



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE



The Virgin & Child with St. Ann, by Leonardo da Vinci

One church bulletin announcement, yet how far and wide was the positive impact which led to the privilege of meeting three generations of precious lives!

Per our request, an announcement about our Spring Rose Sale was published in many church bulletins. The notice included a list of the Center's services. In one parish this led to great-grandmother of a tiny baby in the womb informing her granddaughter about our services. The young woman called, sharing that she would not be seen by her OB-GYN for another month and she had some concerns.

Within a few days this lovely new client came for an ultrasound, accompanied by her mother, grandmother, and the father of the baby. Beautiful, happy conversations with so much joy infused the atmosphere while we conducted the client intake. Next, the whole family was invited to the sonogram room where they exuberantly viewed the miracle of human life.

While saying their grateful goodbyes, the father proudly displayed the pictures of their baby, adding that he could not believe how amazing the experience was. Each of them repeatedly expressed their astonishment that it was the bulletin announcement that led them to us. As our beaming new client left, she hugged me and said, "I will be seeing you often!"

May God bless our priests who welcome, promote and support the Center, and who so carefully and lovingly shepherd the lives entrusted to them.

Gail Faray-Musleh
Executive Director

THE MIRACLE OF THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR

"Nothing short of miraculous! A huge blessing that we have been praying for a long time!" effused the Center's nurse Loren Robenhymer while speaking about our new Medical Director.

Two years ago we began searching for a pro-life doctor who is licensed in R.I. and willing to volunteer on-site. Almighty God answered our prayers—and yours on our behalf—with a superabundance of generosity.

Donna LaFontaine, MD, is a now retired, 37-year-practiced Obstetrics & Gynecology Specialist. Wanting to do something meaningful in retirement, Donna was actively seeking a pro-life ministry.



Donna LaFontaine, MD

A peer at the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians & Gynecologists recommended that she talk to Gail who had

told the association about the Center's need. As their conversations progressed, Donna and Gail realized the fulfillment of something profound was at hand.

"Everything lined up and clicked," Donna said. "Meeting the staff—people who have the same values as I do—and the whole Catholic aspect which means so much to me as a lifelong Catholic."

Gail concurred. "This is a great miracle. Her skill level is exceptional, proficient in both abdominal and vaginal ultrasounds. She is everything we need."

see **Donna**, page 2

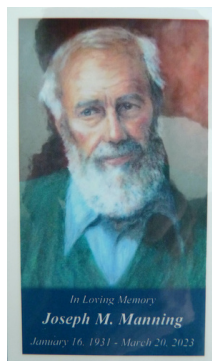
BEATA AND CAMELLIA, AND JOE

Passing into eternal life on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, sidewalk prayer warrior Joe Manning was, like his patron, a quiet channel through which Almighty God performed a miracle that is the Center's most widely known story of a life and a soul saved.

When Beata became pregnant, she felt unprepared and incapable. "I remember immediately considering abortion because I just couldn't imagine how I would measure up to being somebody else's parent," she stated.

She also admitted to feeling deeply ashamed. "There was something so disappointing to me

about how I chose to exercise my femininity and how I didn't consider my ability to mother."



Rest in peace, Joe!

Correspondingly, she was not comfortable with the thought of an abortion. "It occurred to me that I am not the victim. There is someone else to consider and I need to step up to that." Secretly, she prayed to God to help her find another way.

While Beata wrestled with self-doubt, no one she knew offered any encouragement. Her boyfriend simply rejected fatherhood and insisted upon abortion. The weather was overcast, windy and cold when they drove to her appointment.

see **Joe**, page 2

Donna, from page 1

Yet, nothing at the Center stands on its own; personnel, goods and services would not exist without our supportive family.

"The Rose Gala sealed the deal," Donna reported. "The love of the warm, friendly people whom I'd never met. Listening to them and the testimonies, I felt very comfortable, that this is where I am meant to be. That, and the chapel, such a beautiful chapel." Inspired, she joined our team.

Although the Center covers her licensing fees, Donna is unconditionally not accepting compensation. She takes volunteerism very seriously and lives it generously.

Loren is ecstatic about working beside Donna. "You can tell that she truly cares, loves to do this, and appreciates the setting wherein she can be very generous with her time. She is the doctor everybody would want: genuinely concerned and very compassionate."

The template for doctors in hospitals is 30-40 ultrasounds per day with only 4 – 5 minutes per patient. "It's onerous," Donna noted. "Here, it is quite lovely to be able to get to know the mothers and see how they need direction, support and encouragement, which they don't receive in other settings."

Joe, from page 1

Exiting the car, she passed by people gently trying to get her attention. An elderly man with a compassionate countenance, 34-year pro-life warrior Joe Manning, simply offered a brochure that she felt too awkward to accept due to abortion escorts who positioned themselves to prevent interactions.

Inside the building where no natural light is admitted, Beata proceeded with registration. When asked for her I.D., she realized she had left it in the car. Walking back, she furtively reached for Joe's brochure and tucked it out of sight.

The virtue of her openness to the light of Truth brought unusual grace to the situation back inside. Shaking in the procedure room, Beata asked if she could have a few minutes

Loren added, "Donna has been super about addressing their issues and proactive about contacting other physicians for them to get care in a timely manner; finding solutions and putting their minds at ease."

Our team members' respect is mutual. Extolling Loren, who has been on staff for six years, Donna said, "She is very conscientious, very committed. She's phenomenal. I admire her tremendously."

Echoing her first impression Donna added, "Everyone in the office is wonderful, there to help the mom. The staff members respect each other's work and everyone's work is valued."

Donna also spoke highly of you, our cherished contributors. "Everyone should be grateful to them because the resources for pregnant, needy moms are otherwise so limited. It is so unique for clients to be able to come into a beautiful, peaceful place and be unhurried, be heard, and get all their questions answered. We accompany them through all nine months; the sky's the limit; free care, supplies, parenting classes; there is really nothing like that elsewhere."

Recalling our source and summit, Gail declared, "God is using this little pregnancy center to accomplish His will."

alone. Pulling the brochure from her purse, she read the words for which she had prayed: "Another Way Out."

She immediately left and wandered through downtown Providence. As she did, the clouds parted, the sun beamed upon her, and a church bell rang reassurance.

She phoned the Center for an appointment because our number was on that pamphlet. Embraced by our ministry and staff, Beata received an ultrasound. "That was the first time I actually got to hear Camellia's heartbeat," she recalled. Seeing her little body on the screen really was the moment when I realized she's alive, she's here." Thanks to Joe.

You can watch Beata's testimony video on our YouTube channel:



WHEN ASKED HOW THE CENTER'S PARENTING CLASSES HELPED, ONE FATHER REPLIED:

"They helped me learn to prepare and to have an understanding about this miraculous adventure called parenthood."



AND A MOTHER SAID:

"Thank you very much for everything you contribute to make it easier and happier for parents and children who have all these needs."

SPRING APPEAL

A year ago, the nationwide community of pregnancy resource centers agreed that if Roe v. Wade was overturned, the demand for our services would significantly increase.

The outcome has remarkably exceeded expectations. During the first months of 2023, the Center has served twice as many clients as during the same period in 2022, nearly 800 already.

We are operating in a new context. While our spirits arise to the blessed opportunity to encounter and love more women, babies and families, likewise our resources must ascend. If each of you reading this donates according to your means, you will positively affect the vulnerable lives of those whom we serve.

This ministry depends upon your charity. Please give now at motheroflife.org/donate or use the enclosed donation form and envelope. With gratefulness we pray for you daily in our chapel.



Donations are tax-deductible.

HAPPY MOMENTS PICTURED



Taking Our Ministry on the Road

Every staff member cheerfully represented the Center at the annual Diocesan Faith Formation Convocation attended by 500 people.

Nothing Surpasses Hand-Made!

Bundles of beautiful knitted baby clothes were lovingly crafted and donated by the East Greenwich Senior Center Knitting Club. Their annual Christmas tradition provides soft and warm blankets, sweaters, booties, hats, mittens and more to families who otherwise could not afford to enjoy baby goods of such quality.



First, Louis Installed the Kneelers...

Retired fireman Louis Sackal gave thanks for the spiritual support he received while responding to our call for someone with carpentry skills to replace our time- and obsecration-worn kneelers.

You are welcome to pray in our refreshed chapel. Just call ahead to check on our client appointment schedule.

... And Then Malcolm Paired-Up the Trim

Although he received the same appeal from us that Louis was shown by his wife, Malcolm Vakalis heard a different call and



offered his skills as a painter, unaware that we had long-wanted to enliven the color of the chapel trim around the stained-glass windows, artworks, and doors. He, too, prayed his way to completion after Louis returned to unfasten and cluster all the pews and kneelers so Malcolm could move about unimpeded.



St. Nick's Village

Our parenting classroom was loaded with a great array of Christmas gifts donated by several parishes. Counselor/Client Advocate Colleen Earnshaw and cherished volunteers sorted, packaged, and gave them to more than 20 needy families with at least 55 children among them. Prayerful thanks to all who contributed!

TINA & THE WARRIORS

"Have love in your heart," replied Bob when asked how he and his fellow sidewalk prayer warriors cope with the unique challenges of pro-life public intervention.



One morning, a handful of them encountered a young woman who was evidently distressed. Together they swaddled her with love, listening as she described her hardships and fears. Gently, they encouraged her to keep her heart open, to receive the love of others, to trust in God. Then, they brought her to Mother of Life Pregnancy Center.

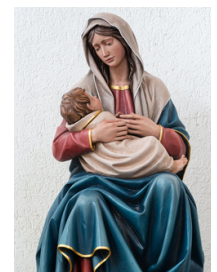
In the photo above, 5-months pregnant Tina is seated gleefully and comfortably in the maternity chair presented to her, along with a car seat/stroller, by the Center and her intercessory sidewalk prayer warriors. Tina's baby is due in June!

WONDERS & DESIGNS

"O God, how many are the wonders and designs you have worked for us!"
Inspired by *Intercessions*, Magnificat, 7 December 2022

A client called, needing a crib. We didn't have one, but we told her we would call back as soon as one came in. The very next call we received was from someone offering a crib.

Someone else donated an adult coat. Not usually receiving requests for adult clothing, we set it aside to bring to a St. Vincent de Paul Society clothing bin. The next day, a woman arrived on foot, shivering in the winter wind. She spoke no English, had a 1-year-old child strapped to her torso, and she was coatless. We offered her yesterday's donated coat. It fit perfectly.



Our Lady of Divine Providence, pray for us!

This is you! This is your love giving them hope! Thank you!



**Mother of Life
Pregnancy
Center**

A Place of
Hope, Healing
and Love

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**ROSE GALA
TICKETS**



SPONSORSHIPS



**ROSE GALA 2023
FRIDAY, SEP. 15
6:00 P.M.**

Scenery from the bay view deck at QCC

Come to lovely Quidnessett Country Club in North Kingstown to experience for yourself our warm and joyful annual celebration and the value you bring to this ministry by your generosity.

Our night will be focused on souls that have been saved and lives that have been transformed. You'll hear heart-warming stories, such as a father's touching testimony about choosing life. Plus, you'll enjoy great food, lively music, and dancing.

Our menu features Stuffed Breast of Chicken Chasseur, Braised Beef Short Rib with Mirepoix Brunoise & Shallot Demi-Glace, and Stuffed Filet of Sole with Lemon Beurre Blanc.

We need you there, so please give us the gladness of seeing your name among the early buyers! Purchase tickets online at motheroflife.org/donate. To purchase by mail or for assistance with online purchasing, please call Gail at 401-421-0821.

A VERY VALANCY CHRISTMAS

Visiting the Center on Feb. 10 with a memorial donation of Christmas baby gifts, Erin & Justin Baro also bestowed on us something greater: their personal witness to the humanity of babies in the womb. With their permission we share with you these excerpts from Erin's sweet letter.

"Valancy Stirling Baro was born on Saturday, April 7, 2018 at 9:53 a.m. I delivered her at 25 weeks, 3 days gestation, and she weighed 1 pound, 3 ounces. My health was declining rapidly as she was born, but I am beyond grateful that through the haze I still heard Valancy cry. This would be the only time my husband and I would hear her voice.

"Valancy was an impeccable, feisty, beautiful baby. She immediately locked eyes with her daddy, and that father-daughter bond was irrevocably forged. Over the next four weeks, we delighted in learning everything about her.

"She loved her hands, and she was happiest having them by her face, touching her head, behind her ears, and under her chin.

"I was blessed to hold Valancy twice..."



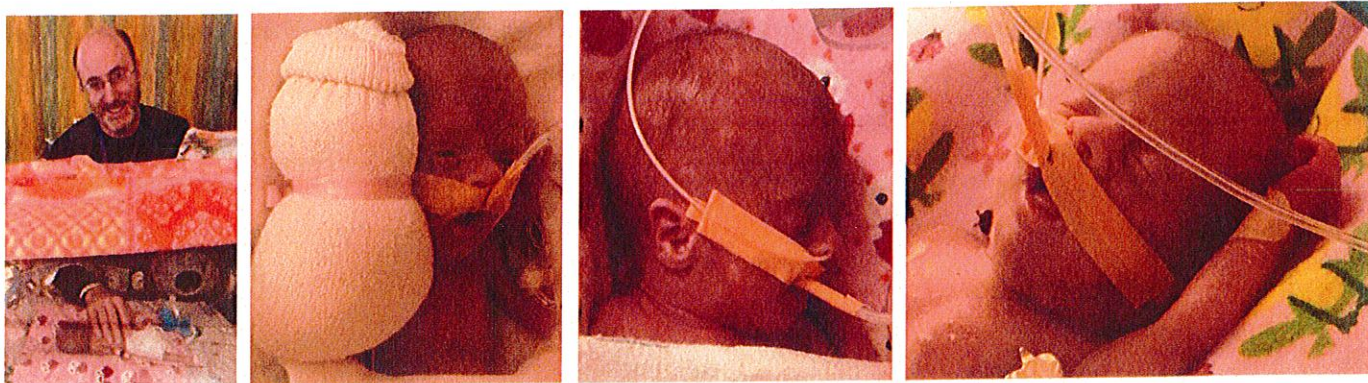
To read Erin's full letter, visit motheroflife.org/donate and select Latest Newsletter. Her letter follows this article.

Dear Mother of Life Pregnancy Center,

Welcome to [A Very Valancy Christmas!](#) We are honored to bring you these gifts in honor of our daughter.

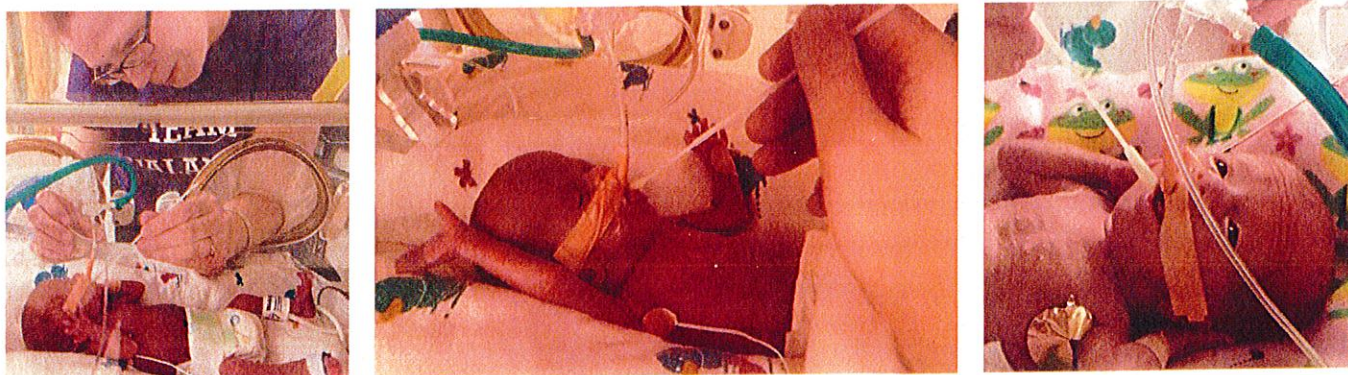
After only five days of hospitalization due to severe preeclampsia, Valancy Stirling Baro was born on Saturday, April 7, 2018 at 9:53am. I delivered her at 25 weeks, 3 days gestation, and she weighed 1 pound, 3 ounces. My health was declining rapidly as she was born, but I am beyond grateful that through the haze, I still heard Valancy cry. This would be the only time my husband and I would hear her voice.

Valancy was an impeccable, feisty, beautiful baby. She immediately locked eyes with her daddy, and that father-daughter bond was irrevocably forged. Over the next 4 weeks, we delighted in learning everything about her. Valancy had dark hair like Justin, and she often furrowed her brow as he does. Her eyes were very dark, and we loved seeing her turn her head to follow our voices. She loved her hands, and she was happiest having them by her face, touching her head, behind her ears, and under her chin. Several times we watched her trying to figure out how to get her thumb in her mouth; when she succeeded, she sucked furiously.



Valancy loved to be fed. At this stage of prematurity, she received breast milk through a feeding tube. She received her care every three hours, and before she was fed, she'd get excited and antsy as any newborn does. Part of feeding included mouth care, when Justin or I dipped a swab in milk and allowed Valancy to suck on it. She loved it; she'd sometimes suck so hard you couldn't pull the swab out of her mouth!

Another part of care included taking Valancy's temperature and changing her diaper. Justin became a pro quickly, and we had many laughs about how messy it could be. Valancy at her young age was no different than any other baby. That means she also fidgeted and quite often didn't like being changed or having her temp checked. Had she not been on a breathing tube, we would've heard those cries!



I was blessed to hold Valancy twice, the first at 8 days old and the second at 10 days old. The most amazing NICU nurse advocated to make skin-to-skin happen as soon as possible. Valancy was so warm, and she curled her tiny fingers on my skin, occasionally scratching at me. When I held her, her stats were the best they had ever been; her oxygen saturation was perfect. Unfortunately, Valancy needed to change ventilators on Day 12, and her new one didn't allow for being held.

Justin and I were with Valancy from early morning to late at night, and we sometimes slept over. We quickly earned a reputation with the staff for our devotion. When Valancy's attending doctors were switching 3 weeks in, our new doctor asked where I lived. I said, "Lincoln", but Valancy's prior doctor corrected me to "101 Dudley". He commented on how Justin and I were present for every round – W&I wants this, encourages this, and asks for this from parents, but we had the impression it wasn't common.

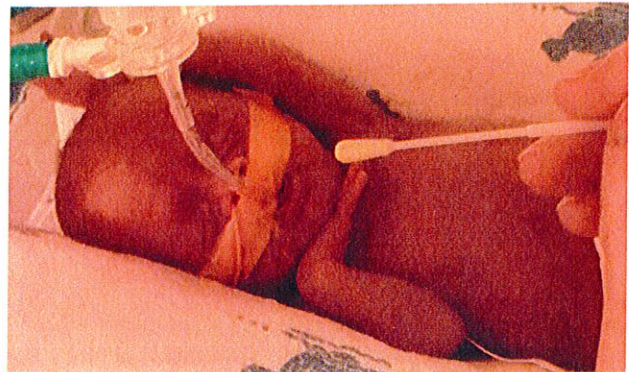
Justin and I enjoyed reading to Valancy. She is named for the Lucy Maud Montgomery character, Valancy Stirling, from The Blue Castle. We were reading this to her, and I also read her my favorite original Grimm's Fairy Tales. We loved touching her between care times. She had constant visitors, and we decorated her room with cards and stuffed animals from her family. I had drawers stuffed with clothes, and we stocked the fridge in the family center. It was our home for 29 days. It wasn't how most parents spend their first month with a newborn, but it was our normal. Our beautiful daughter, who was oohed over by staff, was forever in that incubator except for twice being held. We didn't think to complain because we were confident it was temporary. We loved it because we love her, and this is how we were parenting.



When Valancy was 23 days old, she came down with pneumonia. I never spent another night away from her as she fought. Our brave, strong girl's lungs were too severely damaged though, and on Sunday, May 6, 2018, at 29 days old, the fight was over. Valancy's amazing staff helped to transition her to Justin so he could hold his daughter for the first time. Our family was able to kiss her and say good-bye. She was then given to me, and the mother who brought her into this world held her as she left us.

Our family's grief is immeasurable, so finding ways to honor Valancy is necessary. Her uncle wanted his family to still gift her for her first Christmas, and thus A Very Valancy Christmas was born. The idea is to buy gifts which Justin and I will donate. The idea grew when we shared it with friends and family; the response has been overwhelming, and this year is no different. We are blown away by the generosity and love shown to us and Valancy.

This year we chose the Mother of Life Pregnancy Center, because your mission is one we strongly support. As a pro-life family, we want to play a small part in helping mothers, their children, and pregnancies in crisis. We have also lost three babies in utero since Valancy's death (Oliver, Peregrine, and Kilmeny), and each one is precious and deeply loved, just like their big sister, Valancy, a spunky daddy's girl with personality who knew her parents by sight and sound, who was beautiful, and who was unique. We are thrilled to give her gifts to other beautiful, unique, and precious children.



Thank you for this opportunity to share our daughter and family with you and to make a contribution to other families!

Sincerely,

Emi E. P. Bero