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88 Pennsylvania Avenue, Oreland, PA, 19075  
(215) 885-8150 | [www.prolifeunion.org](http://www.prolifeunion.org)

## Mother's Day Edition - 2015

Guided by a commitment to the sanctity of every life, the Pro-Life Union fosters a cohesive vision and strategy for a Culture of Life in Greater Philadelphia. Our beliefs are incarnated in the context of the family and through service to those making the choice for life. We work in the four areas of the pro-life movement: outreach, education, public policy, and alternatives.

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## Motherhood and God's Plan - *by Jenny Galiani and Maria Malone*

Two words: Mother's Day. For years, these words stung. We had gone from longing for the day that we'd be mothers to wondering if it would ever happen for us. While our closest friends, brothers and sisters were having children all around us, we became "professional" baby shower goers. We had perfected the art of oohing and aahing over all the baby clothes being held up and as we poked our heads in many a beautifully decorated baby's bedroom, we fought back the tears. We struggled silently in our hearts, in our relationships with our husbands, and mostly wondered why God was denying us motherhood. Yet, we wanted to trust that He had our best interest at heart. They were difficult days.

And then one day, God whispered His plan to us. I take that back, perhaps it wasn't a whisper, it was more like God on a megaphone speaking to our hearts. So, we began investigating adoption. It seemed so obvious all of a sudden. However, not until we held our first born, did it really click... GOD HAD A PLAN, a beautiful plan! And not just for us, but for our sons and daughters, our birth parents and extended families. Our children are nothing short of miracles, like every mother believes about their children. But, as adoptive mothers, we feel there are greater bragging rights about how incredible our children are... because of the way they came to us! God handpicked each one of them to be a part of our families and He used some very special people, our children's birth mothers and birth fathers, to make our dream of motherhood come true!

The gift of adoption is an incredible triad of love, reflecting similarly that of God's love; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The adoption triad consists of the birth parents, adoptive parents and the blessed child. And, that child is the recipient of all of it! So much love! It is love that brings us all together.

The birth parents love their children so much that they choose life and try to find a better life for them than they are able to give. The adoptive family comes with all of their "blind faith" love, the kind God taught us to have. And the child... well the child receives all the love and GIVES so much love back to us!

As adoptive mothers of 7 children (Maria has 3 and Jenny has 4), we have been abundantly blessed. Our gratitude fuels our passion to share our stories of adoption with others, especially our young people. Our hope is to change hearts and minds, to show that abortion is not the only option for unexpected and unplanned pregnancies where parenting isn't an option. We long to show others how adoption is not just another option, but an incredibly loving option.

So, this Mother's Day, we are, as always, most grateful for the real heroes of our lives, our birth mothers, for choosing life, for choosing us to be the mothers of their children, for giving us the gift of motherhood.

Mother's Day: two words that used to sting. Today, there are four words that we can never hear enough of, "Happy Mother's Day, Mom!"

*Jenny Galiani and Maria Malone are parishioners of Mary Mother of the Redeemer Church, supporters of the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia and the founders of "Adoption is a loving option." This organization seeks to give a voice to unborn children through adoption education. The Pro-Life Union is grateful for their efforts and blessed by our partnership with them! Visit [www.adoptionisalovingoption.org](http://www.adoptionisalovingoption.org)*



## “Behold, Your Mother” - *by Jewels Green*

The words spoken by our Lord from the cross to His beloved disciple John, blessed all of humanity with the gift of Our Lady as mother to us all. It is to her we must look for guidance when reaching out to the mothers in need in our own communities.

As a terrified, vulnerable, and impressionable pregnant teenager, I did not fit the ideal vision of motherhood. However, when I learned I was pregnant at 17, I desperately wanted to keep my baby. Looking back on that fateful day, I wish that I had met selfless souls reaching out to me to encourage me to choose life--both for my baby and for myself. Lacking the strength and spiritual resolve to fight for my baby's life, I succumbed to the pressure to have an abortion.

My abortion instantly haunted me as grief and guilt overwhelmed me. I attempted suicide a few weeks after my abortion. I felt almost no gratitude at surviving and while recovering in the hospital, I decided to bury my emotions and sought solace in the welcoming arms of the pro-choice movement. I got a job at an abortion center.

Working at an abortion facility was not in my plan, but my years there helped assuage my own crushing remorse as I found myself surrounded by people who thought abortion was a legitimate- even laudable-option. I counseled women, held their hands during their abortions and visited them in the recovery room, always avoiding the glaring truth that the sole purpose of our connection was to ensure the death of her child. All the while I was missing my baby, knowing what I did was wrong, knowing I would never have another abortion, yet still maintaining that abortion was alright for others.

After leaving the abortion industry and becoming pro-life, I found myself eager to help pregnant mothers - eager to lead them away from death and toward life. I've seen many tactics fail, but peaceful and prayerful witnesses succeed.

When we are reaching out to women outside of abortion centers, in pregnancy resource centers, in our families and in our workplaces, we must never lose sight of their motherhood. These women are already mothers--and if Christ resides in each of us through the Holy Spirit, then these women, too, are Our Mother and we are honor-bound to treat her with respect, compassion, and love.

Pray for the strength, patience, and fortitude to connect with abortion-determined mothers to offer them practical and spiritual assistance with compassion. Treat her with the love you have for Our Blessed Mother, treat her as you would Christ--for whatsoever you do to the least of His people, that you did unto Him.



The Pro-Life Union has committed to ensuring a consistent and prayerful presence where abortions are being performed. This activity is truly transforming for both the participants as well as the women we encounter. The Pro-Life Union offers training for those interested as well as materials to distribute to women. Women are so grateful to receive the materials explaining where there are alternatives to abortion and are very receptive to information about the help that is available to them. Please consider being a part of this outreach. Call our office or email us to learn more.

## Upcoming Events

- May 29<sup>th</sup>: Prayer Breakfast for Life. 7-9 am. Union League of Philadelphia. Hosted by the Office for Life and Family and Heroic Media.
- July 18<sup>th</sup> Pro-Life Vigil, Mass and Summit. Prayer Vigil at 7:30 am at PP 12<sup>th</sup> & Locust Street, Mass at 9 am at the Cathedral Chapel followed by a Summit at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center.
- September 22<sup>nd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> in Philadelphia, World Meeting of Families. Visit [www.worldmeeting.com](http://www.worldmeeting.com)

## Caring for Women – by Monique Ruberu, MD

As an Ob/Gyn, I have the privilege of caring for women of all ages and in all stages of motherhood. Some have grown children and grandchildren, some are raising teens, others are caring for small ones and many are planning for their future role as mothers.

When most women think of their annual visit, they shudder with dread at the idea of the exam and the gown that does not conceal quite enough. They postpone this visit as long as possible and may skip a few years along the way. There is another way of thinking about this visit. It is my responsibility to provide the best possible care to these women who have such an important role to play in our society. I aim to spend a few moments with each person and in this way honor their dignity and worth. These yearly visits are the perfect place to address not only physical issues, but also emotional and relationship related ones. We are not human beings compartmentalized into tiny pieces of ourselves. As a physician, it is my job to look at a person as a whole and understand that all parts of the whole affect a woman's health.

For this reason, in addition to taking care of routine medical issues, I make a point of discussing my patient's relationships and try to offer helpful resources and advice. My hope is that the advice helps to nurture the most important relationships in their lives - with spouses, children, boyfriends and family. I hope most especially that there is an opportunity to encourage their friendship with God.

At the office, medical treatments that support and augment the body's natural systems are offered. The many benefits of Creighton fertility care natural family planning are offered as a method to achieve or space pregnancies. This wonderful standardized type of Natural Family Planning can be used to treat a range of problems through Napro Technology such as infertility, recurrent pregnancy loss, PCOS, abnormal bleeding, PMS, post partum depression, ovarian cysts and endometriosis.

I firmly believe that every woman needs to take time to pause, to pray, to rejuvenate, to reevaluate and to begin again with resources and support that they may not have realized was available to them. An annual visit with your physician can be the beginning of caring for yourself and others in a beautiful, life-honoring way. Happy Mother's Day today and every day!

Dr. Ruberu is a pro-life Obstetrician/Gynecologist working at Holy Redeemer Hospital in Meadowbrook, PA. For appointments, call [215-914-2600](tel:215-914-2600).

### Run with the Pro-Life Union

We are training for the Philadelphia Marathon, Half Marathon, and 8K, to support the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia and be a witness for the culture of life in Philadelphia. The races are signature city events, held on November 21-22, and a great goal to train for - all while raising funds and awareness for the families served by the Pro-Life Union. Join our team, and we will set you up with a personal fundraising page, team t-shirt, and training buddies for support. First-time runners are welcome! Call our office for more info or mail [tleinker@prolifeunion.org](mailto:tleinker@prolifeunion.org). Visit [www.prolifeunion.org/marathon](http://www.prolifeunion.org/marathon) for details.

### Save the Date

The Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia is excited to announce that Damon Owens, Executive Director of the Theology of the Body Institute, will be our guest speaker for the 2015 *Stand Up For Life Dinner* on November 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel. Damon is an internationally known speaker at conferences, seminars, and universities on the good news of marriage, sexuality, and adoption. He has published numerous articles and has appeared on radio and television programs including ABC World News Tonight, CBS News 48 Hours and BET Evening News. We sell out early, so watch for reservation details on our website.



### Memorial Crosses

The Memorial Cross display is a wonderful way to educate the community. These white wooden crosses are placed on the lawns of area churches, schools and homes as a memorial to the 57 million children who were aborted since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling. At this time, there are 57 crosses in a set, each cross representing one million children. Sadly, the number of crosses keeps increasing. The crosses typically stay at each church for one month. We will deliver and set up the crosses and collect them. Call 215-885-8150.

## Transforming the Culture



Last Saturday, a call came into the Pro-Life Union's pregnancy hotline. A young woman, "Kelly," asked if there was someone she could talk with because she was feeling desperate. She had been dating a man for over a year and was now seven weeks pregnant. Her boyfriend was pro-choice, but she was pro-life. He was pressuring her to have an abortion. She shared his reasons; his career was just taking off, they were young and a baby would complicate things right now. Kelly just felt overwhelmed. Her mom was supportive and would help her and the baby. The truth is she just felt abandoned. Rejecting abortion meant losing the person she loved. It meant raising a child on her own and facing all the financial struggles that could bring.

Through the providence of God, Kelly remembered the witness of the pro-life people praying in West Chester, and she called our pregnancy hotline. After that phone call, she felt relieved

and confirmed in her belief that abortion was wrong. She still has a long road ahead, but her boyfriend has softened and she is receiving the support she needs.

The Pro-Life Union and our partnering organizations provide the tangible help women need, whatever that entails; friendship, guidance, medical referrals and housing. We are creating a continuum of care and strengthening the lifeline that already exists for children and their mothers.

Kelly's story shows what can happen when all those who share a commitment to the sanctity of life work together to make choosing life possible for every woman. The simple prayers at Planned Parenthood, the pregnancy

hotline and the housing options are all possible because of the prayers, support, generosity and witness of so many people working together to build a culture of life here in Greater Philadelphia.



## Happy Mother's Day!

I would like to learn more about your efforts and get involved.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate via credit card.

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The Pro-Life Union is a 501(c)3 organization.