



Courage & EnCourage  
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## ENCOURAGE SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing Chapter

**When: Sunday, February 21, 2016 from 2:30 to 4:00pm**

**Where: Holy Spirit Catholic Church  
9565 Musch Rd.  
Brighton, Michigan 48116**

Directions: US-23 to Silver Lake Rd. Exit (exit #55) West on Silver Lake Rd. to Whitmore Lake Rd. (a short distance). South on Whitmore Lake Rd. to Winans Lake Rd.(a three way stop). West on Winans Lake Rd. approximately one mile to Musch Rd. Turn left or West on Musch Rd. to Holy Spirit Catholic Church. The Courage group meets earlier at 2:00pm in the new school that connects to the church in the Conference/Lending Library Room. The The EnCourage group meets in the Parish Activity Center. Look for Encourage and Courage Meeting Signs.

As some of you know, we first encountered Courage and EnCourage in a magazine article in 1996 that led us to Fr. Harvey and to this faith-filled ministry. We attended our first annual conference and knew we were 'home' in an authentic Catholic ministry. At our second conference, Fr. Harvey asked us to meet with a few parents, and we did. In 1998, and with our Bishop's blessing, we began monthly meetings in our Diocese. Prior to each meeting, we began sending a meeting announcement along with spiritual and/or informational enclosures. With the years passing by, as we attended more annual conferences, asking parents who wanted to stay connected to add themselves to our mailing list, and as our Lansing Diocese and even neighboring Dioceses contacts increased our monthly letter began to grow. We now mail over 700 letters all over the country and beyond. Our Diocese lovingly and generously provides us with a small budget and support staff to assist.

Susan and I are not going anywhere, we will continue to be active in our Michigan Dioceses, but we will be much less involved in the national efforts.

The time has come with our age and the volume of mail that changes must be made. The main office of Courage/EnCourage will assume greater responsibility for the monthly communication. They have set up a means to sign up for monthly mailings. If you are currently receiving the letter by regular mail and could as easily receive it as email, we would encourage you to do that. A method for signing up is to

signing up is to email the Courage offices at [www.couragerc.org](http://www.couragerc.org) or phone them at 1-203-803-1564. We urge you, if at all possible, to sign up for the new Courage E-Blast that will begin in April, and will be published each month from the Courage National Office in email form only. If, however, email is not available to you, we will make every effort to accommodate you with a hard copy.

May you all have a Blessed and Holy Lent. Please pray for us and this modified change that is taking place in the Courage and EnCourage Apostolate. Pray for the new staff member who will soon be joining the ministry with a focus on EnCourage.

**Please** remember that we unite to pray each Thursday to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in reparation for our sins and the sins against human sexuality such as same-sex behavior and abortion. A powerful prayer is the *Chaplet of the Precious Blood* that is available upon request. This beautiful chaplet has been modified to address the specific concerns of Courage and EnCourage members. We have chosen to add this prayer to our Holy Hour of Reparation. Please remember, “that the necessity of reparation is especially urgent today and must be evident to everyone who considers the present plight of the world, ‘seated in wickedness’. The Sacred Heart of Jesus promised to St. Margaret Mary that He would reward abundantly with His graces all those who should render this honor to His Heart.” (Pope Pius XI Encyclical *Miserentissimus*)

**Please note:** If you cannot attend the February 21st meeting, our next regular Diocesan EnCourage meeting is Sunday, March, 20, 2016. Please remember, as of April, the letter will only be available via email, and you will need to sign up for it by way of the Courage website at [www.couragerc.org](http://www.couragerc.org)

For more information regarding our meetings, or to talk about the issue of same-sex attraction in your lives or the lives of loved ones, call our Diocesan office at 517-342-2596 or email us at [courage@dioceseoflansing.org](mailto:courage@dioceseoflansing.org)

We look forward to meeting with you. Let us remember, however, to always respect the right of each to complete confidentiality.

Trusting in Jesus,



Bob and Susan Cavera

“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4: 6-7

## WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

1. Leon Bloy, the French Catholic writer and convert from Judaism, once said, “Man has places in his heart which do not yet exist, and into them enters suffering, in order that they may have existence.” Just about all of Christian scholarship on the nature of suffering can be reduced to these few simple words. Suffering can bend and break us. But it can also *break us open* to become the persons God intended us to be. It depends on what we do with the pain. If we offer it back to God, He will use it to do great things in us and through us, because suffering is fertile. It can grow new life.

From the introduction to *Beyond Gay* by David Morrison written by Archbishop Chaput

2. “Pain, sorrow, suffering is but the kiss of Jesus. A sign that you have come so close to Him that He can kiss you. May God give you all the courage to accept your cross with resignation and love in union with the passion of Jesus. God bless you.”

Mother Teresa

3. “Lord when my soul is weary and my heart is tired and sore, and I have the failing feeling that I can’t take it anymore; then let me know the freshening found in simple childlike prayer, when the kneeling soul knows surely that a listening Lord is there.”

*A Simple Prayer* by Ruth Bell Graham

4. “So much suffering is wasted, resented, and resisted. If we suffer in love, if we offer our suffering in union with Christ, then our suffering becomes powerful, fruitful, and redemptive. Christ didn’t suffer so we wouldn’t have to, but so that we would be able to.”

*A Father Who Keeps His Promises* by Scott Hahn

5. “Praise be God, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation! He comforts us in all our afflictions and thus enables us to comfort those who are in trouble, with the same consolation we have received from Him.”

2 Cor. 1:3-4

6. “Above all, wrap your child in love and present him to the Lord for Him to restore in His own time program. This commitment to the Lord will free you to pray for the healing power of the Holy Spirit to invade and liberate him.”

“The will of God will not lead you where the Grace of God cannot help you.”

Keep Romans 8:28 forever in your heart. God’s promise that, ‘all things work together for good...’ even when things seem shattered, should take a high position on the priority list for verses on suffering. To glibly quote this without having been through this trial would be the height of hypocrisy and phony love. But aim to saturate yourself with God’s word, so that when you wake in the middle of the night with acute signs of anxiety symptoms, you will hear the voice of the Lord whisper to you, “My child, this will all work out for good because you love Me and are called for My purposes.”

6. "Think about this: 'In love's service, only the *wounded* can serve, for they alone understand the cry of My Bleeding Heart.' This shattered feeling that we are experiencing will one day be gone, and in its place will be a heart of love to minister to others whom God will bring into our lives, because we have passed 'the cup of suffering' trial."

Barbara Johnson Founder of Spatula Ministry

7. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not unto your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths."

Proverbs 3:5

8. "I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything impossible for me?"

Jeremiah 32:27

9. "The Lord is close to the broken hearted: and those who are crushed in spirit He saves."

Psalms 34: 19-20

10. "Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer."

Romans 12: 11-12

11. "Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my Heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Matthew 18: 19-20

12. "O my God! I ask for myself and for those dear to me the grace to perfectly fulfill your holy will, to accept for love of you the joys and sorrows of this passing life, so that we may one day be united in heaven for all eternity. Amen

Saint Therese of Lisieux

13. "Dear Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the union of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our Bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month."

My Daily Offering

14. "O my good angel, whom God by His divine mercy has appointed to be my guardian, enlighten and protect me, direct and govern me this day and always."

Bishop Mengeling's Guardian Angel Prayer

15. Worry ----looks around.

Sorry ---- looks back.

Faith ----looks up.

## SERVING THROUGH SUFFERING

**“ ‘The greatest tragedy in the world,’ Cardinal Cushing once said, ‘was not pain, but wasted pain.’ We all suffer, every one of us, youngest to oldest. We suffer loneliness, cancer, the loss of a wife, a husband, a child; we suffer misunderstandings, family conflicts, ruptured friendships, cosmetic disfigurement, and mental, emotional, physical incapacities. We suffer a sense of utter powerlessness, an empty feeling of futility. The world is awash in pain. How tragic if that is wasted; that pain that could be united with the suffering of Christ on the cross to achieve enormous good.**

**The Cardinal knew that Christ did not make possible the salvation of the world through His teaching, His preaching, His miracles, but by His suffering and death on the cross. When he appeared to be utterly powerless, He was radiating the greatest power ever unleashed in the world.**

**When He was crying out, ‘My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ He was filling billions of hearts yet to come with comfort; with peace. I unite a headache, a backache, a heartache with Christ on the Cross, and wondrous graces flow into the heart of a widow who has lost her only son in Nigeria, a lonely teenager contemplating suicide in San Francisco, a woman ravaged with cancer in New York. My pain, trifling or overwhelming, has not gone wasted.”**

**John Cardinal O’Connor**

**“No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it.”**

**1 Cor. 10:13**

**“In Pope Paul VI’s encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae*, he describes a future world in which moral standards would fall, infidelity would rise, governments would mandate immoral acts, youth would be especially vulnerable to moral confusion, and women would be treated like objects by men. There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit guided the hand that held the pen. The Holy Spirit guides our hand, too, as well as our hearts, and our minds if we are open to the work of the Spirit”**

**Deacon Mike Murray**

## **DISCOURAGED?**

**It was announced that the devil was going out of business and would offer all tools for sale to whomever would pay his price.**

**On the night of the sale, they were all attractively displayed; a bad looking lot. Malice, hatred, envy, jealousy, sensuality, deceit, and all the other implements of evil were spread out, each marked with its price.**

**Apart from the rest lay a harmless looking wedge-shaped tool, much worn and priced higher than any of them. Someone asked the devil what it was.**

**“That’s discouragement,” was the reply.**

**“Why do you have it priced so high?”**

**“Because,” replied the devil, “it is more useful to me than any of the others. I can pry open and get inside a man’s conscience with that when I could not get near him with any of the others, and once inside, I can use him whatever way suits me best. It is so much worn because I use it with nearly everybody, as very few people yet know it belongs to me.”**

**It hardly needs to be added that the devil’s price for discouragement was so high that it was never sold. He still owns it, and he is still using it.**

Reprinted from a column by Bishop Carl F. Mengeling in the Catholic Times

## **The Value of Your Cross**

**By**

**St. Francis de Sales**

**The Everlasting God has in His Wisdom forseen from eternity the cross that He now presents to you as a gift from His inmost Heart. This cross He now sends to you, He has considered with all-knowing eyes, understood with His divine mind, tested with His wise justice, warmed with His loving arms and weighed with His own hands to see that it be not one inch too large and not one ounce too heavy for you. He has blessed it with His holy name, anointed it with His grace, perfumed it with His consolation, taken one last glance at you and your courage, and then sent it to you from heaven, a special greeting from God to you, an alms of the all-merciful love of God.**

### **I AM**

**I was regretting the past and fearing the future. Suddenly, God was speaking:**

**“My Name is ‘I Am’.” I waited; God continued.**

**“When you live in the past, with its mistakes and regrets, it is hard. I Am-not there. My name is not ‘I was’.”**

**“When you live in the future, with its problems and fears, it is hard. I Am-not there. My name is not ‘I will be’.”**

**“When you live in this moment, it is NOT hard. I am here. My name is ‘I Am’.”**

**Benedictine Monastery  
Snowmass, Colorado**

**"Let It Go"**

**To 'let go' does not mean to stop caring,  
It means I can't do it for someone else.**

**To 'let go' is not to cut myself off;  
It's the realization I can't control another.**

**To 'let go' is to admit powerlessness,  
Which means the outcome is not in my hands.**

**To 'let go' is not to try to change or blame another,  
It's to make the most of myself.**

**To 'let go' is not to be protective,  
It's to permit another to face reality.**

**To 'let go' is not to regret the past,  
but to grow and live for the future.**

**To 'let go' is not to deny, but to accept.**

**To 'let go' is to fear less, and love more.**

**Author Unknown**

**Let nothing  
Disturb you,  
Let nothing  
Frighten you.  
All Passes.  
God does not change.  
Patience  
Achieves everything.  
Who has God  
Lacks nothing.  
Only God is  
Sufficient.**

**St. Teresa of Avila**