

ST. MARY'S CHURCH



Church, Business Offices, Meeting Rooms and Rectory

14833 Kutztown Road • Kutztown, PA 19530

www.StMarysKutztown.com

www.facebook.com/stmaryskutztown

Phone: (610) 683-7443 • Fax: (610) 683-7625

Email: StMarysKtown@ptd.net

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Pastor	Rev. Msgr. Walter T. Scheaffer
Permanent Deacon	Dcn. James Russo
Pastoral Assistant	Sr. Marie Clark, MSC
Coordinator of Religious Education	Mrs. Ann Pergosky
Coordinator of R.C.I.C.	Mrs. Carol Bogansky
Coordinator of Home-Based Religious Education	Mrs. Ann Pergosky
Director of Music Ministry	Mrs. Anne Sitarik
Parish Secretary	Mrs. Anne Sitarik

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Baptismal Preparation	Mrs. Ann Pergosky
Building Committee	Msgr. Scheaffer
Faith Justice Committee	Mrs. Barbe Fogarty
Finance Committee	Msgr. Scheaffer
Ladies Auxiliary	Mrs. Jane Bennett
Liturgy Committee	Msgr. Scheaffer
Men of St. Mary's	Mr. Tom Cengeri
Pastoral Council	Msgr. Scheaffer
Pro-Life Committee	Mr. John Tucker, O.P.
R.C.I.A	Msgr. Scheaffer
Scripture Study	Msgr. Scheaffer
Small Faith Sharing Groups	Mrs. Dottie Boyle

DIOCESAN INFORMATION

Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator:	Wendy S. Krisak Direct Telephone: (800) 791-9209
Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator:	Sister Meg Cole, S.S.J., M.S., LMFT, Telephone (610) 332-0442 xt. 19

**What you hear...
proclaim**



from the housetops.

LITURGIES

Sunday	9:00, 11:00 AM
Saturday Vigil	4:30 PM
Daily Masses	8:15 AM

ADORATION

First Friday of the Month, 2PM-4PM
Third Wednesday of the Month, 7-8 PM

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM - Third Sunday of the month at 11AM Liturgy, except during Lent. Baptismal Prep Class required.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION - Saturday, 4:05 to 4:25 PM, before Masses, or by appointment.

SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK - Call the Rectory to make arrangements.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY - Contact the Rectory one year in advance. Couples must attend the Marriage Preparation Program or Engaged Encounter.

CERTIFICATES - Parishioners in full Communion with the Catholic Church may submit requests to receive sponsorship certificates (for the Rites of Baptism and Confirmation). Please allow two weeks to process requests. One is required:

- to attend Mass regularly.
- to have celebrated the Sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation.
- Married individuals should be validly married in the Catholic Church.

HOMEBOUND - Call the Rectory to arrange visitations, made once a month by a Priest and at other times by a Eucharistic Minister.

HOSPITALIZED - Call the Rectory to notify of someone in the hospital so we can pray for and possibly visit him or her. Each hospital in our Diocesan boundaries is either covered by a local parish or has a priest on staff at the hospital.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP - Welcome to St. Mary's Parish. Please register for Parish membership by calling the Business office. Please inform us if you are moving.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - Please call the business office for more information:

Center-based

- Levels Pre-K to 5 meet every week, Sunday mornings.
- Jr. High and Sr. High meet every second week, Sunday evenings.

Home-based

- Families share faith at home and come together several times a year.

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, June 25, 2017

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, June 25, 2017

Mon	06-26	8:15a	Celeste Keller
Tue	06-27	8:15a	Thomas Volkmann
Wed	06-28	8:15a	Mr and Mrs Labaze
Thu	06-29	8:15a	Souls in Purgatory
Fri	06-30	8:15a	Betty Schlegel
Sat	07-01	4:30p	Michael Rhoads
Sun	07-02	9:00a	Donald Sheetz
		11:00a	For the Parish

READING and CELEBRATIONS for the WEEK

Mon	06-26	Gn 12:1-9; Mt 7:1-5
Tue	06-27	Gn 13:2, 5-18; Mt 7:6, 12-14
Wed	06-28	Gn 15:1-12, 17-18; Mt 7:15-20
Thu	06-29	Ac 12:1-11; 2 Tm 4:6-8, 17-18; Mt 16:13-19
Fri	06-30	Gn 17:1, 9-10, 15-22; Mt 8:1-4
Sat	07-01	Gn 18:1-15; Mt 8:5-17
Sun	07-02	2 Kgs 4:8-11, 14-16a; Rom 6:3-4, 8-11; Mt 10:37-42

Collection Info from	Income	Expenses
Regular Collection	4,147.00	7,050.00
Building Fund	1,500.00	
Capital Campaign	179.00	
Other Regular Income	80.00	
Parish Partnership	59.00	
Holy Father-Peter's Pence	1,168.75	

To sponsor altar flowers in memory of a loved one call the parish office.

Please Pray for the Sick, and their loved ones:

Mary Sue Arnold	Jim Fry	Barry & Sharon
Sylvia Austermilller	Sue Fry	Miller
Barbara Bellus	Eric Lee George	Elaine O. Miller
Mary Beth Benedict	Sandra George	Nikolette Nolte
Betty Bennett	Garrett Goebel	Jeff Onopa
Thomas Bennett	Jim Goebel	Dorothy Opilla
Alayna Biltcliff	Ken Gorski	Joanne O'Connell
Sande Blankenbiller	Jacqueline Hartz	Kathleen Parker
Kayla Brown	Linda Haurus	Norma Roche
June Bruno	Philip J. Haurus	Dawn Rosales
Ed Caffrey	Hayduk, Hannah	Nina Hertzog Rundle
Nadia Cahill	Walter Heller	Richard Rusconi
Meaghan Clark	Kathy Henry	Mary Rutkosky
Frank Daddona	Jane Hughes	Dannielle Sands
Kolby Jos. Doerr	Joan Hullinger	Karen Schinski
Annabeth Rose Ebert	Allison Marie Innella	Rev. James Schlegel
Dave Ebling	Lillian Karch	Gregory Schnabl
Floyd Falcone	Ramona Kemp	Janice Schnabl
Helen Falcone	Robert Klucharich	Mark Sidler
Patricia Farabaugh	Henry Kryeski	Faye Smith
Orchid Fajardo	Christopher Lengner	William Stadalnik
Jeannette Fayewicz	Edward & Rosemary	Amy Turko
Niki Ferrizzi	Law	Paul Vasko
Kathleen Fink	Julie Lindsey	Randall Vresko
Ruth Fitterling	Gloria Maturi	Palma Wawrzak
Chloe Flowers	Joceline Maldonado	Susan Wechezak
Eleanor Fry	Loretta Montagner	

To add someone to the prayer list or to update the prayer list, please contact the parish office, stmarysec@ptd.net

THIS WEEK		NEXT WEEK
MUSIC MINISTRY		
4:30	Gralinski, Jim Casey, Peggy	Skoronski, Nathan Lazar, Anne
9:00	Sitarik, Anne Cebenکو, Steve	Talarico, Tim Cebenکو, Steve
Youth	Spanier, Julia	t.b.a.
11:00	Sitarik, Anne Lazar, Anne	Pirnot, Tom Talarico, Tim
EXTRAORDINARY EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS		
4:30	Arnold, Ellen Arnold, Vince Bennett, Jane Osenbach, Carol Zawaly, Joe Zawaly, Sue	Arentz, Bill Arentz, Stephanie Klopp, Virgie Otruba, Pam Shurilla, Donna Stadalnik, Arlene
9:00	Cengeri, Tom Klopp, Daryl Phillips, Rita Quinn, John Sedlack, Tom Zawaly, Patty	Bucci, Nancy Crossley, Karin Dunkle, Kim Sanchez, Michael Spanier, Amelia Spevak, Joe
11:00	Neumann, Sue Pirnot, Ann Sitarik, Tim Thomas, Dan Wanner, Theresa ?	Hosterman, Ed Marakovits, Hannah Pangrazi, Dana Pangrazi, Marco Serino, Jayne Thomas, Dan
LECTOR MINISTRY		
4:30	c-Osenbach, Anne I-Shidisky, Joseph	c-Zawaly, Patty I-Hadnagy, Muriel
9:00	c-Pettit, Bill I-Kaskey, Richard	c-Quinn, John I-Sanchez, Linda
11:00	c-Brooks, Michael I-Kopchick, Karen	c-Fullington, Katrina I-Thomas, Cathy
ALTAR SERVER		
4:30	Beals, Juliet Stitzel, Amaris Roth, Owen	Skoronski, Benjamin Skoronski, John Skoronski, Joseph
9:00	Cebenکو, Sophie Cebenکو, Steve DelRio, Michael	Costello, Ann Neeka Costello, Robert Sedlack, Luke
11:00	Fortna, Jacob Gow, William ?	Fullington, Jesse Gow, William ?
GREETERS		
4:30	Boyle Family	?
9:00	Kokinda Family	Coyle Family
11:00	Marakovits Family	Fullington Family
9:00A-CHILDREN'S LITUGY of the WORD		
Leader	Moore, Christine	Phillips, Rita
Reader	Costello, Ann Neeka	Phillips, Makala
ROSARY LEADER - SATURDAY		
4:05	Eshbach, Valetta	Skoronski, Wendy

EVENTS THIS WEEK

Sun 06.25 2nd Collection-Parish Partnership
 Children's Liturgy of the Word, 9a
 Mon 06.26 Memorial Mass for Jackie Jack, 10a
 Tue 06.27 Men's Spirituality, 7p
 Sat 07.01 Pray the Rosary, Pray the Rosary, 4:05p
 2nd Collection - Mission Co-operative

NEXT WEEK

Sun 07.02 Children's Liturgy of the Word, 9a
 2nd Collection - Mission Co-operative
 Tue 07.04 Independence Day, daily Mass at 8:15a
 Wed 07.05 Baptism Workshop, 7p
 Thu 07.06 Choir practice, 7p
 Fri 07.07 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 2-4p
 Sat 07.08 Pray the Rosary, 4:05p
 2nd Collection-Capital Improvements

EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINE: submit info for the July 9 bulletin by 12n June 28; full page info is due the 27th. Submit all other info by 12n of the prior Monday.

PROJECT HOPE June assistance contact: Louise Olsheski: 610-682-0672. Learn more/join HOPE: LOLCSW@ptd.net



Kids discover that God made them—and for a purpose! Kids participate and experience one-of-a-kind Bible adventures, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building games, make and devour yummy treats, and test out Sciencey-Fun Gizmos they'll take home and play with. Plus, kids will learn to look for evidence of God all around them through something called God Sightings.

Registration info in the Gathering Area * Friends Welcome!



BAPTISMAL WORKSHOP: The next Baptism Workshop is scheduled for 7p, Jul. 5 and 12 at the Parish Center. Please call Ann by June 30 to sign up: 610-683-6454.



100TH ANNIVERSARY OF FATIMA: On July 13th our Parish will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the apparitions of our Lady of Fatima as part of the Berks County celebration of the Apparitions. We will begin our devotion at 6:00p at the Grotto of Mary on our property with a Mary hymn and the Rosary. After the Rosary we will process into church for a Holy Hour and Benediction. During the Holy Hour there will be the Litany of Mary and a reflection on the feasts of our Lady during the month of July and the message of Our Lady at Fatima.

A Word About: Mission Co-operative Collection

We look forward to a visit at all Masses next week, July 01 and 02 from Fr. Joseph Nyanti, SMA who will share his missionary experiences with us. The second collection will support the good works of the Society of African Missions.

Thank you for your support of kind support of the SMA



REMINDER: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REGISTRATION was due Friday June 16. If full payment is a concern for you, return the registration form and contact Ann in

Religious Education who will work with you: 610-683-6454

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL As of today, our parishioners have raised \$53,526.00 from 141 parishioners representing 16.57% of our total number of registered families in our parish. We need the support of all of our parish families to reach our goal. If you have not made your pledge of support, you may return your pledge form to the parish office or make your gift online. We need the support of all of our parish families to reach our goal. Remember, every gift counts, no gift is too small. If you have any questions or would like to make a gift, please call the parish office or visit the Appeal website at FaithHopeCharityGives.org

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: A prayer of St. Teresa of Avila addresses the challenge our scriptures present today. Jesus told the twelve apostles that they should expect misunderstanding and rejection and in those circumstances they may doubt that God is faithful and trustworthy and to expect suffering and death. When we feel abandoned by God and have doubts about God's caring for us we need to respond with courage and faith imitating Christ in his obedience to the Father if we are to be restored to hope and the share in Christ's peace and life. St. Teresa prayed, "Let nothing disturb you; let nothing frighten you; all things are passing away. God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices."

Please Pray for these persons serving our Nation.

Keenan Albright	Timothy DeVall	James Knight
Kyle Albright	Anthony DiPietro	Nick Marakovits
Michael Barron	Charles Douglass	Melissa Marks
Andrew Barthol	Timothy DuShaw	Laura Miller
Frank M. Bieda	Keith Essig	Heather O'Donnell
John Boyer	Michael Allen Haak	James Quinn
Matthew Boyer	Diane Henry	Phillip Talarico
Jonathan Cardé	Joshua Joseph	Steve Ziegler
Eric Cunningham	Dan King	

Call the office to add/remove names from this list



Celebrating a Wedding Anniversary?
Recently Married? Your love as husband and wife is a gift to one another as well as from God. Attend a **WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER** weekend to make the most of this precious gift. 1-732-904-9636 or www.aweekendforyourmarriage.org

A Word About: Peter's Pence Collection

Thank you for your generous support in last week's Peter's Pence Collection! As a parish, we collected \$1,168.75. Our contributions will be combined with those from our brothers and sisters around the world to help Pope Francis provide essential relief to people in need. If you missed the collection, it is not too late to give, visit www.usccb.org/nationalcollections, and click on the "How to Give" link on the left.

Thank you for your support of last week's Collection



RELAY FOR LIFE-ST. MARY'S TEAM. Thank you to thank all those who supported the St. Mary's Relay for Life Team for The American Cancer Society. This year's Relay teams raised over \$152,000 so far. We have till the end of August to reach our goal of \$162,000. To make a donation you can send a check made payable to



"The American Cancer Society" and to St. Mary's Team Captain, Tom Cengeri: 321 Crystal Ridge Rd, Kutztown, PA 19530. Call Tom with any questions: 610-20 7-5831; everyone knows someone who has been affected by Cancer. Thank you again for your support.

We welcome into the family of God, and the family of St. Mary's, who was baptized last Sunday,

James Joseph Barrett,

May we all share our faith with him.



ATTN CRAFTSMEN/WOMEN: The annual Holiday Bazaar, held the first Saturday in November, is an excellent opportunity for parishioners to showcase their talents. Consider making handcrafted items to be sold at the Ladies Auxiliary craft table. Any handcrafted items - made from fabric, wood, paper, yarn, etc. will be accepted for the table. Small items, using materials you may already have in your stash, will be a wonderful addition to the Ladies Auxiliary craft table.

Crafty persons (adult or teen) are needed to help sort the donations before the bazaar and helping sell them the day of the bazaar. Items can be brought to the Religious Ed Center the week before the bazaar. Questions? Contact Frances Larash: 610-683-3675

LOGOS and LAGERS: 7-8:30p, July 6, St Mary's, Hamburg. Join Berks County Young Adults for this new Bible Study group that will meet the 1st Thursday the month to discuss the Mass readings for the upcoming weekend, followed by food and fellowship at a local establishment. All young adults are welcome! Summer schedule: Jul. 6 -St. Mary's, Hamburg; Aug. 3-St. Ignatius Loyola Parish, Reading. For info: Alexa Doncsecz: adoncsecz@allentowndiocese.org

MARRIED SAINTS and HOLY COUPLES: 7-9p, July 11, at Monocacy Manor/St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem. Whether you are married or single, you are invited to the Fr. Thomas Kevin Kraft, O.P. presentation of several of the many holy couples which he has studied over the last 15 years. He will provide an opportunity for reflection and prayer asking their intercession in our lives. Come join us to become familiar with these powerful intercessors! To assist with our planning for this FREE Event register: www.allentowndiocese.org/aff. Questions? Please call 610-289-8900 ext. 21 or email: adultformation@allentowndiocese.org

ARE YOU WONDERING what to do with your life? Have you asked the question, "What am I looking for?" If so, you're in good company because people like Saint Andrew and Saint John the Evangelist had these questions and found the answers in a man who was baptized by John the Baptist and called them to be "fishers of men." We invite you to join the seminarians of the Diocese of Allentown and Sisters from women's religious communities at the 2017 Quo Vadis or Fiat Days at DeSales University from Sunday, July 16 to Thursday, July 20. Quo Vadis and Fiat Days are open to young men and women from ages 14 to 18 (including the newly graduated). This five-day event includes time for personal and group prayer, Mass and other Catholic devotions, talks by priests and religious

sisters, sports and other activities. Registration is now open; visit www.allentowndiocese.org and click on the vocations info link. Spaces are limited so act fast.

Registrations must be received by Friday, June 30

RETROUVAILLE: Rediscover the Love in Your Marriage! Lost, alone or bored in your marriage? Frustrated or angry with your spouse, constantly fighting or do you simply shut down? Have you thought about separation or divorce? Retrouvaille may be the LIFELINE that you need! Retrouvaille is weekend and six post-sessions that follow. The next program begins the weekend of August 11-13 at the Family Life Center in Malvern. For more info/ to register www.HelpOurMarriage.com or 1-800-470-2230. All inquiries are kept strictly confidential.

NUN RUN 5K and 1M Fun Walk 2017: Sept. 16, Sacred Heart Villa, 51 Seminary Ave., Reading. Bring family and friends to benefit the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart! Register as an individual or a team online at www.mscreading.org by Aug. 25 to guarantee a dry fit NUN RUN t-shirt! Registration is \$25 before race day; \$30 on race day. Email Carrie: cwhitmoyer@mscreading.org with questions, to register or to become an event sponsor! Enjoy exercise, music and fun for a good cause!



SAVE the DATE-DIOCESAN FAMILY FESTIVAL: Sept. 24 at the SteelStacks in Bethlehem. Past events have attracted well over two thousand and all have had a thoroughly enjoyable day.

WORD of LIFE: "If someone we know has received a prenatal diagnosis, let us ask the Holy Spirit to work through us. May the families of these little children be strengthened and comforted by our affirmation of the truth that their child's life—however long or short—is worth living." Supporting Families Who Receive a Prenatal Diagnosis USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

PROLIFE: The abortion ruined my self-esteem. I do not stand up for my beliefs and rely heavily upon what others think I should do and or be, and especially if they are well-educated, I feel they are more knowledgeable and are able to make better decisions than myself. -- Linda @ Rachel's Vineyard.org

REFLECTION... by Rev. Leonard N. Peterson

Anyone who witnessed it that bright October day will never forget it. I refer to the first homily preached to the world by the newly-elected Pope John Paul II, now a saint, at his Mass of inauguration. New to the white robes, the vigorous young pope from Poland began dramatically by declaring "Be not afraid!" That phrase would become the hallmark of his pontificate, destined to be one of the longest in history.

Indeed, the year 1978 had been one of continuous sorrow for the Catholic world. Pope Paul VI had died in August after a long illness. Then came the smiling John Paul I on the scene, but his hopeful reign lasted only 33 days.

So, to hear "Be not afraid!" strongly pronounced and vigorously underscored by a new pope's gesture of holding out his staff to the crowd somewhat like a baton was exciting and uplifting. It was new day! Hope had a helper!

That whole event came to mind when I reflected on today's Gospel scene, particularly at Our Lord's exhortation to his nervous Twelve, about to go on their first missions. Like a good sports coach, Jesus huddled with them and boldly said "Fear no one!" What He undoubtedly gave those men was something called "confidence." Confidence in Him. Confidence in the message they were going to deliver. May I ask, "Are you confident in your mission? In your Catholic faith?"

In this context, I wonder if the whole Church might benefit from celebrating what I might call a "Confidence Sunday." It seems like we all would. My idea is not so fanciful as to be ridiculous. After all, we already have a Divine Mercy Sunday, a Religious Vocation Sunday, a Mission Sunday, and a Respect Life Sunday. Each of those calls for a definite trust in God. My proposal would simply make confidence in Him our direct focus. Today's Readings would be the perfect ones for that day's Mass.

Whether or not such a thing ever happens, we know that confidence includes not only a certainty about God, but also a belief in oneself as His agents. Granted, we are not flawless creatures. We humbly acknowledge such every time we gather for Mass. What do we begin with, but "I confess...that I have greatly sinned?"

But we also have to remember that we are a redeemed people. Our Creed proclaims that, does it not? Join that with power from Christ and we can join Jeremiah to say "Praise the Lord!"

Of course, we always have to be careful that we never give the credit for our blessings to the wrong source. The story is told of a carpenter who was nailing shingles on the roof of a house. He lost his footing and started to slide off. As he was sliding he began praying, "Lord, oh Lord, help me!" Still, he kept sliding. Again the man prayed, "Lord, oh Lord, help me!" He kept sliding until he got to the edge of the roof and a nail sticking up caught hold of his pants. After he came to a stop he said, "Never mind, Lord. The nail's got hold of me now."

SUPPORTING FAMILIES WHO RECEIVE A PRENATAL DIAGNOSIS

Pregnancy should be a time of joyful expectation. But what if the baby is believed to have a disability or a life-threatening health condition? Prenatal screening is quickly becoming a routine part of obstetric care, in many cases using a simple blood test to screen for such conditions. Because of the growing frequency of this testing, parents are increasingly told by their doctors of potential problems with their pregnancies and are encouraged to abort, or to have additional tests done to determine a diagnosis.

It is worth noting that a screening is meant to detect the *potential* for a disability or illness and is not a diagnostic. A diagnosis requires further testing, and there is evidence that screenings are not as accurate as many believe them to be. Additionally, even with further testing, doctors sometimes misdiagnose a baby who is then born completely healthy. Often, however, the diagnosis is accurate.

For parents, the news of a prenatal diagnosis is crushing. They may not know what to do or where to turn. They may anguish over what medical decisions would be best for their baby and wonder how to approach the rest of the pregnancy. All too often, they are advised to physicians, and sometimes by family, to schedule an abortion. Tragically, many parents are told that it would be best for everyone, including their baby, to have the abortion—even late in the pregnancy. Many feel great pressure to do so and may fear continuing their pregnancy.

In some cases, the diagnosis may indicate that the baby is expected to die before or shortly after birth. As parents face the heart-rending knowledge that their *hello* may also be their *goodbye*, those around them may wonder how to provide the best support.

"I felt numb from hearing the diagnosis, and my reaction was to do anything to get out of this pain." — Christina¹

A model of care has been developed specifically for families whose infant is likely to die before or after birth. Often called "perinatal hospice," it's a way of caring for both the baby and the baby's family before, as well as after, birth.² The word *perinatal* refers to the time before and after birth; hospice is specialized care for anyone diagnosed with a serious illness, most often in the final stages of life. Perinatal hospice is not a place; it's a form of support provided by many hospitals and high risk obstetrical practices, in addition to ordinary maternity care.

It includes specialized prenatal care, help with planning for the baby's delivery, and a focus on the baby's comfort after birth. This comfort care includes components such as attention to feeding, warmth, time with the family, and medical treatments when needed. Perinatal hospice nurtures the baby's life for as long as he or she lives. Depending on the diagnosis, some babies live long enough to be cared for at home the their family—sometimes for months or even years. Perinatal hospice provides a model of care that respects the baby's life from conception through natural death. It also honors the baby's family and provides precious moments together—whether the baby is inside or outside the womb—which can be cherished forever.

For Friends and Family

Suppose you have friends or family who recently received a prenatal diagnosis for their unborn child. You may want to be there for them but don't know how. In an effort to ease the sorrow of their loved ones, some people may be tempted to suggest to the parents that abortion is the answer. However, many parents who carried their children to term say that protecting their baby and honoring his or her natural life, no matter how brief, was profoundly healing.

When parents say "yes" to life for their child, they are saying "yes" to the most loving and healing path for all involved. When God invites us to draw close to him by following his commandments (Jn 14:15), he does so because he wants what is best for us. By saying "yes" to life for their child, which is morally good and right, parents are placing their trust in God and embracing their child and the life their child has been given for as long as it is given.

Remember that both the mother and the father deserve our concern. Some may try to comfort parents with comments such as "God needed another angel" or "You're young; you can have another one." Most parents do not find these comments helpful; they want *this* baby. We can help parents by acknowledging their baby, using his or her name, asking about their hopes and plans for their child's birth, and most of all, by *affirming their exceptional role as the parents they already are*.

If someone we know has received a prenatal diagnosis, let us ask the Holy Spirit to work through us. May the families of these little children be strengthened and comforted by our affirmation of the truth that their child's life—however long or short—is worth living.

"The first weeks after David's diagnosis, never in my wildest dreams did I imagine how wonderful and rewarding this journey would be. Yes, it was painful and sorrowful, but I could not imagine the joy that would also be a part of this. David has left us with so much more. I am so blessed to have lived and experienced this little life." — Christina³

¹ Quoted from *A Gift of Time: Continuing Your Pregnancy When Your Baby's Life Is Expected to Be Brief* by Amy Kuebelbeck and Deborah L. Davis (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011). Used with permission. Name changed for privacy.

² N.J. Hoeldtke, B.C. Calhoun. "Perinatal hospice." *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*. September 2001; 185(3):343–348.

³ Kuebelbeck, Davis. *A Gift of Time: Continuing Your Pregnancy When Your Baby's Life Is Expected to Be Brief*. Used with permission. Names changed for privacy.

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