



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

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And the Two Shall Become One Flesh: Marriage, The Family, and Human Sexuality

A reflection by *Father Steve Giljum*, who took the course “Marriage, The Family, and Human Sexuality”—“an investigation of authentic Catholic thought on the family and human sexuality, and an introduction to Natural Family Planning for clergy...” (from course description)—which is offered jointly by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary (St. Louis) and the Pope Paul VI Institute (Omaha)

Few people would dispute that we are living in trying times. Almost every age brings with it a host of challenges that can lead to hopelessness if not for God’s eternal plan. That’s where it usually begins, though. We forget or ignore God’s plan in favor of our own, and then the trials begin! At first, the trials may not seem negative and do not seem to foster hopelessness. When we see losses and poverty of spirit, however, we begin to awaken to what has been lost.

When I was in the seminary, I was awakened to God’s loving plan for holy sexuality, marriage, and family life. In the spring of 2000, we took a class entitled “Marriage, The Family, and Human Sexuality.” We studied John Paul II’s theology of the body and natural methods of fertility regulation (focusing on the **CREIGHTON MODEL FertilityCare™ System**). Even though I was a life-long Catholic, I was hearing things for the very first time. It was an awakening!

Our culture has, in many ways, lost its love for God’s plan of sexuality and marital love. When we savor the first two chapters of Genesis, we taste the delicious world of Eden and a God who is literally *in love* with love. Engaged couples are naturally drawn to this God. They thirst like the deer for running streams (Psalm 42). I am grateful for these foundations; they continue to serve me well in ministry.

As a priest, I get so excited when the Lectionary proclaims these readings. Seeing eyes, ears, and hearts engaged during the proclamation of God’s original plan always fills me with awe and reverence. People long for this; they crave it; they need it to survive. That is why I love the theology of the body and **FertilityCare™**. They are true experiences of hope, deep connection, and incarnation!

They awaken us to what life was like in the “good old days!”

One couple that I walked with several years ago grew into a real success story. They began the process being most affable and willing to “do” what was required to “get” married. Their understanding of sex and relationships was more in line with mainstream television than anything else. We talked frankly and honestly; they attended several **CREIGHTON MODEL FertilityCare™** classes; and, they fell in love anew! Between their humility and the Holy Spirit, they were awakened to the beauties of sexuality, **FertilityCare™**, and respect for each other’s bodies. They began to desire each other in such holy and creative ways. They began to live celibately during their courtship, prayed before making love on their wedding night, and strove to live the **FertilityCare™** lifestyle. Although I have lost touch with them, I believe they are blessed and happy.

Walking with couples during marriage preparation is a perfect time to talk about natural methods of fertility regulation. Even when artificial contraception has been their sole experience, many couples are ready to have their hearts, minds, and bodies awakened. Couples who use natural methods and go to Church on Sundays are likely to find much more strength in their marriage and experience less divorce than couples who contracept, sterilize, or abort. My prayer is that we are only beginning to know the impact that **FertilityCare™** and the theology of the body will have on our Church and the world. ☩

The Rev. Steve Giljum

A priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and a graduate of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, Fr. Giljum is assigned to serve the people of Immaculate Conception Church of Dardenne. He has been a priest for seven years.



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— FATHER GILJUM
As a deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God.
— PSALM 42: 2

Real Solutions...Our Testimonial

By: Greg and Kathleen Morrioni. Read their full testimonial in the Winter 2009 online edition (V4, N4) at www.popepaulvi.com/connect.htm

Friends of the Pope Paul VI Institute, we are a Catholic Christian couple and have been married for nine years... We have experienced many problems from miscarriage, to endometriosis, to hormonal problems... We sought help from more than seven doctors... For seven years we struggled to find hope and healing in this time of suffering.

All we found was pain, suffering, and the destruction of our individual and our marital dignity. ...We had tried everything... Finally, we were told that *in vitro* fertilization (IVF)

was our only solution. We did not follow that advice... Dr. Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute has been an answer to prayer for us... [We practiced] the system for over 2 ½ years and... [had] surgery to correct significant problems; we are healthier and happier.

...[W]e delivered a healthy baby girl, Mary Joy Morrioni, on March 24, 2009. ... Without Dr. Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute this would not have been possible. ☩

Greg and Kathleen Morrioni with Mary Joy



Pope Paul VI Institute
For the Study of Human Reproduction



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to a culture of life in the Archdiocese of Omaha

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Helping Priests Respond To Medical and Moral Challenges
In this issue: "Marriage, The Family, and Human Sexuality"—Impact of the Course on One Priest
Real Solutions for One Couple

The Home of **FertilityCare™** and **NaProTECHNOLOGY™** **Building a Culture of Life in Women's Health Care**

The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus...
the saintly Cure of Ars would often say.
In his time the Cure of Ars was able to transform
the hearts and lives of so many people
because he enabled them to experience
the Lord's merciful love,
Our own time urgently needs a similar proclamation and
witness to the truth of Love:
Deus caritas est (1 Jn 4:8)...
To the Most Holy Virgin I entrust this Year for Priests.
I ask her to awaken in the heart of every priest
a generous and renewed commitment to the ideal of
complete self-oblation to Christ and the Church,
which inspired the thoughts & actions of the Cure of Ars...
Dear Priests, CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU.
In the footsteps of the Cure of Ars,
let yourselves be enthralled by Him.
In this way you too will be, for the world in our time,
heralds of hope, reconciliation and peace!
— Pope Benedict XVI, Letter Proclaiming a Year for Priests, June 16, 2009

Access this newsletter online at
www.popepaulvi.com/connect.htm

More resources can be found on our web sites:
www.popepaulvi.com
www.creightonmodel.com
www.naprotechnology.com

Chapel of the Holy Family
Open business days, 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
8:30 a.m. Mondays and 1st/3rd Fridays
8:45 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Tuesdays

- **Rev. Edward Richard M.S., D. TH. M., J.D.**
For ethics and questions
(314) 792-6107 or richard@kenrick.edu
- **Sue Hilgers: (402) 390-6600 ext. 149 or suchilg@aol.com.**
Direct all other questions to:

Pope Paul VI Institute Directory

- **FertilityCare™ Center of Omaha**
To learn the Creighton Model FertilityCare System.
(402) 392-0842 or fcco@popepaulvi.com
Co-directors: Jeanice Vinduska, Sue Elser
- **National Center for Women's Health**
For clinic questions:
(402) 390-6600
Linda Cady (Dr. Hilgers' head nurse)
- **Creighton Model FertilityCare**
Allied Health Education Program
For FertilityCare provider education.
(402) 390-9168 or education@popepaulvi.com
Alice Sales
- **Center for NaProEthics**
For ethics questions and consults:
(402) 390-0812 or ethics@popepaulvi.com
Sr. Renée Mirkes, OSF, PhD

Connect

Our Story...A Testimonial by Greg and Kathleen Morroni

Excerpted from an appeal letter written by Greg and Kathleen Morroni, November 2008 and June 2009

Friends of the Pope Paul VI Institute, our names are Greg and Kathleen Morroni and we live in Denver, Colorado. We are a Catholic Christian couple and have been married for nine years, have been pregnant many times, but have not yet experienced the joy of a full-term pregnancy. We have experienced many problems from miscarriage, to endometriosis, to hormonal problems. For many years we searched for answers to why and how to get real medical help with these problems. We sought help from more than seven doctors in Denver including "fertility specialists."

For seven years we struggled to find hope and healing in this time of suffering. All we found was pain, suffering, and the destruction of our individual (especially Kathleen) and our marital dignity. We had all but given up hope when we were introduced to Dr. Thomas Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute from a marriage and family director at church that insisted this doctor was very different from the average professional.

We had tried everything from multiple laparoscopies, to all kinds of different drugs (Clomid, Lupron), to herbs and acupuncture. Finally, we were told that *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) was our only solution. We did not follow this advice as it did not make sense, since we had been pregnant many times on our own and yet were never able to carry to term.

Dr. Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute has been an answer to prayer for us. He has proven to us that there is a better, more scientific, more dignified, more successful and truly Christian method of dealing with our infertility. There is truth in Dr. Hilgers, his methods, and the Pope Paul VI Institute. Dr. Hilgers has also once again brought us hope. He has given us hope in our future health and in our desire for children. He has brought physical healing to some of our problems and continues to give us hope in what is to come. After practicing the system for over 2½ years and after a major five-hour surgery to correct significant problems we are healthier and happier. We have learned so much about our marriage, our fertility and how great the plan of God has for our marriage. We have learned to value each other and our marriage more than ever. This gave us strength in our time of struggle and suffering. We believe in

this cause so greatly that we have decided to support Dr. Hilgers and the Pope Paul

VI Institute with our time, our talent (as **CREIGHTON MODEL** couple, teacher of the **CREIGHTON MODEL FertilityCare™ System** and Medical Consultant), and our treasure, our financial support.

We are presently happy and blessed to report that we delivered a healthy baby girl, Mary Joy Morroni, on March 24, 2009. It was a trouble-free pregnancy and short labor (less than 12 hours). God is never to be underestimated in what He can do in coordination with workers in His vineyard. His timing is perfect and surpasses our greatest plans. Without Dr. Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute this would not have been possible. ...

We continually celebrate God's plan to send His only Son, Jesus to in order to bring about salvation to a fallen world. God humbled Himself to allow us to be near Him, so that we could give our love in exchange for His, so that our freedom might bow, not at the sight of His power merely, but before the wonder of His humility. We have been given a gift that none of us deserves or could earn. We as witnesses to Christ have the honorable duty of making our faith in Christ known through our words and deeds. As people who value life we must make a strong statement to promote and further the course of life. Let us make the same statement of faith and humility to Our Father. Let us profess our belief in Him as the Creator of all life. Let us thank Him for the gift of our Savior and the realization of our salvation. Let us trust in Jesus. Let us support Dr. Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute.

We all know how important the gift of life is. ...[The Institute is] a part of this mission [to] bring Christ back into the medical field of OB/GYN. It is time to bring light back into this darkness. The greatness of this task is overshadowed only by the One who gives us the power to accomplish it. We must only have Faith! (Matthew 17:20).

May God Bless you and your family! ...

Sincerely in Christ,
Greg and Kathleen
Morroni



Greg and Kathleen Morroni with their baby girl, Mary Joy



Pope Paul VI Institute
For the Study of Human Reproduction