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88 Pennsylvania Ave., Oreland, Pa 19075  
[www.prolifeunion.org](http://www.prolifeunion.org) • 215-885-8150

## Respect Life Sunday 2017

The Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia affirms the sanctity of life through leadership and service to those making the choice for life. We accomplish this through education, outreach, public affairs and by offering alternatives to abortion and through our maternity home Guiding Star Ministries.

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## Be Not Afraid – 2017

The experience of fear is part of the human condition. It can be a normal response to life situations, but when it becomes disordered, it consumes us and we become slaves to that fear. In that slavery, we lose our freedom to make sound decisions and are easily manipulated by others, the media and the culture. We see this too often in our world today. Fear is fuel thrown on the hatred of racism; the fear of loneliness leads to bad relationships, and the fear of not having enough leads to greed.

As we reflect this Respect Life Sunday on the message “*be not afraid*,” we are encouraged to trust in the providence of God, accepting that life’s beginning and end are in His hands. In our culture, women have been told that ending an unexpected pregnancy through abortion will solve the problems they face about how they will take care of their child. People facing disabilities or life limiting illnesses are afraid of burdening others, of suffering, of death. Those fears may lead them to consider assisted suicide and euthanasia.

The Culture of Death is rooted in fear and it is incumbent upon us to reject that fear and proclaim boldly and joyfully that life has a purpose. Sometimes babies are conceived unexpectedly and they come into this world on their own timetables. Each one of these tiny human beings brings a reflection of God into a world longing for His presence.

When we encounter women facing unexpected pregnancies, we affirm their value and the dignity of their unborn child. When we witness at abortion facilities, we offer hope and help so that women can reject fear and move forward with their pregnancies. At our maternity home, Guiding Star Ministries, we build relationships with these women and offer tangible support and housing when possible.

This Respect Life Sunday, we are grateful for the courage and examples of these moms. Women like Vaya, who found out about the Pro Life Union through a friend, and was able to walk out of the abortion center and give her child life. The material assistance and the crib we provided her were critical to her decision, but it was the sharing of our confidence in God’s plan for her life and the life of her unborn child that allowed her to move from fear to faith! Her son was born on August 21<sup>st</sup> and his brothers are ecstatic!

The Pro-Life Union advocates for the sanctity of life through outreach, education, public affairs and through our alternatives efforts and Guiding Star. We are inspired by the families we meet and our supporters who encourage us to “*be not afraid*,” in this effort.

This Respect Life Sunday, let us celebrate and honor the incredible gift of life and “*be not afraid*” to proclaim its dignity and value, no matter the circumstances, to the world. In doing so, we can be a catalyst to building a Culture of Life rooted in faith and hope.



*Things rust and break, But every child is a universe of possibility that reaches into eternity, connecting our memories and our hopes in a sign of God's love across the generations. That's what matters. The soul of a child is forever.*

*Arch. Charles Chaput*

## Guiding Star Update

The newest baby boy came home to Guiding Star in September. Our home is filled with moms, toddlers, and two newborns. We are also excited to be welcoming our new live-in intern who will help to provide overnight coverage and support to our families. Guiding Star Ministries responds to women in crisis with referrals, emotional support and guidance. This year we have responded to 175 phone calls with support, material assistance is offered, including diapers, clothes, food and layette bags to families. In the last two years, over fifty women, children and unborn babies were housed at Guiding Star.

In September, our community came together for an end of summer BBQ. It was a wonderful day with staff, residents and alumnae moms gathering for fellowship, food and fun. We are constantly amazed at the growth of this program and know that prayer and support have made it all possible.

Please consider supporting this incredible home. Visit us at [www.guidingstar.org](http://www.guidingstar.org).

## Welcome the Sisters of Life

In a much-anticipated move, the Sisters of Life are bringing their Visitation Mission to serve pregnant women in need to Philadelphia. The sisters will reside at St. Malachy's Convent in Philadelphia.

We were blessed to receive the Sisters at Guiding Star Ministries where they met with some residents and were joyfully welcomed by some of the littlest residents. Yvonne Branch, GSM Program Director from Catholic Social Services shared the good news about our home and was able to share her experiences with serving homeless families and women in Philadelphia.

The Sisters will bring a powerhouse of prayer and love as they encounter women in crisis and the Pro-Life Union is so excited to work with them in affirming the sanctity of life and serving the vulnerable!



## Upcoming Activities and Events

- ♥ **September 27<sup>th</sup>:** The Fall 40 Days for Life Campaign begins and opportunities to participate in this national effort are available through November 5<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the following area leaders.

PP Center City Philadelphia (12<sup>th</sup> & Locust)  
Philadelphia Women's Center (777 Appletree, Phila.)  
PP West Chester (8 S. Wayne Street)  
PP Warminster (610 Louis Drive)

Pat Stanton – 267-718-4851  
Monique Ruberu - 469-231-9084  
Paulette Matthews – 484-832-2746  
Mary Paris – 215-589-5422

- ♥ **October 1st:** Joining a Life Chain is a wonderful way to witness for life. People line the streets and share pro-life messages. Consider participating at one of the following locations:

Abington – Old York Rd & Horace (2-3)  
Bryn Mawr – Bryn Mawr Ave & Lancaster (2-3)  
Collegeville – Main St at 6<sup>th</sup> Ave (2-3:30)  
Downingtown – Rt 30 at Manor Ave (2:30-3:30)  
Kennett Square – 225 Cypress at Meredith (2-3)  
Oxford – Rt 472 at Rt 10 (2-3)  
Paoli – Rt 30 at Rt 252 (2:30-3:30)

Philadelphia – Comly Rd at the Boulevard (2:30-3:30)  
Philadelphia – St. Martin Church, Roosevelt Blvd (2-3)  
Phoenixville – Rt 23 at Phoenixville Hosp (2:30-3:30)  
Warminster – Street Rd from York to Louis (2-3)  
Wayne – Lancaster Ave at Aberdeen (12:45-1:45)  
West Chester – S High St at Market St (2-3:30)  
West Grove – 290 State at Assumption BVM (2:30-3:30)

- ♥ **October 28<sup>th</sup>:** 9:30-11:30 a.m. Pro Life Training Day "From Terri Schiavo to Charlie Guard." This education seminar is hosted by the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia. Please call 215-885-8150 to RSVP and for details.

## Miraculous Adoption – Helen Mazur

After five years of marriage my husband and I were still childless. For as long as I can remember I had wanted to be a mother, with an awesome husband, a beautiful loving marriage, a nice house and then, of course, children. That was *my* plan. God had a different plan for us; a better plan for our family. His plan was adoption. Looking back His plans are always far better than anything we can dream up.

Geoff and I had been married for about 18 months when we decided that something wasn't quite working out. Many of our friends had married and were already on their way to having their first baby. But what about us? Modern fertility treatments are the first recommendation from family doctors and well-

meaning friends and family. While we were tempted with a deep desire for a baby, we knew there was something “off” about the typical infertility treatment protocol. After more involvement with the pro-life movement, I began to understand just how bad IVF can be for a woman and how it ends the lives of so many tiny little babies in their first days. So, as my husband and I battled infertility, we remained true to our pro-life beliefs. We started using NFP to achieve a pregnancy. We changed our diet, we took the “recommended” supplements, we got blood tests, we charted, we saw doctors, and boy did we PRAY! We prayed for a pregnancy. We prayed for a baby.

Then, as we continued to pray, our wording slowly changed. We prayed for a child to come into our lives. We were now praying for God to start our family however He chose. After 4 years of struggling with infertility, our hearts were completely opened to adoption through prayer.

I began gathering folders of information from adoption agencies to narrow down our choices. Our dining room table was covered in adoption paperwork and we had just celebrated our five-year wedding anniversary when I received a call from a friend. My friend worked at a local pregnancy center and she had just met with a 19-year-old woman who came to her for abortion information.

The young woman had left the counseling session still determined to abort her child, so my friend asked for prayers for this young mother. My prayers were now redirected from my own situation to this life or death decision. I prayed for the young mother, whose name I didn't even know, and I prayed for her baby. A few weeks later my friend called me back and informed me that the young lady came back to the pregnancy center and had not gone through with an abortion. Our prayers had been answered! Not only that, but she specifically said she wanted to place the baby with a young couple that didn't have any children yet! We were set up with an appointment so she could meet us and decide if we were the right couple for her child.

We met our daughter's birth-mother on a Monday. I accompanied her to a doctor's appointment that Wednesday. That Sunday we made it to the hospital 2 minutes after our daughter was born and I was the first one to hold her! She was the most beautiful baby I had ever seen. She was perfect in every way, right down to her little pink, peaceful doll-like lips.

While holding her in my arms and crying (me, not the baby!), I looked across the hospital room to her birth-mother. All I could stammer out was a “thank you.” It is because of her birth-mother that my husband and I were finally parents. All the prayers from everyone had touched her heart, too. She braved the road less traveled (adoption) and rejected the lie of abortion. In doing this, she not only saved the life of her child but she then gifted that beautiful life to a couple so they could finally become a family. God had worked a miracle through her, as He does with every brave birth-mother that trusts and plans for something better. Birth-mothers know that adoption, not abortion, empowers women.

When we think that God isn't answering our prayers, try to remember that He might just be saying, “Hold on. Be patient. I have something much better and more exciting planned for you.”

Years later, my husband and I relocated and stayed in touch with the Pro-Life Union and followed their growth and expansion as our own family grew as well. While we were in the final stages of the adoption process with our second child, I found out I was pregnant. Our children would be born months apart and our lives have been forever changed and blessed.





Please join us for the  
Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia's  
Annual Stand Up For Life Dinner  
with keynote speaker Melissa Ohden  
Sunday, November 19, 2017  
4:30 P.M. Cocktails – 5:30 P.M. Dinner  
Sheraton Hotel – Center City, Philadelphia



Abortion survivor Melissa Ohden will inspire all with her story of Life. Melissa was fourteen years old when her adoptive mom told her that she had literally survived a failed abortion. She will tell how her life came full circle when she gave birth to her own daughter at the same hospital where her life was almost ended. Tickets are \$75 per person, Tables of ten discounted to \$700. Student tickets are \$50 per student. Visit [www.prolifeunion.org/dinner](http://www.prolifeunion.org/dinner). Call 215-885-8150 for details.

**Reservations may be mailed to 88 Pennsylvania Ave., Oreland PA 19075.**

- ☐ I would like to make a donation to support the Stand Up for Life Dinner with a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ gift.
- ☐ I would like to be a donor to the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia. Enclosed is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ Please charge a one-time donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my credit card.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Book Sponsorship Opportunity!**

For a donation of \$15, you can place a one-line shout-out or memorial message in our dinner program book. Please use the line below to write your message.

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