."

I have made the statement over the years that I will be available after Mass for anyone who would like to be prayed over for inner healing or prayer of any type. I have asked that you call on me if you need God's healing presence in your life. As the Mass takes place at St. Jerome's, I will need the support of your prayers so the Holy Spirit will work through my hands and bring His healing graces to us all. –Father Jim

Anointing the Sick

Please remember anyone who is in need of the Anointing of the Sick should not hesitate to contact the Rectory. It is recommended that you come in for this sacrament prior to hospital admission. The hospital chaplain may not always be able to anoint you prior to surgery. This sacrament is meant to strengthen the members of the church and to find the deeper meaning in the sufferings and pain that comes to all in this life. "The most beautiful moment in a priest's life is in the administering of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick."

ST. JEROME'S SCHOOL NEWS

REMINDER: School accounts must be kept current in order for us to maintain our budget! Tuition accounts are due on the first of each month and payable in the Rectory office (across the street from the school).

(NOTE: Letters have been sent to all families who have registered for the 2007-2008 school year. If you have not received your letter, please call the Rectory Office weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.)

ACTIVITIES FOR THE SUMMER

Summer Program is in full swing! A great way for your children to keep safe and have fun during the crazy days of summer!

There are some openings in the school for the 2007-2008 school year. Call 301-277-4568 for details. The beginning of the new school year is Tuesday, September 4th.

Child Protection in the Archdiocese of Washington

Child protection is a priority of the Archdiocese of Washington, which has the most comprehensive child protection policies in the nation. This policy calls for prevention, quick response, and pastoral care. **All employees and volunteers who have substantial contact with children must attend child protection workshops and undergo a criminal background check, and those who suspect child abuse must report it to the authorities.** The policy (in English and Spanish), workshop schedules and reporting, fingerprinting and other information are available online at www.adw.org. (click on "Protecting Our Children"), and from your parish office and parish school principal. Anyone who has experienced harm from a person working or volunteering for a Church entity is encouraged to report this to the authorities and to contact the Archdiocesan Director of Child Protection Services, Ms. Marcia Zvara, 301-853-5328, so we may provide assistance.



Our prayers of sympathy are extended to the family and friends of our Pastor Emeritus, **Rev. Msgr. Joseph L. Teletchea** who was called home to God. The following is taken from our History of St. Jerome's Church... "On January 5, 1975, Msgr. Joseph L. Teletchea became the 15th pastor of St. Jerome's. Monsignor was born in Watertown, Massachusetts on September 15, 1915. He attended St. Dominic's Academy in Waverly, Mass, and St. Mary's High School in Waltham. He earned a B.A. at Boston College and then undertook seminary training at St. Mary's in Baltimore. He was ordained on June 3, 1944 by Bishop Thomas M. O'Leary of Springfield Mass. At that time Washington was part of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and because of the proposed separation of Washington from Baltimore which took place in 1944, Father Teletchea was the only member of his class ordained for the Archdiocese of Washington. His first assignment was at Nativity Parish and then at St. Patrick's, both in Washington. He was named founding pastor of St. Phillip's, Camp Springs in July 1957. In 1971 he was honored for his accomplishment in helping to develop this parish into a thriving suburban church by being elevated to a Prelate of Honor with the title of Rev. Monsignor.

Msgr. Teletchea came to St. Jerome's with a song in his heart and on his lips. At the dual reception as a farewell to Msgr Gillen and welcome to the new Pastor, Msgr Teletchea did not have to be asked more than once to give some musical entertainment to the gathering. He sang popular tunes in his clear tenor voice including some favorite Irish Ballads. ...Msgr Teletchea fills the Church with beautiful music in High Masses he sings just as Father Russell did (St. Jerome's first resident pastor) in the original small church.

Msgr Teletchea became actively involved by serving as Moderator for the Ladies of Charity, the St. Vincent DePaul Society and Our Lady's Sodality. He affectionately refers to the Sodalists as "my girls" and rarely misses one of their monthly meetings where he gives encouraging talks and has conducted question and answer sessions on matters of their faith and its application to problems in their daily lives. He always leads the singing at their Christmas Parties and May Communion Breakfasts. He is very effective in personal counseling and has eased many a pressing problem of a troubled parishioner. He has had many marriages sanctified in the church...

Soon after his arrival, Msgr. Teletchea was one of the leaders in establishing Friendship Arms, a subsidized apartment complex in Hyattsville for senior citizens which was sponsored by five community Churches."

Monsignor served St. Jerome's until he retired on March 19, 1990 when Cardinal Hickey made him our Pastor Emeritus.

Many of the members of St. Jerome's Parish Family can share stories of the good times with Monsignor. Even after he retired, he faithfully visited those on his Communion Call list until his health required him to move to Cardinal O'Boyle's residence for the priests. He was mentor to many young priests and friend to all. Surely Father (Mean) Green, Father Matt, Father Dooley and many others will be at heaven's gate to greet him and say...well done, good and faithful servant. May he now rest in peace in the company of the saints and join the heavenly choir of angels. (bet there will be some Irish laughter and tunes galore!)

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