



Pregnancy
& Infant Loss
Resources



Index of Resources

(Click on title to be taken to page)

Pregnancy & Infant Loss:

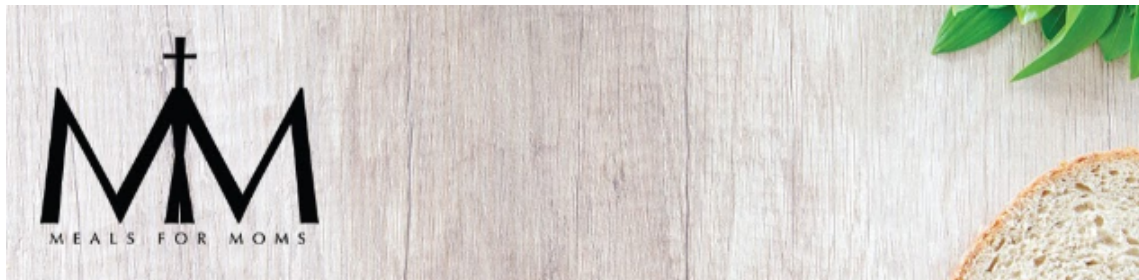
- Meals
- Prayers
- Liturgical Rites
- Care of Infant Remains - *Overview*
 - At home
 - At the hospital
- Burial of Infant Remains
- Local Funeral Homes and Cemeteries
- Counseling
- Medical Care - *Physician Referrals & Perinatal Hospice*
- Website and Book Resources





Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Meals

Our Parish offers "Meals for Moms". This ministry is for any parishioners that need meals. Even though you have lost your child, you are still a mom. You became a mom the moment you conceived and the loss of any child can be hard to navigate. Let St. Luke's parishioners carry some of the burden for you by taking care of some meals while you heal emotionally and physically.





Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Prayers

Reach out to the Church for Prayers

- You can call Father at any time for prayers and direction. To reach him, please call the office at (515) 964-1278 and select option 3 from the menu to dial Father Ken's extension. Miscarriage does not just happen 9-5 and the church is here for you no matter what time it occurs.
- Email prayer@slte.org to be put on the parish prayer line. Parishioners would love to lift you up in prayer in this time of need.
- Reach out to the parish office and have a Mass said for your baby.
- Reach out to Julie Shannon, Parish Nurse, at (515) 250-9316 if you would welcome our team to pray over you and your family with a prayer shawl made for you.
- *See next page for Liturgical Rites available.*



Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Liturgical Rites

This chart describes various Catholic Liturgical Rites available for those who have experienced miscarriage, stillbirth, infant loss, or a life-limiting prenatal diagnosis.

Please contact the Church if you would like clergy to administer any of these rites.

Liturgical Rite	Minister	Notes
Rite of Baptism for danger of death	Anyone	In an emergency, anyone can baptize, provided the child is still alive, and the person pours water and says "-name- I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit".
Blessing of child in the womb	Priest or Deacon	Can be done while the child is still in the womb.
Blessing of parents after Miscarriage	Priest or Deacon	Can be done at home, hospital, or church.
Rite of Naming and Commendation	Priest or Deacon	Can be done at home or church, and is for a child who died before birth.
Prayers after Death	Priest or Deacon	Can be done at home, hospital, or church.
Funeral Rites	Priest or Deacon	Can be done when there are the child's remains present. Family can choose readings if they would like. There are different options for the order of service. Contact Father for coordinating the Rites.
Funeral Mass	Priest	Can be done when there are the child's remains present. Family can choose readings if they would like. There are different options for the order of service. Contact Father for coordinating the Rites.
Mass of Memorial	Priest	Can be done if there are no remains present. Family can choose readings if they would like.
Rite of Committal	Priest or Deacon	Can be done when there are the child's remains present.
Masses for the Dead	Priest	Contact the parish to schedule a Mass for your child.
Mass on the Anniversary of death	Priest	Contact the parish to schedule a Mass for your child.

Additional Ways to Honor Your Child:

Oct 15 - World Pregnancy & Infant Loss Remembrance Day

St. Luke's holds a Mass on this day. Families are invited to light a candle in remembrance of their child, no matter when the loss occurred.

November - Month of Remembrance

Parishioners are invited to have a candle with their loved one's name placed in front of the altar in memory of those that have passed in the last year. Call the office to have a candle for your child.




Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Care of Infant Remains

It can be very confusing on what to do when you are faced with infant loss. Most of the time, infant loss is sudden. To help in making the most informed choice that is best for your family, here is some guidance on caring for your infant's remains.

Since human life begins at conception, the remains of infants must be treated with the same respect as the remains of other human beings. Such remains should never be spoken of or considered as “mere tissue” or “medical waste,” or treated in the same way as medical waste. The remains of infants should either be buried or cremated in a respectful manner and place. Cremated remains should either be buried or entombed.

Parents may wish to arrange for private burial and cremation with a funeral director, or may give the remains over for burial in a communal grave in a specially designated section of a cemetery. A health care facility at which the mother has been a patient during the miscarriage or stillbirth may be able to assist with these arrangements.

Families experiencing perinatal loss should be afforded all the services and support that would be offered for families who had an older child or adult die, including the proper care for and burial of their remains. Since in Iowa a death certificate is only required after the child reaches 20 weeks gestation, miscarriages require special attention in this regard. Unfortunately, miscarried children are often not automatically offered the same services as those children who are old enough to receive a death certificate and need more advocacy. Please see the following pages for guidance regarding obtaining and burying your child's remains.



*Source: Archdiocese of Dubuque
Behold Your Child Ministry
dbqarch.org/beholdyourchild*



[< Return to index](#)



Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Care of Infant Remains at Home

When a miscarriage occurs at home, the remains of the child may be difficult to identify, depending on the age of development of the child. Every miscarriage looks different and unfortunately it is not always possible to collect any of the remains of your child depending on your circumstances.

The reality is that many women tend to labor over the toilet where products of conception may drop down and unfortunately the child may as well. If you are able, try to collect as much of the remains as possible, keeping in mind the following:

- The embryo will likely look like a large blood clot in the earlier stages of development and the child may not be easily perceived within the amniotic sac.
- It is not required to search through the amniotic sac to find the remains of the child specifically, although if the parents, a family member, or friend is comfortable doing so it can be done.
- Miscarriage collection kits are available at some doctor's offices and hospitals or could be purchased online. If you cannot obtain a kit, you can use a cleaned kitchen sieve or strainer as well to collect any infant remains.
- Place remains in a container with a saline solution and place in a refrigerator at home until burial and/ or until they are transferred to the care of a funeral home. Ensure that the container will not leak, has a tight seal, and is in a place that it won't be dropped or mishandled. A possible option to make the place of reservation of the remains slightly more suitable would be to place a lit candle near the refrigerator as a sign and symbol of the importance of the child's remains.


Continued on next page



Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Care of Infant Remains at Home

(continued)

- Remember that the child's remains are likely very small and fragile and, depending on the age of development, may be imperceptible. A miscarriage can occur and resolve in a short time, but it can also take days. When the miscarriage happens over several days, this complicates the collection of the remains, especially when the child is in early development stages, because of the other biological materials that are also expelled over this period of time.
- If someone has had a miscarriage at home, it is important for them to seek medical assistance for follow-up to ensure that nothing is still present in the uterus which could lead to infection.
- Depending on the type of miscarriage and whether or not the fetus has been expelled from the uterus, a Dilation and Curettage (D&C) procedure may be necessary. This procedure involves the cervix being dilated by the doctor and the contents of the uterus being removed (this may include parts of the fetus, the placenta, etc.). This may be necessary whether the miscarriage happened at home or in the hospital. Some confusion surrounds the morality of this procedure as it is also used for certain types of abortion. If, however, a miscarriage has occurred and the fetus is deceased, this procedure is morally permissible and likely necessary to ensure the health and safety of the mother.
- Any remains obtained should be given a proper burial/cremation.



*Source: Archdiocese of Dubuque
Behold Your Child Ministry
dbqarch.org/holdyourchild*



[< Return to index](#)



Pregnancy & Infant Resources: Care of Infant Remains at the Hospital

When a miscarriage takes place at a hospital, or a D&C procedure is conducted after a miscarriage, it is important for parents to obtain the remains of their child for a proper burial/cremation.

According to the Iowa Department of Public Health, nothing in Iowa Code prohibits parents from obtaining their child's remains from a hospital. That said, some hospitals might have their own policies that would prohibit or dissuade parents from obtaining their child's remains for Christian burial/cremation, especially if the child is before 20 weeks gestation.

Even if a hospital does not have a policy against releasing the remains, they might not voluntarily offer the remains to the parents and might have the practice of discarding the remains as "medical waste." Therefore, parents ought to request the remains of their child to coordinate with local funeral homes and cemeteries to properly bury or cremate the child's remains.

If hospital policy prohibits parents from obtaining the child's remains for Christian burial/ cremation, parents should contact the hospital legal department.

*Source: Archdiocese of Dubuque
Behold Your Child Ministry
dbqarch.org/holdyourchild*

[< Return to index](#)





Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Burial of Infant Remains

The child's remains should be buried in a cemetery or cremated and interred in a mausoleum or columbarium. Keeping ashes or remains at home, dispersing the ashes, or making jewelry out of the ashes is not in keeping with Catholic teaching.

Some cemeteries have specific sections for children who died before birth and some cemeteries will allow families to bury their child on another family member's plot. Inquire with your local cemeteries to see if this is permissible. This can also alleviate the cost of purchasing a new plot or worrying that the child will not be buried with the family.

Burial Vessels

Depending on the stage of development of the child, different vessels can be used for burial purposes. Some of these items can be purchased in stores, including nice jewelry boxes (wooden, brass, etc.), online, or through a local funeral home or cemetery.

New Melleray Abbey in Peosta, IA offers small wooden caskets and urns free of charge, and they will ship them when needed to parents who have lost children. These also work for children in very early development. For more information, visit <https://trappistcaskets.com/>.

Burial Gowns

St. Luke's has been gifted "angel gowns" from a ministry at St. Michael Parish in Sioux Falls. These offer a beautiful way for parents who've lost a baby to make the last moments they have with their child a lasting memory of love and gives these precious children a final outfit worthy of a child of God.

Please contact Julie Shannon, Parish Nurse, at (515) 250-9316 to receive an angel gown.



*Source: Archdiocese of Dubuque , Behold Your Child Ministry
dbqarch.org/beholdyourchild*

[< Return to index](#)





Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Local Funeral Homes & Cemeteries

Caldwell Parrish Funeral Home

Urbandale location

(515) 454-5817
8201 Hickman Road
Urbandale, IA 50322

Adel location

(515) 461-7334
735 S. 14th Street
Adel, IA 50003

Winterset location

(515) 462-4080
1823 N. John Wayne Drive
Winterset, IA 50273

Ankeny Funeral Home and Crematory

(515) 964-4674
1510 West First Street
Ankeny, IA 50023

Hamilton's Funeral Home

6 locations

Iles Funeral Home

6 locations

Glendale Cemetery

(515) 248-6320
4909 University Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50311

Ankeny Memorial Gardens

(515) 964-0592
4208 N. Ankeny Blvd
Ankeny, IA 50023

Highland Memorial Gardens

(515) 289-2230
1 N.E. 60th Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50313

Resthaven Cemetery/McLaren's Resthaven Chapel and Mortuary

(515) 225-7225
801 19th Street
West Des Moines, IA 50265

Please reach out to our pastor or an Infant Loss Minister for more information on pricing and ways each funeral home/cemetery can help during this time of need.



Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Counseling

You do not have to walk this alone. There are parishioners that have gone through training to walk alongside you. **Reach out to Julie Shannon, Parish Nurse, at (515) 250-9316 to be put in contact with a parish minister.**

Below are also good counselors in the area that have been recommended for counseling through infant loss.

Integrative Psychology

Kevin Kilcawley
2024 NW 92nd Ct #12
Clive, IA 50325
(515) 421-8250
kilcawley@integrativepsychologyservices.com

Family Legacy Counseling

5415 NW 88th St # 100
Johnston, IA 50131
(515) 727-1338

Heartland Christian Counseling

6200 Aurora Ave #401E
Urbandale, IA 50322
(515) 331-0303

Center for Interpersonal Effectiveness

Jim Thorpe PSY.D
Phyllis Eddy, MA, LMHC, NCC
2525 N. Ankeny Blvd. Ste. 113
Ankeny, Iowa 50023
(515) 289-9136
<https://www.cie-ankeny.com/>

Children and Families of Iowa

1111 University Ave
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-288-1981
contactus@cfiowa.org

Team Restoration

Joel Fry MSW, LISW
Brent Douglas MA, LMHC
Julie Porter MA, LMHC
(515) 238-9010

Catholic Charities Counseling Program

(515) 237-5045
Bilingual therapist available

Okerberg & Associates

Melinda Wadsley LMHC, NCC
(515) 577-6595
<http://okerberg-assoc.com/>

24-Hour Central Iowa Crisis Line

(855) 581-8111
<https://www.co.jasper.ia.us/574/Crisis-Line>



Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: OB/GYN Care Physician Referrals

Sometimes after a loss you are left with many questions about how to move forward with trying again. This list has some recommended physicians to reach out to that can help you navigate moving forward while respecting your Catholic beliefs.

Vitae Family Care Clinic OB Care

Dr. Gregory McKernan
(515) 225-3261
1355 50th Street #100
West Des Moines, IA 50266

Broadlawns-OB & Prenatal Care Clinic

Dr. Larry Lindell
(515) 282-2340
1801 Hickman Rd
Des Moines, IA 50314

Central Iowa OB/GYN

Dr. Barney Munro
(515) 267-8300
2501 Westown Pkwy #1101
West Des Moines, IA 50266

Women's Health Services OB/GYN (UnityPoint)

Dr. Tami Fahnlander
(515) 263-9107
Waukee, Clive, and Des Moines

Mercy South Family Practice OB/GYN

Dr. Dennis Zachary
(515) 643-9400
6601 SW 9th St.
Des Moines, IA 50315

Sancta Familia Medical Apostolate (Offers telehealth)

Teresa Kenney APRN-NP
(402) 991-3393
10506 Burt Circle
Omaha, NE 68114

Saint Paul VI Institute



(Offers telehealth and chart review via email)

(402) 390-6600
6901 Mercy Road
Omaha, NE 68106
<https://popepaulvi.com/>
naproquestions@saintpaulvi.com
NAPRO technology "provides hope and healing to women and couples who are struggling and suffering with reproductive and gynecological medical issues, issues that are often ignored or undiagnosed in mainstream medicine". They only practice methods that align with the Catholic faith.

Additional Resource:

The Hormone Genius Podcast

<https://www.hormonegenius.com/>
Looking to learn more about natural family planning and/or female hormones to help advocate for yourself at the doctors? The Hormone Genius podcast is run by two Catholic women in the medical field that highlight just these issues!



If you are in need of Perinatal Hospice, please contact
Connie Thompson, Perinatal Bereavement Coordinator,
at Mercy Medical Center: (515) 358-3030

[< Return to index](#)





Pregnancy & Infant Loss Resources: Books and Websites

Websites

Catholic Miscarriage Support: <http://www.catholicmiscarriagesupport.com>

Heaven's Gain Ministries (Pregnancy Loss): <https://heavensgain.org>

Red Bird Ministries (Child Loss, any age): <https://www.redbird.love>

Trappist Caskets: <https://trappistcaskets.com>

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep (Remembrance Portraits):

<https://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org>

Perinatal Hospice: <https://www.perinatalhospice.org>

Isaiah's Promise (Severe/Fatal Prenatal Diagnosis): www.isaiahspromise.net

Elizabeth Ministry (Support during Childbearing Years): www.elizabethministry.org

Books

A Gift of Time: Continuing Your Pregnancy When Your Baby's Life Is Expected to Be Brief – Amy Kuebelbeck and Deborah L. Davis

After Miscarriage: A Catholic Woman's Companion to Healing & Hope – Karen Edmisten

Blessed is the Fruit of Thy Womb: Rosary Reflections on Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Infant Loss – Heidi Indahl

Empty Cradle, Broken Heart: Surviving the Death of Your Baby – Deborah L. Davis

Grieving Together: A Couple's Journey through Miscarriage – Laura and Franco Fanucci

Hiding in the Upper Room: How the Catholic Sacraments Healed Me from Child Loss – Kelly Breaux

Loving Baby Louie: Hope in the Midst of Grief – David and Colleen Currie

Waiting with Gabriel: A Story of Cherishing a Baby's Brief Life – Amy Kuebelbeck

Videos

["Grieving the Loss of a Baby through Miscarriage"](#) by Jackie and Bobby Angel