



Supporting a pastoral commitment to a culture of life in the Archdiocese of Omaha

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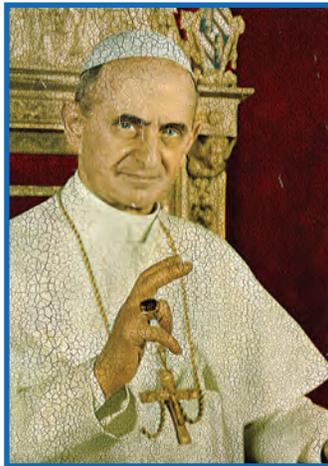
Welcome to the spring issue of the *Connect* newsletter. Since May is the month in which we commemorate our mothers, I think that this is an important time to recognize how the Church is unique in upholding the feminine vocation and the dignity of women. If we turn to Blessed John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, we are reminded that that dignity is intrinsic to human nature by the fact that we are made in the image of God. This is a foundation to Pope Paul VI's most beautiful address to women, which I would like to highlight in this newsletter. Also, I am including an excerpt from an address by Pope Benedict XVI in which he highlights the urgency of promoting a culture of life which, ultimately, safeguards the dignity of women.

So many of the women—both married and single—who we encounter in our practice have had previous healthcare experiences that they feel violated their dignity. These women have undergone little or no diagnostic procedures. Married couples have often been told that they suffer from “unexplained” infertility. They are told that their only hope is *in vitro* fertilization or else they will have no chance of ever becoming pregnant. The women and their spouses who pursue that “only hope” are subjected to degrading clinical procedures which help less than 0.5% of women suffering from infertility. Because of the intrinsic dignity of the human being, “[b]iomedical research too, a field which promises great benefits for humanity, must always reject experimentation, research or applications which disregard the inviolable dignity of the human being, and thus cease to be at the service of people and become instead means which, under the guise of helping people actually harm them.” (EV 89)

Address of Pope Paul VI to Women

Closing of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council
8 December 1965

And now it is to you that we address ourselves, women of all states—girls, wives, mothers and widows, to you also, consecrated virgins and women living alone—you constitute half of the immense human family. As you know, the Church is proud to have glorified and liberated woman, and in the course of the centuries, in diversity of characters, to have brought into relief her basic equality with man. But the hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of woman is being achieved in its fullness, the hour in which woman acquires in the world



never hitherto achieved. That is why, at this moment when the human race is undergoing so deep a transformation, women impregnated with the spirit of the Gospel can do so much to aid mankind in not falling.

You women have always had as your lot the protection of the home, the love of beginnings and an understanding of cradles. You are present in the mystery of a life beginning. You offer consolation in the departure of death. Our technology runs the risk of becoming inhuman. Reconcile men

an influence, an effect and a power

with life and above all, we beseech you, watch carefully



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Chapel of the Holy Family — M-F 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Access *Connect* newsletters online at
www.popepaulvi.com/connect.htm

FertilityCare™ Center of Omaha – (402) 392-0842 or fcco@popepaulvi.com
National Center for Women's Health – (402) 390-6600 or popepaulm@gmail.com
(admin. asst.) tgreen@popepaulvi.com
Center for NaProEthics – (402) 390-0812 or ethics@popepaulvi.com

over the future of our race. Hold back the hand of man who, in a moment of folly, might attempt to destroy human civilization.

Wives, mothers of families, the first educators of the human race in the intimacy of the family circle, pass on to your sons and your daughters the traditions of your fathers at the same time that you prepare them for an unsearchable future. Always remember that by her children a mother belongs to that future which perhaps she will not see.

And you, women living alone, realize what you can accomplish through your dedicated vocation. Society is appealing to you on all sides. Not even families can live without the help of those who have no families. Especially you, consecrated virgins, in a world where egoism and the search for pleasure would become law, be the guardians of purity, unselfishness and piety. Jesus who

has given to conjugal love all its plenitudes, has also exalted the renouncement of human love when this is for the sake of divine love and for the service of all.

Lastly, women in trial, who stand upright at the foot the cross like Mary, you who so often in history have given to men the strength to battle unto the very end and to give witness to the point of martyrdom, aid them now still once more to retain courage in their great undertakings, while at the same time maintaining patience and an esteem for humble beginnings.

Women, you do know how to make truth sweet, tender and accessible; make it your task to bring the spirit of this council into institutions, schools, homes and daily life. Women of the entire universe, whether Christian or non-believing, you to whom life is entrusted at this grave moment in history, it is for you to save the peace of the world. ☩

On the Dignity of Women

Pope Benedict XVI — 10 February 2008

From an Address at Pontifical Council for the Laity conference “Woman and Man, the ‘Humanum’ in Its Entirety”

...There are certain places and cultures where women are discriminated against and undervalued just for the fact that they are women, where recourse is even had to religious arguments and family, social and cultural pressures to support the disparity between the sexes, where there is consumption of acts of violence against women, making them into objects of abuse and exploitation in advertising and in the consumer and entertainment industries. In the face of such grave and persistent phenomena the commitment of Christians appears all the more urgent, so that they become everywhere the promoters of a culture that recognizes the dignity that belongs to women in law and in reality.

God entrusts to women and to men, according to the characteristics that are proper to each, a specific vocation in

the mission of the Church and in the world. I think here of the family, community of love, open to life, fundamental cell of society. In it, woman and man, thanks to the gift of maternity and paternity, together play an irreplaceable role in regard to life. From the moment of their conception, children have a right to count on a father and a mother who care for them and accompany them in their growth. The state, for its part, must sustain with adequate social policies all that which promotes the stability of matrimony, the dignity and the responsibility of the husband and wife, their rights and irreplaceable duty to educate their children. Moreover, it is necessary that it be made possible for the woman to cooperate in the building-up of society, appreciating her typical “feminine genius.”

[Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic]

Moreover, man and his life appear to us not only as one of the greatest marvels of creation: for God has granted to man a dignity which is near to divine (Ps 8:5-6).

In every child which is born and in every person who lives or dies we see the image of God's glory.

We celebrate this glory in every human being, a sign of the living God, an icon of Jesus Christ.

— Blessed John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, paragraph 84.

One Last Time

A testimonial by Nancy

I AM 39, AND THIS WILL BE my very first Mother's Day.
I thought this day would never come.

In years past, I would quietly cry on this very special Sunday in May. Seven years of infertility made me wonder if we would ever have a child.

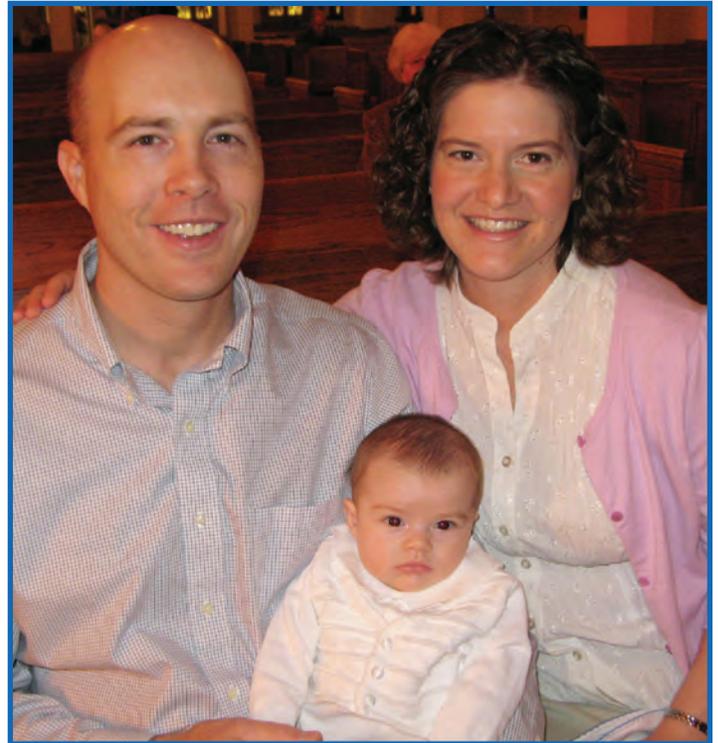
Everyone around me was either a mother to several children or expecting. Family and friends would ask when we would have children. It was difficult to finally tell them that it's not that easy for us.

I went to numerous doctors trying to figure out what was wrong with my body. However, none of the doctors could identify a problem, and they recommended I pursue IVF to have a baby. Feeling defective and discouraged, we consulted with two successful IVF doctors. **The diagnostic workup was painful, and I felt emotionally traumatized by the lack of support and communication we experienced.** The staff at one of the doctor's offices even told me I should quit my job as a pediatric nurse if I was serious about wanting to have a child. I was simply crushed.

During a fall evening in 2010, friends invited us over to watch EWTN's World Over with Raymond Arroyo. Dr. Hilgers was a guest on the show talking about women's health and, specifically, infertility. All the issues that Dr. Hilgers discussed seemed applicable to me; my husband and I were intrigued to learn more about NaproTechnology and the Pope Paul VI Institute.

If not for my husband Chris, I probably wouldn't have gone to Pope Paul VI Institute. I had such bad experiences with previous doctors and diagnostic testing that I didn't think I could go through this process again. Chris begged me to do this one last time. We scheduled an appointment at the Institute to learn more about this innovative approach to optimizing a woman's health, treatment of infertility, as well as the Creighton Model of charting.

After charting for approximately two months, I went to see Dr. Kristina Pakiz at Pope Paul VI Institute. I was so scared remembering my previous experiences. **Dr. Pakiz was warm**



Nancy and Chris holding their son, Paul William

and calm. She made me feel like a person, very much in contrast to the experiences I had with the IVF doctors and their staff. After a thorough assessment, I was diagnosed with severe endometriosis, fallopian tube dysfunction, and hormone imbalances. Dr. Pakiz performed a seven-hour surgery to correct the abnormalities and restore my health.

I remember after the surgery, asking Dr. Pakiz if she thought I would be able to have a baby. She said my chances were very good. The words brought tears to my eyes. For the first time, we had real hope. I have never in the history of my infertility been comforted with such care, warmth, and encouragement.

One year from my first visit to the Institute, I found out that I was expecting. It was unbelievable! With Dr. Pakiz' close supervision, I carried our baby boy full term. We welcomed Paul William on July 22, 2012.



Paul William

This Mother's Day, I will be holding my son and thanking Pope Paul VI Institute for the science and the amazing patient care for women and families. 🙏

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Helping Priests Respond to Medical and Moral Challenges

Address of Pope Paul VI to Women by Pope Paul VI, 1965 | *On the Dignity of Women* by Pope Benedict XVI, 2008
Women Healed with NaProTechnology by Thomas W. Hilgers, MD | *One Last Time* A Testimonial by Nancy

Look down with maternal clemency,
Most Blessed Virgin, upon all your children.

Consider the anxiety of bishops who fear
that their flocks will be tormented
by a terrible storm of evils.

Hear the anguish of so many people,
fathers and mothers of families who
are uncertain about their future
and beset by hardships and cares.

Soothe the minds of those at war and
inspire them with the "thoughts of peace."

Through your intercession, may God, the avenger of injuries,

TURN TO MERCY.

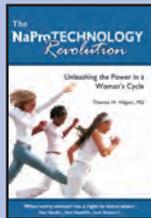
May He give back to nations the tranquility they seek
and bring them to a lasting age of genuine prosperity.

With confidence that the exalted Mother of God
will graciously hear Our humble prayer,

We lovingly impart the apostolic blessing
to you, venerable brethren,
and to the clergy and people
committed to your care.

— Pope Paul VI, *Christi Matri*, September 15, 1966

The NaProTechnology Revolution:
Unleashing the Power in a Woman's Cycle



What every woman has a right to know
about her body...her health ...her future.

A new book (2010) by Dr. Thomas W. Hilgers
to be read by all women. It contains real
women's charts and testimonials to
illustrate the impact that NaProTechnology
can have on their health and their lives.

www.amazon.com

www.unleashingthepower.info

Resources for Your Parish

www.fertilitycare.org — Find CrMS teachers & NPT physicians
Education programs — www.popepaulvi.com/education.htm

MONDAY, OCTOBER 14 – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2013

Love & Life Unlimited Conference

For priests, religious, lay professionals. A
conference to ponder, promote, and proclaim the
Catholic vision of reproductive health care. Topics
include Creighton Model System &
NaProTechnology, *Humanae Vitae*, *Donum Vitae*,
Evangelium Vitae, Theology of the Body, & more!

Conferences

Connect



HELPING PRIESTS RESPOND TO MEDICAL AND MORAL CHALLENGES



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One Last Time... A Testimonial by Nancy

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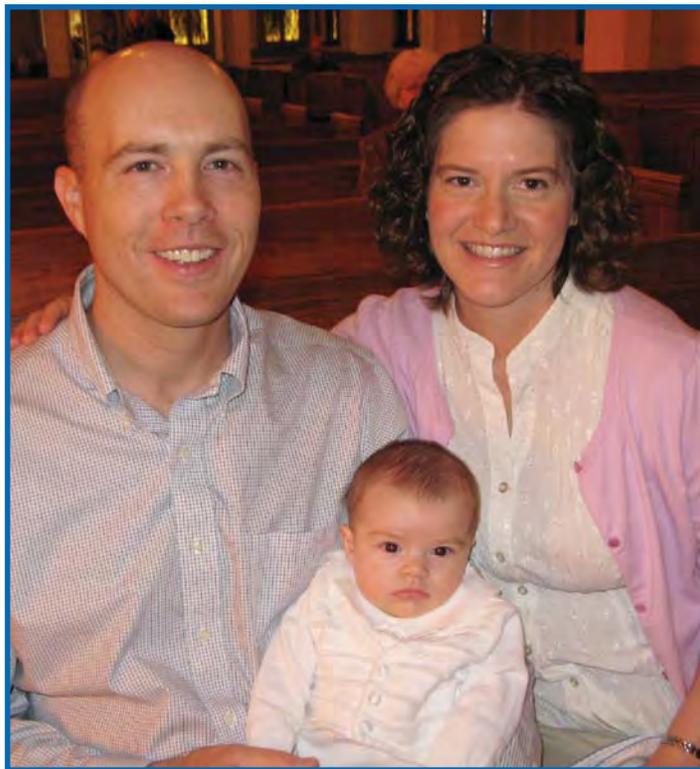
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Nancy and Chris holding their son, Paul William

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Nancy and Paul William



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