

## Created for Joy

Good Morning,

I have the opportunity to share with you about the World Meeting of Families~

This event will be held next September (22-27<sup>th</sup>) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

In preparation for this our Archdiocese has provided information for its members.

But, first a bit of some backstory. During the week of October 8<sup>th</sup> there was a special meeting of Bishops~ an Extraordinary Meeting of Bishops at that. These church leaders met together to discuss how the Worldwide Catholic Church could come together, focus on and show their support of marriage and family life.

The information has been broken down into 10 individual topics.

We have been provided with materials and resources that I will get a chance to share with you throughout these next 10 months.

I begin with some ideas for you to ponder

The church and family.

The church as our family.

The church is only as strong as the families it serves.

Do we see the church as an extension of our family? AND

Do we see our church as the author of our family life?

Believe it or not, the church does see its role in family life as an extension, an example and a true guide.

Beginning in October of 2014 through October 2015, and beyond, the church will be focused on how it might support marriage and family life in the whole church, and throughout the world.

Each month a subject will be focused on to engaged discussion, enrich prayerful reflection, invigorate growth and offer support for our parish families.

November 2014 begins with this subject: 'Created for Joy'

"Who am I?" "Why am I here?" "How should I live?"

It is important to the one that created us to remind us and have us REMEMBER that we were CREATED!!

We are more than an accident of evolution. We are greater than the sum of our biology. God exists. He is good. He loves us. He made us in his image to share in his joy. He takes an active hand in our lives. He sent his only Son to restore our dignity and lead us home to him. (p 15)

We as Christians have a wonderful and unique understanding of our place and our purpose. Our faith gives us answers to these time old questions.

Not to say that because you are a Christian life won't throw you for a loop.

But amid the uncertainty, Christians are people who trust in Jesus Christ. Despite all of those unanswered questions, the Catholic way of hope and joy, love and service grounds itself in an encounter with Jesus. (p 16)

There is a purpose to your efforts. There is a meaning behind the struggle. There is celebration in what may seem ordinary.

But some may argue that the church is so big~ how would it begin to understand "My Family?"

The answer can be found in what the faith is anchored in. God our creator, Jesus his son and the divine works of the Holy Spirit.

Look at it this way:

God became man. In that miracle our divine maker has the deepest understanding of our current condition. God himself did suffer. God himself did mourn. God himself did love and celebrate. He communed with friends. He loved his parents. He felt anger and fear. He knew compassion and betrayal.

We have an amazing opportunity to have a creator that has not been removed from our lives. Christians believe that God is not remote from the human condition. The God whom we trust wants us to flourish. Because of Jesus Christ, Catholics have confidence in God's love for us. (p17)

Love is Our Mission is the focus and theme for the World Meeting of Families next year.

Understand, our church is on this journey with us. Our Catholic faith relies on strong families and marriages. Our faith is grounded in love.

We know how to love because God has first loved us. Love being the focus and mission for families comes directly from our creator. It is not a bunch of flowery language to encourage us to get along. It is a true path to follow. Knowing that you are created for a purpose and that purpose is to love. Spreading this knowledge. Helping the church as a whole find a deeper understanding of this message is the goal. Because in knowing this the strength of family will increase. The bond between creator and created will tighten.

All God desires is to be close to you. He desires for you to know the depths of his love.

There is information available to help further discussion and encourage prayer in your home. A way to bring this mission of love to the ones whom we love the most. Please contact me if you are interested in learning more.

By: Shannon Holthaus