

The Life & Family Resource Centre Presents:

Fertilitas, A Ministry of Hope

Submitted by a Member of the Fertilitas Committee

The ability to conceive and bear children is often taken for granted, but more and more couples are finding that being able to have children is not as easy as they initially thought it would be. Infertility is a medical condition defined as the inability to become pregnant after one year of unprotected intercourse¹. According to Health Canada, it is estimated that up to one in eight Canadian couples experience infertility². What this means is that if you are not experiencing infertility yourself, there is a good chance that you know someone who is.

Infertility can present itself in many different ways. Some are primary infertility (couples who have never been able to conceive); secondary infertility (couples who are unable to conceive after having given birth to at least one baby); couples who are subfertile (it may take a long time to be able to conceive); couples who experience miscarriages; couples who have chosen to grow their families through adoption; and couples who have chosen to remain childless.

No matter the scenario, couples will face different challenges. The Church teaches that “a child is not something owed to one, but is a gift... the child possesses... the right ‘to be the fruit of the specific act of the conjugal love of his parents’” [CCC 2378]. For Catholic couples wishing to be faithful to Catholic teaching, this means that the typical methods of infertility treatment such as in vitro fertilization (IVF) or artificial insemination (AI) are not permissible. One of the major challenges is to

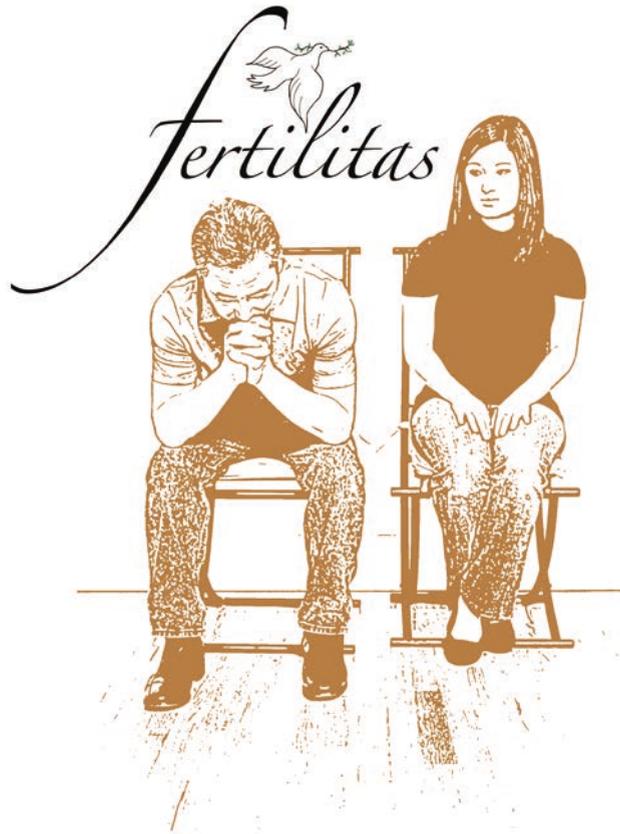
pursue medical treatments outside of these which are often the primary approaches offered by specialists. Other challenges may be remaining strong against the temptation to pursue treatments that go against one’s beliefs, especially when these are presented as the only options for a potential pregnancy. Still other challenges may be focused around making peace with the cross of infertility and the ways that infertility may change the direction of a couples life together.

Regardless of the struggles that a couple experiencing infertility faces, it is helpful to know that you’re not alone. Fertilitas is a ministry to support couples who are journeying through the challenge of infertility.

We do this by making available connections within the community such as priests, medical personnel, and other couples who have shared similar experiences. We are working towards providing information relevant to Catholic couples with infertility (see www.fertilitas.ca). We also have several meetings throughout the year with guest speakers and group support.

Events for the year are tentatively scheduled for January 25, March 22, and May 3 from 10 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and include a potluck lunch.

If Fertilitas may be helpful to you or someone you know, or you would like to assist with this ministry, you can contact Gabriele Kalincak by phone at (403) 218-5504 or by email at lifeandfamily@calgarydiocese.ca.



SOURCES:

¹ <http://www.myfertility.ca/aboutFertility/index.asp>

² <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mpps/brgtherap/legislation/reprod/index-eng.php>