

"The one who perseveres to the end will be saved." Matthew 24:13



Your August 2015 Newsletter

Our Mission:

to provide counseling which is faithful to the teachings, values, and traditions of the Catholic Church.

Our Primary Services:

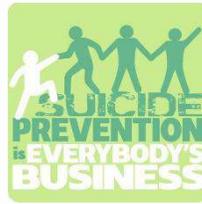
Evaluation and Treatment for mental illness, addictions, and spiritual distress.

Monthly Newsletter Issue #40



Catholic Night with the Houston Dash

Looking for some wholesome fun for your family? Please note that on Monday, August 31st the "Catholic Night with the Houston Dash" is scheduled at BBVA Compass Stadium beginning at 7:30pm. Come out and watch World Cup stars and support Catholic schools at the same time! Catholic Night with the Dash gives you an opportunity to take your families out for an affordable night of fun, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting Knights of Columbus' Texas State Charities! Through a special promotion, tickets are only \$25 and include both your seat and a \$10 food voucher. To take advantage of this promotion, contact Houston Dynamo/Dash service specialist Deepika Desai at 713-276-7574 or at d-desai@houstondynamo.com or for more information please contact Clint Mendonca at mendonc@stthom.edu



Death by Suicide

On Tuesday, September 1st the Family Life Ministries office of the Archdiocese will host a special program called “A Home for the Wounded Heart: A Pastoral Response to Suicide.” You can find out more about this event [here](#). In 1986 rock musician Richard Manuel took his own life after suffering from grief over a close friend’s death by heart attack. For months after the loss Manuel had become depressed and was reportedly heavily using alcohol and drugs. After Manuel’s death, fellow musician and friend Eric Clapton wrote [this song](#) about his own grief over this suicide. In the lyrics Clapton expresses his sadness through turning to the Blessed Mother for consolation. The Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows is September 15th. Our Gratia Plena waiting room displays an image of Our Lady of Sorrows. St. Laurence in Sugar Land offers a [special support group](#) for grieving family members.



Innovations in Reducing Drunk Driving

Labor Day approaches (September 7th), as does football season. Yay! Many people in America like to drink on big holidays and around sporting events like football. That’s fine as long as the drinking is in moderation and nobody gets hurt. However, that doesn’t always happen. Instead, we typically see a huge number of serious alcohol-related catastrophes and crimes, including domestic violence and driving accidents. While drinking for adults is not by itself considered a sin in the Catholic Church, it is a sin to become intoxicated, to break laws, and to harm others. This excellent [Wall Street Journal](#)

[article](#) describes a successful program for drunk driving offenders. There are many effective and proven ways in which people can stop drinking. Counseling is one, and AA is another. People with a drinking problem will sometimes try counseling or AA or other methods when they are “sick and tired of being sick and tired”. Alcoholism is a disease and there is nothing good that comes from feeling shame over it. If we have heart disease, we probably are willing and sometimes eager to go for treatment. When we don't seek treatment for a disease, it becomes worse and may kill us. Take action today.



Gratia Plena Holiday

Our Stafford office will be closed Monday the 7th for Labor Day and Tuesday the 8th for the Feast of the Nativity of Mary. The Church has celebrated Our Blessed Mother's birthday since at least the 6th century. St. Augustine connects Mary's birth with Jesus' saving work. He tells the earth to rejoice and shine forth in the light of her birth: "She is the flower of the field from whom bloomed the precious lily of the valley. Through her birth the nature inherited from our first parents is changed." Here is the opening prayer from Mass on this feast day: "Impart to your servants, we pray, O Lord, the gift of heavenly grace, that the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin may bring deeper peace to those for whom the birth of her Son was the dawning of salvation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever." Happy Birthday Mother!



Passion and Purpose for Marriage

Many married and engaged couples search for programs that can enrich their marriage relationship. [Here is one](#) you might enjoy for a date night out. Saturday, September 12th at 7pm at St. Paul the Apostle in NASA. Tickets are \$25. Music is by George Lower, and the presentation is by Dr. Allen Hunt.

How Do You Get Your Spouse to Heaven?

Here is another marriage enrichment opportunity. On Friday, September 18th Deacon Tom Vicknair will be presenting "How to Get Your Spouse to Heaven!" from 7-9 pm in the Bishop Sheltz Hall at [St. Anthony of Padua in The Woodlands](#). Childcare is available for a fee. Deacon Tom is the co-author of the book "One in the Lord: You 2 Can Have a Great Marriage!"



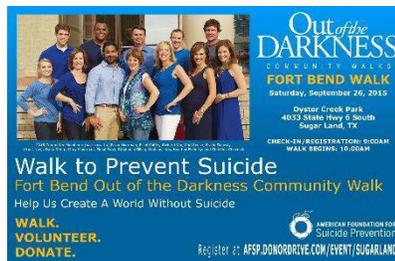
Atrevete Retreat

The Catholic Charismatic Center of Houston is offering a [one-day bilingual retreat](#) for high school teens on Saturday, September 19th. The theme is to highlight stories of young people found in the four gospels. You are never too young to spread the Good News! David Bisono from New York is the guest speaker. The day ends with a Mass for the whole family. Call Maggie at (281) 491-3495 for questions or registration.



Prayer Breakfast for Catholic Professionals

This is the first event of its type, to be held in Katy (TX) September 22nd from 7am-9am. [For more information click here.](#)



Out of the Darkness Walk—Fort Bend County

Gratia Plena has formed a team for the upcoming walk. Our team goal is to raise \$500 for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). When you walk in the Out of the Darkness Walks, you join the effort with hundreds of thousands of people to raise awareness and funds that allow AFSP to invest in new research, create educational programs, advocate for public policy, and support survivors of suicide loss. [Here is the link to our fundraising page.](#) Join our team!

- Walk Date: **09/26/2015**
- Walk Location: **Oyster Creek Park-4033 State Hwy 6 South**
- Check-in/Registration Time: **09/26/2015 at 9:00 am**
- Walk Begins: **10:00 am**



The Leading Presidential Candidates on MISA

It is good news that our front-running presidential candidates are talking about mental illness and substance abuse. We've got to hold all politicians accountable for taking action and not just talking about it. Donald Trump: "Mental illness is a massive problem in the US." Hillary Clinton: "Substance abuse is a quiet epidemic. I think a lot of people are thinking 'well that's somebody else's problem, that's not my problem.' And indeed, it is all of our problem. This is not something that we can just brush under the rug and wish it would go away." Let the candidates know that MISA is an important issue to you.

Federal Legislation on Mental Health

Earlier this month, U.S. Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Chris Murphy (D-CT) introduced the "Mental Health Reform Act of 2015" (S. 1945). [Click here](#) to read APA and APAPO's joint letter of support to the sponsors of the legislation. This legislation makes significant strides to address our fragmented mental health system and improve outcomes for children and adults with serious mental illness. In June, U.S. Reps. Tim Murphy (R-PA) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) introduced "Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2015" (H.R. 2646) in the U.S. House of Representatives. This comprehensive legislation also seeks to reform the mental health service system by focusing on programs and resources for patients and families most in need of mental health and support services. Read more about Rep. Murphy's legislation along with APAPO and APA's joint letter of support in the June 25th issue of the [APAPO's Practice Update newsletter](#).

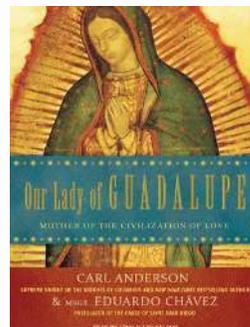
Access to Care and Parity for Mental Health

[This article](#) provides a look at conditions in California, which has been a leader in mental health legislation.



What Else are Pro-Abortion Activists Hiding?

The liberal media news outlets won't report on this research. The liberal professional association journals won't publish this research. However, the truth manages to come out eventually. The truth is that we have many women (and some of their male partners), walking psychologically wounded from the aftereffects of abortion. [This article](#) describes some of these serious consequences. Understanding this reality is the first step. Thinking about getting help comes second. There are many available paths to healing from abortion, but ultimately it requires taking action to get started on the journey through recovery. Don't be afraid. You do not have to walk alone.



Book of the Month Recommendation

This month, we recommend the 2009 book [“Our Lady of Guadalupe: Mother of the Civilization of Love”](#) by Carl Anderson (Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus) and Monsignor Eduardo Chavez. Msgr. Chavez was Postulator for the Cause of the Canonization of St. Juan Diego, and was named canon of the National Basilica of Our Lady of

Guadalupe. This book describes the events of the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego, but also paints the broader canvas of the apparition in the context of the history of Spanish evangelization in Mexico. The book goes into fascinating detail explaining the deep symbolism in the apparition and the image on the tilma, as well as the miraculous aspects of the tilma itself. More than a history book, this text is inspirational as well. All Catholics in the Western Hemisphere would do well to study this excellent text. Next month tune in for our “Movie of the Month” recommendation.

Disclaimer: Gratia Plena and its staff do not receive any compensation or earthly benefits from recommending books, movies, music, websites, blogs, apps, et cetera...

[follow on Twitter](#) [friend on Facebook](#) [forward to a friend](#)

Copyright © 2015 Gratia Plena, All rights reserved.

Contact Us:

10701 Corporate Drive, Suite 190, Stafford, TX 77477
(832) 532-0129 (office land line)
www.gratiaplenacounseling.org