

VOCATIONS

Calling all college students! Looking to build your faith life while teaching others? Totus Tuus 2017 is just around the corner! Seeking enthusiastic, creative, caring, Christ-centered college students to teach elementary, middle and high school students about the Church, the Rosary and vocations! This is a paid summer position for 5 weeks plus two weeks of training and formation. Travel around the Diocese is necessary with food and lodging provided. For questions, please contact Colleen Darland, 563-888-4378. Applications are available on the diocesan website at: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/documents/2016/12/Totus%20Tuus%20Team%20App.pdf>. Please feel free to make copies and give out to other young adults you think would be willing to consider being a Totus Tuus teacher this summer. Past teachers consider this missionary work of catechizing and evangelizing the youth to be one of the most difficult but also one of the most rewarding summers of their life. We look forward to having you on our team!

SOCIAL ACTION OFFICE

Income Tax Help: Low-and moderate-income working families may qualify for help from two federal tax benefits: Earned Income Credit (EIC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC). For more information about the Tax Credit go to www.eitc outreach.org. Also, please encourage families to file their taxes through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA). This offers free tax help for low-to-moderate income people who cannot prepare their own return. To learn more and to find a location in your area call, 888-227-7669 or go to: <https://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation-for-You-by-Volunteers>.

CRS-Fair Trade Chocolate: This Valentine's Day give a gift that will change lives. When you purchase Fair Trade chocolate and gifts artisans and farmers will receive a fair wage. Visit Catholic Relief Services partners, [SERRV](#) to purchase delicious chocolate or beautiful gifts that will benefit so many—here and around the world. Click this [link](#) to learn more about Ethical Trade or contact [Kent Ferris](#) if you are interested in hosting a Fair Trade sale.

CRS Rice Bowl Collection begins March 1.

- **Promotional Materials** have been shipped. If your parish did not order or you need additional materials please contact [Esmeralda Guerrero](#), 563-888-4210.
- **Rice Bowl Breakfast:** Breakfast events over the past few years have helped to increase awareness of the Rice Bowl campaign. This year the Office of Social Action wants to try something different. We want to encourage every parish around the diocese to host and plan their own Kick-off Breakfast. We will assist you with ordering materials, coming out and walking you through the process on how to host a breakfast. For assistance contact [Loxi Hopkins](#), 563-888-4212.
- **Grants:** Annually, 75 percent of the funds raised go to Catholic Relief Services to ease hunger worldwide; while the remaining 25 percent goes to organizations working to fight hunger within the Diocese of Davenport. Last year the CCHD/CRS board was able to fund 16 local organizations, totaling \$22,000. If you wish to apply for a grant go [here](#).

2017-18 Internship for Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD): Applications are being accepted until Feb. 15. Are you Catholic? Interested in fighting poverty? Then consider being an intern for CCHD. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development:

- Provides grants for self-help projects developed by grassroots groups working to address the root causes of poverty in their communities.
- Works to increase Catholics' awareness of poverty in the U.S.
- Educates about the Catholic social tradition.
- Builds bridges between poor and non-poor communities.

The Intern must be able to attend the **May 31 - June 2** CCHD Training. (Expenses paid). For more information go [here](#) or contact Loxi Hopkins, 563-888-4212 or hopkins@davenportdiocese.org. Please distribute the attached flyer to those who might be interested.

Social Action E-Newsletter: The Diocesan Social Action office has an email newsletter filled with upcoming events and deadlines, calls to action and social justice news and views. You can view previous issues or subscribe to *The Two Feet Newsletter* at <http://bit.ly/TwoFeetNewsletter> or, send an e-mail to kerstana@diodav.org and we will add you to our subscription list.

Project Rachel services for those wounded by abortion are:

- Dedicated Helpline: 563-333-4107 (calls answered personally Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 9:00 am-3:00 pm.) Voice messaging available all other times.
- Dedicated e-mail: projectrachel@diodav.org
- Dedicated national website: www.hopeafterabortion.org
- Confidential referrals for individualized counseling with a Project Rachel priest or counselor

How you can help promote Project Rachel in your parish:

- Distribute the free brochure, “Peace Starts Here.” Call 563-888-4212 to receive.
- On your parish website put a link to the [Project Rachel](#) website
- Pray for women and men that have been affected by abortion
- Include weekly bulletin announcements

There are two ways to support Project Rachel:

1. “Humble Angel Honey”: For parishes who are interested in having “Humble Angel Honey” for sale at their parish please contact [Kent Ferris](#) or 563-888-4210 to make arrangements.
2. Make a financial contribution, payable to the Diocese of Davenport and mail to Diocese of Davenport, Project Rachel, 780 W. Central Park Ave., Davenport, IA 52804-1901.

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE

Ministry Skills Development: The Art of Accompaniment: Radical Listening workshop will be held at American Martyrs Retreat House on March 9-10. Participants will have the opportunity to enhance their listening skills and to understand the importance of developing these skills in preparation for effective ministry. The facilitator will be Barb Schwery, Executive Director of BeFriender Ministry. Go [here](#) for additional information and registration options.

Re-Visioning Faith Formation Ministry with Adolescents: The process has begun to take a fresh look at our efforts to form faith with adolescents within the Diocese of Davenport. All pastors, parochial vicars, parish life coordinators, DREs/CREs, Coordinators of Youth Ministry/Youth Ministers, and Catholic School Principals, and Catholic School Campus Ministers are asked to complete a brief survey by the end of this month. The online Pastoral Leaders’ Survey (for pastors, parochial vicars, parish life coordinators) can be accessed [here](#), and the Ministry Leaders’ Survey (for DREs/CREs, Coordinators of Youth Ministry/Youth Ministers, and Catholic School Principals, and Catholic School Campus Ministers) can be accessed [here](#). Please take a few moments in the coming few weeks to complete this important survey. If you have any questions, contact Don Boucher at 563-888-4243 or via [email](#).

Re-Visioning Focus Event: *Calling Youth To Mission – Equipping Young Disciples Workshop*: Join Bishop Amos and ministry leaders from across the diocese on Thursday, May 4, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at St. Patrick’s Church in Iowa City for this exciting workshop. The workshop will be presented by Tom East from the Center for Ministry Development. You’ll hear the findings from the surveys being utilized for the Re-Visioning process, and explore possible methods and approaches for re-directing present ministry efforts. Cost, registration information, and more can be found at www.davenportdiocese.org/mission.

COR Retreat. This year’s diocesan COR will be held March 10-12 at St. Joseph’s School in DeWitt. COR is for 10th-12th graders and focuses on personal reflection about family and relationships. The flyer and registration form for this COR can be found on the [COR webpage](#). Additionally, another COR, sponsored by Holy Trinity parish in Keota, will be held March 24-26 at St. Mary Parish Center in Keota. Registration deadline is March 11. To obtain a flyer and registration form, please contact Lori Lamb (641-660-4224) or Justin Lamb (641-660-7733).

Junior High Rally: Sunday, March 19, from 9:30-5:30 p.m., at Regina Education Center in Iowa City. Publicity and registration materials are now available on the [Rally webpage](#). The Rally is for all 6th-8th graders. This year’s keynoter is [Cooper Ray](#).

MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM

MFP Courses: Classes are held at the Chancery in Davenport from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. or participants may instead choose to join one of the video small groups held at various locations throughout the diocese. Each small group location will determine its monthly meeting time. An application form and additional information may be found on the [MFP website](#). For information regarding the courses or the Ministry Formation Program contact [Marianne Agnoli](#) or 563-888-4242.

2017 Schedule

	2/18/17: Liturgy II: Deacon Frank Agnoli
3/18/17: New Testament I: Dr. Matthew Coomber	4/22/17: New Testament II: Dr. Matthew Coomber
5/20/17: Canon Law: Fr. Paul Appel	6/17/17: Intro to Theology: Dr. Corinne Winter
7/15/17: Intro to Catechesis: Dr. Corinne Winter	8/19/17: Civil Law: Deacon Bob Glaser
9/16/17: Spiritual Themes: IlaMae Hanisch	10/7/17: Commissioning Liturgy

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

National Marriage Week will be celebrated February 7 – 14. Within this week is World Marriage Sunday observed on February 12. The USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth has a variety of resources available: bulletin inserts, a virtual marriage retreat, an online contest, preaching resources and resource websites. These items can be found [here](#). The Faith Formation office also has several marriage enrichment resources available for individual or parish use. Contact Marianne Agnoli at agnolim@davenportdiocese.org or 563-888-4242 for more information.

Diocesan Marriage Preparation Policies and Procedures: The new diocesan marriage preparation policies were promulgated on December 30, 2016 and will apply to all couples who began marriage preparation in the diocese after December 31, 2016. The new policy is now available on the diocesan website [here](#). Note that the diocesan Prenuptial Investigation form has been revised to reflect the new marriage preparation requirements. Access a fillable PDF form in English [here](#) and the Spanish fillable form [here](#).

Marriage Preparation: In the hope of helping to build a solid foundation for an enriching life-long marriage, engaged couples beginning preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony in the Diocese of Davenport after December 31, 2016 will participate in the following preparation activities:

1. Initial personal interview with the priest, deacon or pastoral minister
2. Completion of an approved Premarital Inventory: FOCCUS, REFOCCUS or PREPARE/ENRICH
3. Follow-up meetings as determined by the minister.
4. Participation in a Marriage Preparation Instructional Program:
 - Sponsor Couple (preferred option)
 - Approved Diocesan Marriage Preparation Day/Weekend - see dates below
 - Approved On-line option (only under special circumstance – requires parish approval)
5. Participation in an approved Introductory Natural Family Planning Instruction-see options below
6. Completion of the pre-nuptial investigation form.
7. Post-wedding couple contact plan.

Marriage Preparation Instructional Programs: The Diocese of Davenport offers several marriage preparation program formats: Sponsor Couple (through your parish), One-day, Weekend (two-day), and Online (under special circumstances-with parish approval).

Sponsor Couple: It is preferred that those preparing for marriage meet with a trained parish Sponsor Couple. Contact [Marianne Agnoli](#) to schedule a training in your parish to serve in this important ministry with couples preparing for marriage.

Weekend and One-day:

February 25, 2017: Bettendorf, St. John Vianney, *registration deadline February 17*

April 29-30, 2017: Williamsburg, St. Mary, *registration deadline April 21*

August 5-6, 2017: Mt. Pleasant, St. Alphonsus, *registration deadline July 28*

October 7, 2017: Muscatine, SS Mary and Mathias, *registration deadline September 29*

Registration fee: *\$150 per couple*. The registration form and more information can be found on the [Marriage and Family webpage](#). If you have questions contact [Barb Butterworth](#) or 563-888-4240.

Online: Go [here](#) – to be used only under special circumstance with parish approval.

Marriage and Parenting Resource: Attached is the February issue of “Marriage Moments and Parenting Pointers.” These may be used in parish bulletins or as links on parish websites.

Natural Family Planning: Participation in a diocesan approved *Introductory NFP Instruction* is required for all engaged couples of child bearing age that begin preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony in the diocese after December 31, 2016.

Both general information as well as method specific content is offered in a variety of formats:

- Individual couple or group on location instruction
- Live or self-paced online instruction
- One-on-one Skype instruction
- Video instruction and study guide

Couples may select to participate in one or more of these resources based on their individual level of interest or particular life circumstance. Most instruction is available in both English and Spanish. Engaged couples are encouraged to start NFP instruction at least four months prior to their wedding date. Diocesan approved NFP online and local instructional resources can be found [here](#).

PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN

To report child abuse contact: Iowa Department of Human Services Child Abuse Hotline: 800-362-2178 and if it involves clergy or church personnel also notify Alicia Owens, Victim Assistance Coordinator: 563-349-5002, vac@diodav.org or PO Box 232, Bettendorf, IA 52722-0004.

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS, CLINTON

Lenten Retreat, “Nonviolence . . . More Powerful Than Violence”: March 4, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at The Canticle, Clinton. To register by Feb 27 call 563-242-7611 or email office@clintonfranciscans.com. The \$25 suggested donation includes lunch and can be mailed to Attn.: Retreat, 843 13 Ave N, Clinton, IA 52732 or paid at the door. Make checks payable to “Sisters of St. Francis.” For more information go [here](#).

OUR LADY OF THE PRAIRIE RETREAT, WHEATLAND

To register contact: 563-336-8414 or olpretreat@gmail.com. All programs include a delicious homemade meal prepared with local and organic ingredients. To learn more about Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat visit www.chmiowa.org.

Lenten Taizé Vigil Service: Sun, March 5 | 6:30pm. Zion Lutheran Church, 439 3rd Ave. So, Clinton, Gathering Space. Taizé` is an ecumenical movement, drawing Christians of all denominations together in unified and compassionate prayer. All people of faith are invited to participate. Pre-registration encouraged. No fee

Come to the Quiet: Wed, March 8 | 9:30am – 3:30pm. St. Brigid of Kildare, prompts us to remember *Christ dwells in every creature*. She recognized the manifestation of divine gifts in all creation and the healing peace that comes

from that awareness. Come to the Quiet for a day of peaceful reflection. The day begins with a short message from a wise, holy person who exemplifies an abundant and compassionate life. Time for quiet, a nutritional seasonal lunch, more silence and a closing reflection summarizes the day. Fee: \$20. Pat Shea

Visio Divina through Film: Wed, March 8 | 5:30pm light supper followed by 6:00pm film. Film: *As It Is In Heaven*. Award winning Swedish film. This is the story of a successful internationally known orchestra conductor who returns to his childhood home to confront bullying and grief. To his surprise he finds himself, love and friendship through music and community. An excellent Lenten film. (132 minutes, subtitles) *Visio Divina* is scheduled on evenings following Come to the Quiet. A growing spiritual practice of *Visio Divina* allows us to sink into God's presence through visual stories of redemption, transformation, awe and beauty. Sharing our experience of viewing these films together will open doors to "see" more abundant life around us. Join us for a light supper followed by the film. Fee: \$15

Men's Retreat: Empty Yourself So That You Can Believe God Abundantly Loves You: Fri, March 10 – Sun, March 12 | Fri, 5:00pm – Sun, 11:00am. Our human lives are like bowls. We are created to hold what God gives us. At least that's what the story of Creation was supposed to be like for Adam and Eve and their descendants. Even before our birth, as we rested within our mother's womb, God's unconditional gift of life was competing with the forces of sin. Emerging as infants into a finite and complex world, God's grace was pumped into us, culminating for most of us in our Baptism. In the ensuing years, our bowls have at times overflowed with happiness and joy and other times with sadness and pain. This retreat will focus on what we are carrying in our bowls today. Fee: \$125 John Cooper, MA Theology, Vice-President of Enrollment Management at St. Ambrose University

An Additional Option: Men are encouraged to come Friday, March 10 in time for 5:30 pm dinner, enjoy each other's company, participate in the retreat day and consider staying overnight on Saturday, March 11. Meals and lodging provided on Friday eve and/or Saturday eve for an additional fee of \$50 for each overnight and meals.

Singing the Liturgy: Thurs, March 23 | 7:00pm., St. Paul the Apostle Church, Davenport. Explore the meaning of various elements of the Mass: Introductory Rites, Liturgy of God's Word, Liturgy of the Lord's Table, Dismissal Rites. Discover music that helps the "full, conscious and active" participation of the faithful associated with these elements. Presenter: Fr. (Jan) Michael Joncas, author of 4 books on liturgy, composed 25 collections of liturgical music including "On Eagles' Wings" often used for funeral services. Fee: Free will offering.

Roman Catholic Thought and Practice 50 Years after Vatican II: March 24 – 26 | Fri, 5:00 pm – Sun, 11:00am Fr. (Jan) Michael Joncas. Explore the meaning of the four great Constitutions of Vatican II 50 years after their publication: *Sacrosanctum Concilium on the Liturgy*; *Lumen Gentium on the Church*; *Dei Verbum on Sacred Scripture*; and *Gaudium et Spes on the Church in the Modern World*. Fee: \$125

Clifton StrengthsFinder Workshop: Focusing on What's STRONG, Not What's Wrong: Tues, March 28 | 9:30am – 3:30pm. StrengthsFinder Workshop is an opportunity to identify and develop unique talents to enhance personal and professional lives. Our talents are the ways in which we most naturally think, feel, and behave and represent our innate power and potential. When we tap into this source of wisdom and power, we gain the ability to transform every moment, every interaction, and every day. The process begins with a web-based survey, taken prior to the workshop. Registration due March 15. Fee: \$30. Pat Shea

BENET HOUSE RETREAT CENTER/ST. MARY MONASTERY, ROCK ISLAND, IL

Contact Sr. Jackie Walsh, OSB at 309-283-2108, retreats@smmsisters.org or online at <http://www.smmsisters.org/retreats/> to register for programs mentioned below.

Valentine's Evening for Couples: "They Are Like Trees Planted in the House of the Lord." Psalm 92:13: Feb. 10, 6:30 - 9:30 PM. Trees are strong, beautiful statements of life, as is marriage. The knots in the wood of a tree add to its beauty. The challenges of the world can add to the beauty of a couple. Join us for an evening of celebration of that beauty. Presenters: Deacon Steve and Kathy MacDonald; Jeff and Deb Rausch. Fee: \$45/couple. Couples may stay overnight at Benet House for an additional \$75.

Men's Retreat: Look Beyond the Horizon: Feb. 17, 6:30 p.m. – Feb. 19 Noon. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." (John 15:5-8) This retreat will break open John 15 and challenge you to be a disciple of Jesus. Jesus calls us to look beyond the horizon and follow Him in new ways. Presenter: Rev. Duane Jack, Retired Priest and serves as Spiritual

Director of NW Cursillo. Fee: Register and pay in full: \$235 (private room), \$220 (shared room). Commuter fee: \$155, includes lunch, dinner and brunch.

Girls' Be A Catholic Sister For A Day: Feb. 25, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Spend a fun-filled day at St. Mary Monastery with other girls entering 5th - 8th grades. This great day includes meeting and praying with Benedictine Sisters, making arts and crafts, playing games, enjoying friends and food. Learn how wonderful a life focused on God can be! Fee: \$10 for materials.

SHALOM SPIRITUALTY CENTER, DUBUQUE

To register call 563-582-3592 or send check payable to Shalom Spirituality Center with your contact information to: 1001 Davis St., Dubuque, IA 52001. www.shalomretreats.org, info@shalomretreats.org

Simple Practices For Befriending Stress: Saturday, February 4, 9:30am-11:30am. Learn practical ways that can be used to deal with stress, so that we can grow in kindness towards ourselves and others. An integrative approach of body-mind-spirit will be offered during this. Offering: \$10, includes a snack. Registration Deadline: February 2

Grieving the Loss Of A Loved One: February 6, 7:00pm-8:30pm. If you are grieving the loss of someone dear to you, we invite you to join us for this evening of supportive learning and sharing. Offering: Free
Registration Deadline: February 3

Days of Quiet & Prayer: A 4-Session Series: February 8, March 8, April 12, May 10, 9:30am-2:45pm. Each session will begin with coffee and rolls at 9:30am. We will continue with prayer, and each participant will be given a booklet to aid personal reflection throughout the day. Faith-sharing and prayer will conclude each day. The book selection for this program is "The Rebirthing of God: Christianity's Struggle for New Beginnings" by John Philip Newell. Offering: \$85 for series, includes the book, program, materials, coffee & rolls, lunch, and a private room

Shalom's Annual Valentine Evening For Married Couples: Sunday, February 12, 6:00-8:00pm, Sunday Liturgy at 5:00pm. Bring your Valentine for a delicious candlelight meal in our cozy dining room! After dinner, Steve and Gina Gansemer will share an inspirational message on the meaning of married love. For those who wish to attend, the 5:00pm liturgy will include an opportunity to renew your loving commitment to one another. Offering: \$48 per couple. Registration Deadline: February 7

Wellness Day: Wednesday, February 15, 9:00am-3:30pm. Come for a day enjoying two 30-minute holistic services of your choice, a private guest room, delicious lunch, walking the labyrinth, adult coloring, and space to just be. Choose two services from the following: Massage, Reflexology, Essential Oil Consultation, Success Coaching, Spiritual Direction. Offering: \$85. Registration Deadline: February 10

Substance Use Disorders & The Family: Tuesday, February 21, 6:30-8:00pm. This presentation will include signs and symptoms of substance abuse disorders and the effects of these disorders on the family system, as well as things you can do and resources available. The evening will include time for sharing, processing, and questions. Free Will Offering. Co-sponsored with Mercy Medical Center. Registration Deadline: February 20

Create A Brighter Future Workshop: Thursday, February 23, 6:00pm-9:30pm. The workshop is designed for people in transition. In contemplating a career move or considering what to do in retirement, participants will discover ways you want to be and how you want to impact the world. Offering: \$35 includes materials and snacks. Registration Deadline: February 16

To support the ministry of your parish, school and the diocese these groups automatically receive the *Mini-Messenger*:

Deacons	Diocesan Corporate Board	Youth Ministers	Pastoral Associates	Directors/Coordinators of Faith Formation
Parishes	Catholic Foundation Board	Sisters	RCIA Parish Contacts	Diocesan Liturgical Commission
Priests	Parish Lay Directors	Bookkeepers	Diocesan Board of Education	Diocesan Planning Commission
Seminarians	Diocesan Pastoral Council	Principals	Parish Life Coordinators	

Other interested persons are welcome to subscribe. If you have questions regarding your subscription contact Laurie Hoefling, hoefling@davenportdiocese.org.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development Diocesan Internship

The Catholic Campaign
for Human Development
(CCHD):

1) Provides grants to self-help projects developed by grassroots groups of empowered poor persons who are working to address the root causes of poverty in their communities.

2) Works to increase Catholics' awareness of poverty in the U.S., educates about Catholic social tradition, and builds bridges between poor and non-poor communities.

**For more information,
contact:**

Loxi Hopkins
Diocese of Davenport
780 W. Central Park Ave.
Davenport, IA 52804
563-888-4212
hopkins@davenportdiocese.org



Are you Catholic? Interested in fighting poverty?

Application deadline is February 15, 2017

Who? Any U.S. Catholic with an interest in solidarity building, participation of the poor, and Catholic Social Teaching. Spanish-speaking preferred but not necessary.

What? Intern will work with two local CCHD funded groups: Quad Cities Interfaith, Davenport or Center for Worker Justice, Iowa City. Tasks will vary but may include: parish education, training and outreach, letter and article writing, research, and developing relationships with community organizations. The internship is 16-20 flexible hours per week for 24 weeks during the school year paid at \$12.00/hour.

When? 2017/2018 school year. Intern must be able to attend the May 31 to June 2, 2017 CCHD Training. (Expenses paid).

Where to apply: Diocese of Davenport,
<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/cchd-internship-opportunities>

2016/2017 Intern

Nick Riedesel works with Quad Cities Interfaith. He is working with neighborhood outreach efforts. He is a liaison for Ambrosian's for Peace and Justice. He also assists with the administration of the office and provides assistance with the monthly newsletter, manages the office database, and creates marketing materials. Nick also engages with the board of QCI.

Marriage Moments & Parenting Pointers February 2017

FOR MORE extended marriage and parenting articles, plus archived Marriage Moments and Parenting Pointers, go to: www.SusanVogt.net ***BLOG:** *Living Lightly.* www.SusanVogt.net/blog

TWITTER: [@Vogt_Susan](https://twitter.com/Vogt_Susan) ***EDUCATORS, LEADERS, & MINISTERS:** You are welcome to reprint these MM's and PP's in bulletins, newsletters, and on your website with proper credit, (By Susan Vogt, www.SusanVogt.net). When used on a website, please also link to my website: www.SusanVogt.net

MARRIAGE MOMENTS

715. Feb.6: Overlook a little, love a lot. To motivate yourself, you need to let go of the trivial. Ponder for one minute the possibility that your spouse might die next week. We can never be certain about the future.

716. Feb. 13: Valentine's Day. Jesus continually urges us to go beyond the letter of the law. He interprets "You shall not kill" (Mt. 5) as "Don't be angry." "You shall not commit adultery" might be interpreted as "Show your spouse that they come first and you love him/her wholeheartedly. Go the extra mile for your beloved today. Find a way to stretch your love.

717. Feb. 20: A good marriage is not recognized by the absence of conflict, but the presence of peacemaking. One sign of a healthy marital relationship is the desire of a husband and wife to seek unity when there are disagreements and differences. (Family Minute)

718. Feb. 27: "Do not worry about your life." (Mt 6:26) Worries come naturally into most couple's lives. It may seem unrealistic not to worry. Try watching some birds today. It's winter, but somehow they are surviving. Do they look sad? Learn from the birds.

PARENTING POINTERS

714. Feb. 3: "Share your bread...Shelter the homeless...Clothe the naked." (Isaiah 58:7) Although this scripture is usually meant to urge people to go beyond their own families, if you are in the active parenting stage of life, it may be enough to feed, shelter, and clothe your own family. If you're stretched pretty thin this week, you're allowed to count that. It's holy.

715. Feb. 10: Black History Month. The past few years have been tumultuous for race relations. Few people think of themselves as racist, but do you or your children have friends of a different race? It may feel awkward but find a way to meet someone who looks different than you this week. Perhaps go to a church, store, or neighborhood where people who look different from you gather.

716. Feb. 17: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18) Generally, preachers generalize neighbor to mean beyond the person next door. But today, why not take it literally. With your child, choose a neighbor. Make them a treat or do a favor for them together.

717. Feb. 24: Children whine and complain. (OK, adults do this too.) Join with your child to make a "Gratitude List." See how many things you can each think of for which you are grateful.