

"If only all the people of the Lord were prophets! If only the Lord would bestow his spirit on them." (the words of Moses) Numbers 11:29b



Your July Newsletter

Monthly Newsletter Issue #39

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.



Keeping the (Catholic) Faith in College

Heading off to college for the first time can be a psychological stress on young adults. Releasing that first or last child to college marks a family development milestone and can be a time filled with emotions for the parents. One concern of parents, and sometimes the young adults too, is the challenge of living in the secular college world. Connection to a lively church community is one of the keys to students maintaining their Catholic faith when they leave home for college. We are thankful that Joe McClane's Monday radio show "Evangelium Live" (Houston area Catholic Radio 1430AM) is devoting a series to this topic. Joe is going to provide a peek into Catholic life on some of our most popular Texas campuses. Below is a partial schedule: (he may add more schools as the series continues), so check with the station listing. Many colleges have a Newman Center (see the links below) and many of these centers offer retreats to start the school year. Getting hooked up with the local church community should be one of the important "to do" items on the list for freshmen.

- August 10 at noon - [UT Austin](#)
- August 17 at noon - [Texas A&M U](#)
- August 31 at noon - [U. of St. Thomas](#)
- September 7 at noon - [Stephen F Austin U](#)



Back-to-School Shopping

If you shop on-line for any of your back-to-school needs, you can support Gratia Plena's mental health services work in the community at the same time! Check out coupons on [GoodShop](#), and sign in to your AmazonSmile account when shopping Amazon.



Suicide in Jails and Prisons

Many of us heard in the news about the recent tragic death by suicide of Sandra Bland, a 28yo who had been arrested and jailed after a traffic stop in Prairie View. Across five years since 2009 there have been 140 deaths by suicide in Texas county jails. There is a high rate of mental illness among those who are incarcerated. Jail is just not ever going to be the appropriate setting for the treatment of mental illness.

Twitter Chat about Coping with Cancer

The National Cancer Institute and the National Institute of Mental Health jointly hosted a Twitter Chat on July 22nd on the topic of how patients and caregivers, across all ages, can deal with the psychological impact of cancer. If you missed it, you can view the transcript [here](#).

And if you're interested in viewing their past Twitter chats on various topics, please visit this [website](#).



Enjoying Life and Facebook

[Here's a really good little article](#) about Facebook and enjoying life. Don't let the Facebook bring you down.

Seniors Dating

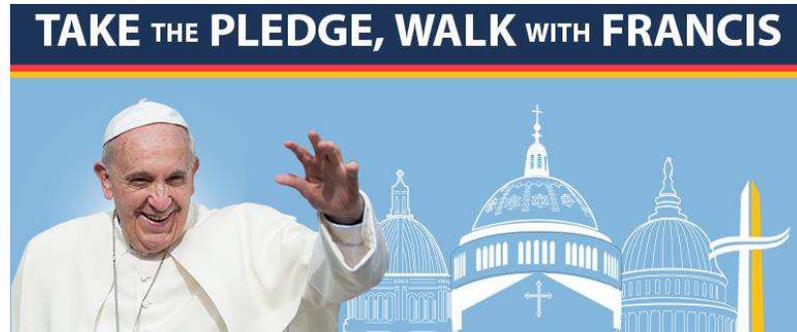
We monitor our children closely because we know that there are dangers that they may not be aware of and may not be able to protect themselves from. At a certain point, this may also be true for our aging parents. [Here is an article](#) about predators who target widows and other senior women. We all need companionship in the form of family and friends, and this longing can be manipulated by those who have bad intentions.



Ministry to the Widowed

The Family Life Ministry office of the Archdiocese is offering a program Saturday, August 29th at St. Dominic Center called "Ministry to the Widowed." The event begins at 9am in the auditorium and ends at 1pm and costs \$25. The Family Life Ministry has a [variety of programs](#), including a ministry to the

Separated and Divorced as well as a domestic violence awareness program.



Walking with Francis Pledge

In anticipation of Pope Francis' visit to the United States in September, there is a movement starting which is similar to the "ice bucket challenge" of 2014. Anyone wishing to "take the pledge" can do any variety of acts of charity and then use social media to encourage others to do the same. The hashtag to be used is #WalkwithFrancis and a more complete explanation is made [in this article](#).

Director of Development

We are continuing to search for and ask God to send us a Director of Development. Gratia Plena seeks a skilled and experienced individual, perhaps a retiree, who might volunteer 2-3 days a week in this position. This person will be inspired to assist us with fundraising projects, grant applications, and other ideas for supporting the growth of Gratia Plena. Is God calling you? This work is critical to our mission. Please contact Dr. Ken if interested.

Donations In Memory of Loved Ones

We receive donations several times a year in memory of loved ones who have passed from this life to the eternal life. This is a beautiful way to remember a loved one. These donations help cover the cost of counseling at Gratia Plena for those who do not have sufficient funds. We pray for our donors and for those whom they honor (Eternal rest grant to them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.).

Volunteer Service Hours for Students

Catholic high school and college students who need community service hours or are just looking to volunteer are welcome to help out at Gratia Plena as an evening/weekend receptionist. This might be a really great opportunity for a young person who is considering studying to become a counselor. We have a tremendous need for Catholic counselors, particularly those who are from any of our great ethnic communities in the Greater Houston area. Contact Dr. Ken for more information.



Technology Improvements

Because of our growth, which has been made possible through the support of individual donors as well as the support of parishes like St. Laurence and St. Theresa (Sugar Land), Gratia Plena has recently begun a significant improvement in our technology infrastructure. This improvement accomplishes two goals at once. It makes our electronic medical records and other office documents: (1) more secure to protect our clients and (2) more accessible to our clinical staff so that they can do their work efficiently and effectively. We wish to express our deep appreciation to: Stephen Howard, Daniel Millikan, Mike Campbell (of [A-GoGo Media](#)) and TJ Horlacher who all donated their time and networking expertise on this project.



Men! Join “The Holy League”

This is a new initiative for men across the greater Houston area. It is a monthly Holy Hour for men with Adoration and Confession. This is designed for a special kind of man who desires to build up his family and community. Joe McClane of KSHJ Catholic Radio says “This isn't for everyone. We want the men who desire to lead the way to join us in the league.” The first Holy Hour will be Wednesday, August 12 at Annunciation Catholic Church, 1618 Texas Ave in downtown. The League will meet the second Wednesday of every month at 5:30am.

Schedule:

5:00am - Men begin to gather in the Narthex to greet one another

5:30am - Holy Hour begins (Confessions are available)

6:30am - Holy Hour concludes

6:30am - Daily Mass is available to those who can stay

Parking is in the church lot on the corner of Jackson and Texas (or on the street which is free until 7am). Please invite any man you think would be a good fit for this program. Annunciation would like to get a head count to have enough priests for Confessions, so they are asking that men RSVP via an email list sign-up by clicking [HERE](#), or call Joe at 832-786-4500 x2.



Movie of the Month Recommendation

This month, we recommend the clever and entertaining 2012 movie "[Me Again](#)" starring David A.R. White and Ali Landry. This is a faith-based family film about a church pastor who is struggling with his true self. In his misery he prays to be somebody who he is not, anybody but who he is...and then his prayer is answered! Next month tune in for our "Book 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...

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Contact Us:

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