



St. Jerome's Catholic Church 10895 Hamlin Blvd. Largo, FL
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As Pandemic Continues, Some Catholic Moms Call the Midwife



As hospitals continue to treat patients with COVID-19, many expectant women worry about exposing themselves and their babies to the virus while giving birth. Their concern has led to a surge in demand for at-home births, according to some midwives.

In 2018, about one percent of births occurred at home, according to a CDC study. That figure has been on the rise since 2004. The figure for at-home births increased by 77% between 2004 and 2017.

The increase may be due to increased coverage of home births by insurance, but the surge in demand for home births during recent months is unprecedented, Catholic midwives told CNA.

Catholic midwife Tiara Rodgers, whose practice, Modern Miracle Birth serves women in central Texas, says she has seen demand for her services double. "Because of covid, a lot of women and families are finding themselves considering home birth when they would've never thought otherwise to consider home birth," Rodgers told CNA. "Midwives are busier than ever right now."

Midwives are trained to deliver babies in low-risk pregnancies, often with the help of a doula, who offers emotional support for women during the birth itself. If a risk-factor develops during the pregnancy, midwives take women to a hospital for further care. That, said Rodgers, will not change even in a pandemic.

Because of the virus, Rodgers said that women are doing their own research into home birth as a viable alternative to hospital care. And they are finding that for low-risk pregnancies, the outcomes are very good.

"Some moms who are due in a couple of weeks are calling us up and saying 'do you have room for me? I'm 37 weeks... and I really don't want to birth in a hospital,'" said Rodgers.

One mother contacted Modern Miracle Birth 38 weeks into her pregnancy. She was afraid of going to the hospital, although she admitted that she knew nothing about having a baby at home.

But after meeting Rodgers, she trusted her team and decided to have her baby at home. She gave birth to a nine-pound baby boy in her bathtub.

"You could see the fear melt away. That was really, really beautiful, because it was not what she expected at all," said Rodgers.

Tracy Santangelo, a midwife whose practice, serves the Dallas-Fort Worth area, said that she had to turn away seven or eight women every week at the peak of the pandemic. "People are willing to do a lot to make sure that their birth desires are really something that they can be attained and will be respected," Santangelo said.

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FROM AROUND THE WORLD OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

WHO, UNFPA Use Coronavirus Pandemic to Promote Abortion

Celebrating the Life of Down Syndrome Advocate Birthe Lejeune

Pilgrims Flock to 'Scotland's National Shrine to Our Lady' During Lockdown

Congo's new Ebola outbreak adds strain as agencies respond to COVID-19

Eucharist and tabernacle stolen from North Carolina Catholic Church

Pope Francis adds three titles to Catholic litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

LBGT equality ruling's full impact on church 'yet to be seen,' some say

Pope Francis declares Catholic sister killed in Satanic ritual a martyr

Can Catholics support 'Black Lives Matter'?

FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT



Pete Grasso

Brothers: This is the "Quarantine" version of the August Newsletter. Much has been written about this virus and how it is affecting us, but we still must stay cautious. Where I work, we have seen the highest numbers of Covid deaths since this pandemic started. Some say it is a conspiracy, others take it very seriously. Nevertheless, it is important to err on the side of safety and keep vigilant. I want to see all of your smiling faces as soon as this is over. In the meantime, please continue to wear your masks and maintain social distancing to keep everyone safe. Fr. Tom and the staff at St. Jerome continue to provide safe practices. It is nice to see so many people at church and receiving the sacraments on Saturday and Sundays. Thanks to our brothers for their continued support of our drive-through confessions and Holy Communion. Also, thanks to those brothers and their families who

braved the storms and attended the Vigil and following day Funeral Services for our Brother Bill Devarti who passed. We had a good number of members from the council and from the 4th Degree Assembly. I have been speaking with several of our members about some potential upcoming projects which will be outdoors and projected into the fall when it will be cooler and safer. I will be placing these ideas in a memo request form to the membership for approval after speaking with Fr. Tom (on his return from vacation) and presenting them to the officers at our upcoming meeting Wednesday, August 5, at 7:30 p.m. I believe we should reach out to each other as often as possible just to speak and share and to uplift our spirits. Equally important is to continue to pray for each other, our Priests, Deacon, Sister Lucia and for our church family. We all need each other. I would like to suggest that you all read the wonderful news in the Columbia magazine. Also, the Florida Catholic Newspaper is now online and provides information of those things happening in our State. God bless you all. Vivat Jesus. Pete

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Ye men of noble bearing,
That joined the K. of C.
Are men possessed of daring,
Who in battle will not flee.

You will fight for Church and State.
You will fight for God and man.
In the end you will create,
A power behind God's plan.

You will oppose oppression,
To the poor and humble here.
You will conquer all suppression,
To those friends that we hold dear.

You will fight for God and state,
For the nobler things of life.
For the things God did create,
Against oppression here and strife.

You have become a soldier,
Of God's might army here.
By His help you've grown bolder.
You're a warrior without fear.

March 29 , 1938



FROM THE DESK OF OUR PASTOR



Fr. Tom Morgan

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), in the document *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation* in the United States, stated, "Adult faith formation, by which people consciously grow in the life of Christ through experience, reflection, prayer, and study, must be 'the central task in [the] catechetical enterprise,' becoming 'the axis around which revolves the catechesis of childhood and adolescence as well as that of old age.'" It is our desire as a parish to continue to reflect on this document and ask how we might assist each other to grow in our Catholic Faith. I am thankful for the opportunities that have had an effect in

the lives of many through our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), our bible studies, our Embrace Board, our ALPHAs, and our Connect groups. We recognize that, in this time when our lives have been dramatically affected by the coronavirus, we must consider alternative means to continue to grow in our faith.

St. Jerome has for over two years participated in a programs called FORMED. What is FORMED? FORMED provides the very best Catholic content from more than 60 organizations to help parishes, families and individuals explore their faith anywhere: at home, on their phones or on a tablet or desktop com-

puter. FORMED provides thousands of movies, children's programs, eBooks, audiobooks, parish programs and bible studies direct to your browser, mobile or connected device. All parishioners of St. Jerome are eligible to participate in FORMED free of charge. Our parish has paid for the annual subscription for the benefit of our parishioners.

How can I sign up or learn more about FORMED? Go to: <https://formed.org/signup> and follow the instructions on that page. You will then enter an exciting "FORM" of faith formation that can last you a lifetime!

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Fr. Tom Morgan



Covid-19 Driving Pregnant Women to Midwives

(Continued from page 1)

But she could not get the supplies she needed to accept extra clients, although she went to great lengths to obtain supplies. She even bought a face shield from a Chinese food restaurant supplier.

"People were very panicked," Santangelo said. Most of the women who called her were already late in their pregnancies. "I don't know if they found somebody or not."

Santangelo said that one of her clients, a first-time mother, plans to give birth in a hotel room in order to allow her family to be present but also to be close to the hospital. It's actually something Santangelo has done before.

Women's concerns about not having family present at a birth go beyond sentimentality. Rodgers explained that in the case of a medical emergency, a husband makes decisions on behalf of his wife, if she is unable to do so.

"The woman doesn't have anyone to advocate for her," if the husband is not present, said Rodgers. "If she has to have an emergency c-section, there's nobody there to consent for her if she

can't consent for herself. Although many women did not plan to deliver their babies at home, Rodgers said that many say they end up preferring at-home births over hospital births. "We're seeing people have these wonderful birth outcomes, that are saying, I want to do this again. There's no way I'd go back to the medical model of care."

As Catholic midwives, Rodgers and Santangelo serve women of all faiths with an understanding that birth is both physical and spiritual.

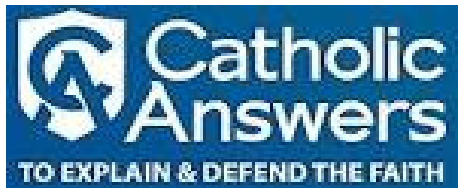
"It really is an opportunity to show people the grace that a woman of faith can give someone else," said Santangelo. She has the opportunity to connect with the Catholic mothers she serves on matters of faith, but has also found that



non-Catholic mothers are often looking for a sympathetic ear.

"To come from a non-judgmental place and to truly serve women because that's the gift that God gave you, that's my greatest joy," she said.

"We are made body, mind and spirit by the Lord. If you cut out one of those, then you will be missing part of the puzzle to caring and giving this mom and baby the best care possible."



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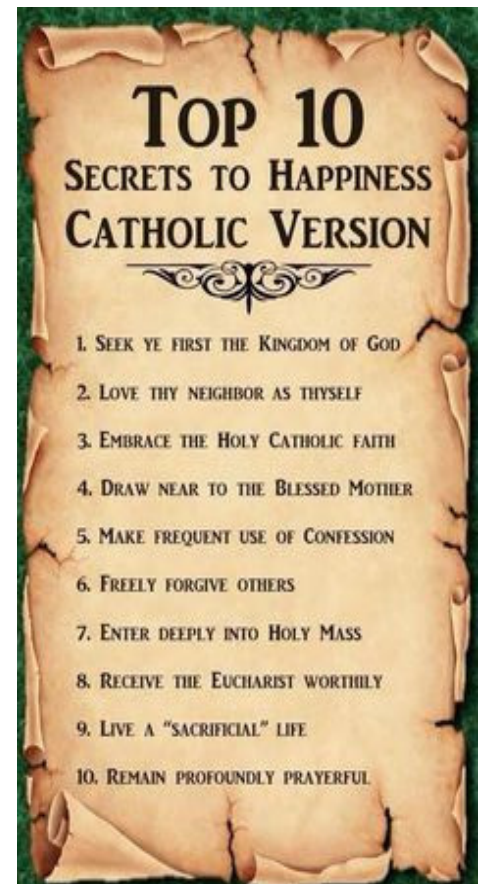
Midwives come under the canon law of the Church in their relation towards two of the sacraments, baptism and matrimony. As regards marriage, their testimony is frequently required in cases of no consummation, whether owing to the impediment of impotency or because a dispensation is asked. In such cases, the testimony of three midwives is held sufficient in practice, since the number seven mentioned in the "Corpus Juris Canonici" is not considered to be obligatory in law, though some older canonists insisted on the necessity of having the testimony of 'seven midwives.

With regard to the sacrament of baptism, the office of midwives is of the highest importance. On them frequently devolves the duty of conferring this sacrament, under circumstances where no other person's ministrations is possible. Hence, the Church has always been most solicitous concerning the character of midwives and their instruction in

this religious duty.

Canonists teach that women who undertake the office of midwife are bound under mortal sin to learn the methods and requirements of valid baptism, as this duty frequently devolves upon them. There has been much legislation on this subject in various diocesan synods, whose canons place special obligations on parish priests and midwives. The former are reminded that, as midwives in conferring baptism act in place of the parish priest, he is strictly bound to inform himself whether they have sufficient knowledge to administer the sacrament validly. Some diocesan synods require that midwives, before being approved for duty, take an oath that they will labor to procure the spiritual safety of infant and mother. When a newborn child has been baptized by a midwife, the parish priest must inquire carefully whether she had the proper intention and administered the rite according to the prescriptions of the Church. If there is any reason for doubt, the baptism is to be repeated conditionally, but if it be certain that the sacrament was properly conferred it may not be repeated and only the other ceremonies are to be supplied by the parish priest.

Finally, it is likewise necessary that midwives be well informed on the Church's teaching concerning.



St. Jerome Gets New Office Manager

Deacon Cris Stout was born to Catholic parents in Miami Beach, FL. "And I have 10 siblings to prove it," he jokingly said.

Cris is our new Parish Manager. We spoke of both his past and present. "I enjoyed being a Catholic as a child," he said. "I often played priest, using Necco wafers as the host." When in high school, he said, his possible vocation to become a priest waned some, so he didn't even consider being a deacon for quite some time. Upon graduation, he went to the University of Florida for a business degree and then to Penn State and got his MBA there.

Over the years he worked for several corporations; Ford Motor Company was one of them, where he worked as a Financial Analyst. "We would study how cost-effective vehicles were five to ten years out, with various up-keep expenses compared to their gross



Deacon Cris Stout

under then-pastor Tom Morgan. He later was asked to go with Fr. Tom to St. Lawrence to be on the parish staff. Initially he said no thanks, but eventually agreed to since he was in the middle of the process to become a deacon and felt God was calling him to combine a potential clerical career with his secular employment. He completed the diaconate formation program and was ordained on Oct. 3, 2009.

Here at St. Jerome, Deacon Cris has basically three responsibilities: the

profit," he said. In that way they analyzed whether certain business decisions were profitable or not. In addition, he worked for Champion Home Builders and John Deere. He was also involved in commercial real estate.

He was a parishioner at Nativity in Brandon for 15 years, then went to St. Clement for 6 years, five of those years

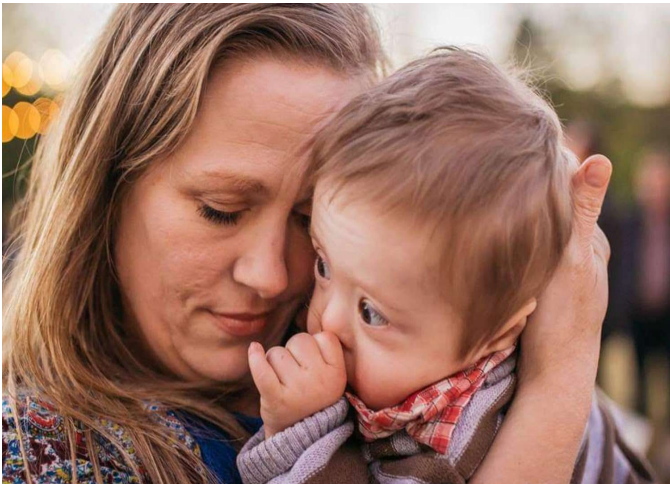
head of all administrative functions, primarily what Cindy Munroe did. He pays the bills, does the payroll. His next function is Human Resources, which entails hiring, firing, evaluations, raises, benefits, etc.

Finally, he is responsible for the facilities: the property, the physical plant, the equipment. He works along with Bruce and Mike in maintenance.

Deacon Cris has no idea how long he will be here. In general terms, he said, "When I have done what I am here to do, or when Fr. Tom feels satisfied that I am needed no longer." He is retired from regular employment. He is glad to be here but is still looking forward to being fully retired. His work week here is long. He officially works 40 hours in three days: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, "...but I have the tendency to work until I am satisfied that I have done what I'm supposed to do," he said. He lives in Valrico and leaves home around 4:30 a.m. and heads home at the end of a long day around 8:30- 9:30 p.m., missing the heavy traffic both ways that way, he said.

Upon learning that Deacon Cris was working with Fr. Tom, an old priest friend said, "It looks like they put that old band back together again." Yes they did!

MIRACLE BIRTH ATTRIBUTED TO FR. MCGIVNEY



When Michelle Schachle found out that her 13th (unborn) child not only had Down syndrome, but fetal hydrops--an uncommon, typically fatal condition where fluid builds up around the vital organs of an unborn child--she and her husband appealed to Fr. Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus, for help. The unborn fetus was

the Schachle family. Daniel works for the Knights of Columbus and had previously been Grand Knight of his local council. The Schachles even dubbed their homeschool the "Fr. McGivney Academy." We've worn out his prayer card over the years," said Daniel. When it came time to invoke some spiritual help dur-

ing a crisis, there was no question about what they would do next. "We knew that (Fr. McGivney) looked out over our family, and we looked to him a lot and asked him to pray for us, anyways. So it was more of a natural, I would say, flow," said Daniel. Michelle concurred, telling CNA that McGivney had answered prayers "many times" for their family. When they prayed for their unborn baby, Fr. McGivney came through again - in a big way. With hundreds of people praying for McGivney's intervention for her child, and following a quick pilgrimage to Fatima with the Knights of Columbus, Michelle's next ultrasound showed no sign of fetal hydrops. Her doctor, unaware that her patient was the woman she had heard about - the woman with the terminally ill baby - began to discuss what they would do when the baby was born. Until that day, she and her husband had planned to name the baby Benedict and had been referring to him as "Baby Ben." But when she heard that her child had been healed, Michelle knew he had to

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Fr. McGivney,

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be named Michael, in honor of Fr. McGivney. "I just remember weeping and saying, 'His name is Michael,'" said Michelle."

On May 27, 2020, Pope Francis confirmed what the Schachles already knew: they had witnessed a miracle. After extensive medical examination, the unexplained healing of Michael was decreed a miracle that arose through the intercession of Fr. McGivney.

As a result of that miracle, McGivney will be beatified, and referred to as Bl. Michael McGivney.

"I remember praying the whole, the entire trip (to Fatima), 'let Michael be the miracle,' but like in my heart of hearts, that meant he would live," Michelle explained. "And I never thought beyond him living...I only wanted him to live."

During the investigation into Michael's healing from fetal hydrops, the Schachles were repeatedly asked why they did not pray for Michael's healing

from Down syndrome as well. They explained that they viewed a child with Down syndrome as a "blessing" to their family, and that they were only concerned about him being born alive.

Despite the miraculous healing from fetal hydrops, the rest of Michelle's pregnancy did not go entirely according to plan. She delivered her son in an emergency cesarean section after just 31 weeks gestation. Michael weighed only 3 pounds 4 ounces, and spent the first 10 weeks and one day of his life in the hospital. They call him Mikey.

Michael's birthday, May 15, is the anniversary of the chartering of the first Knights of Columbus council. Michael and McGivney have the same birthday. Both Michael and McGivney were born into families of 13 children - McGivney was the eldest and Michael the youngest.

Michael was born with a heart defect commonly found in children with Down syndrome and had heart surgery at just seven weeks old. He had another brush with death at six months old,



when he came down with a respiratory illness that landed him in the hospital for six weeks.

But today, Michael is a happy and active five-year-old. He has no conditions related to his prematurity or fetal hydrops, and, by his family's account, he's thriving.