

We are so proud of our little ones here at Mater Filius!

Spotlight on the Early Childhood Learning Center

The ECLC is excited to have two new friends! They are adding to the "cute factor". Making new friends is something we love here at Mater Filius of Nebraska and our ECLC is often a place where friendships begin. Speaking of friends... we celebrated two first birthdays!! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO NAHLA AND KEKELI!



A Letter from the Directors



Spotlight on the Lighthouse Preschool

We almost have another school year in the books! Clarity will be graduating soon and heading off to kindergarten! Thanks to the Lighthouse Preschool, she is prepared to be a "big kid" at her new school. These adorable preschoolers have been busy finishing up the alphabet, celebrating Valentine's Day, playing outside in the warmer weather (and rain), and don't forget dance class! The girls have a big day coming up soon; they have been preparing for their dance recital on May 14th! Zavi will be there cheering them on. It's certainly a bright spot in the day when we visit our friends down in the preschool!



Our first 6 months have passed quickly, and we are off to a great start! Currently, we have 6 moms living in the house, one 7-year-old, two toddlers, three babies and three more arriving in May! Please continue to pray for healthy babies, protection of everyone in the house, and the unborn.

We are enjoying a full house with lots of joyful noise. The joyful noise is that of life! Mater Filius is Life! We are so proud to be a part of a mission that protects and Defends Life with Love! The women we are serving have blessed our lives with hope and a vision of a great future for them and their children.

moms after they move out. In March, we received news that one of our graduate moms moved into a house she bought on her own. What an achievement! This is our first graduate mom to buy a house!

We have had many opportunities to Defend Life with Love in Nebraska. We made a trip to the Capitol in Lincoln to testify as proponents of LB933 (Nebraska Human Life Protection Act). Julie Mainelli and our graduate, Hailey Ghumm, did a great job speaking in front of the Judicial Committee. We want our law makers to know that we have a plan to support those who choose life and might need a little help.



With the Easter season upon us, we are all given the hope of new life. Here at Mater Filius, we look forward to sharing our stories of new life with you. Watch Instagram for pictures of our new babies as they arrive. We hope you have a very Blessed Easter season full of family and warm weather.

Steve and Anne Raynor



Mater Filius is participating in the Joy of Giving Day on May 18th, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Omaha.

We appreciate your support!

Mater Filius, Nebraska, is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. If you feel called to donate, please send check or money orders to: Mater Filius, Nebraska, 5924 S. 36th St., Omaha, NE 68107

For your convenience, you can also donate through paypal on our website at: www.materfiliusne.org. Thank you for your consideration, and God bless you!



At Mater Filius, we have two requirements for entry: Pregnant and ready for change! Shelby, who entered the house in July of 2021, was ready for change. Shelby came to Mater Filius when she was 6 months pregnant seeking help

with a methamphetamine addiction; wanting more for her and her beautiful family. She knew that our program would offer her the long term, individualized support and guidance that she needed to overcome her challenges. The first few months were not easy for Shelby as the grip of addiction is strong. Shelby persevered through the feelings of

relapse and put the health of her unborn baby first. Shelby worked hard in her recovery program for about a month, and she began regular visits with her daughter, Gracee. Soon, plans were being made for Gracee to move into the Mater Filius House with her mom! What a joyful moment!

Gracee, a first grader, brings so

much to our home; she always has a smile for everyone who enters. During her most recent parent-teacher conference, Shelby was informed that Gracee moved up 5 reading levels!! A few weeks after conferences, Gracee bounded through the front door exclaiming, "Best Day Ever! I am Student of the Month!" We are so proud of her achievement.

Gracee learned from her mom, "Believe in Yourself" as represented on her sweatshirt. Congratulations Gracee! We celebrate Shelby and Gracee, and we pray for their success as they continue their journey at Mater Filius of Nebraska and after they move to their own home.



FOCUS ON

PATH

Positive Actions
Toward Happiness

At Mater Filius of Nebraska, all moms are working on what we call their PATH. The PATH may be obvious the minute a mom moves in and for others, it may take a few weeks for their PATH to develop.

Upon arrival, each mom receives a beautiful backpack full of baby care items from the Christ Child Society along with a

welcome bag from our BLU*tique. A trip to the BLU*tique is very important as they receive everything needed to help settle in and feel good about themselves and their new home. Recently, through a generous donor, we have been able to add hair appointments to the list! We believe in Building Lives Up! Between the boutique and the hair salon, we can begin achieving this goal.

The first two weeks are typically devoted to health care and addressing any legal matters. Everyone receives a checklist when they first move into the Mater Filius House. This checklist includes beginning or continuing obstetric care, eye exam, dental exam, pediatrician visit, and a counselor visit. Once the healthcare items have been addressed, we ask each mom if they have their birth certificate, social security card, health care coverage, valid identification, and any necessary vehicle documentation. This checklist ensures that the moms, in addition to getting used to the new rules and schedule, have something to work toward when they first move into the house. We have been learning quite a bit about immigration and we have been working with the Juan Diego Center to help our moms through the immigration process if needed.

Another important PATH is working on mental health and addiction recovery before going to work or school. This is where our new Executive Director,

Anne Raynor, along with our Spirituality Director, Rita Sawin, step in. With each new arrival, Anne and Rita begin to look at each new mom with a spirit, mind, and body approach.



During the first few weeks, they meet with her to discuss the goals she has for herself and get to work lining up resources and assigning homework. PATH meetings are a weekly occurrence, and our moms look forward to

their weekly check-in with Anne and Rita. They ensure the previous week's homework is done and she is moving forward every week. After the meeting, Anne communicates the results of the PATH meeting with the Doula (mentor mom), so they have multiple reminders and lots of encouragement along the way. Some weeks are tough, and they are there to help her through those feelings and ensure all possible resources are in place when necessary. Another form of support in the house is our weekly group counselor. Living in community can be challenging, so she meets with the women once a week to discuss house dynamics. She is also able to identify any individual challenges that may need to be addressed.

Currently, we have 6 moms in the house who are working on their individual PATHs. Rita and Anne have lined up many resources throughout our community and within the house. Bright Course lessons are an on-line tool we use every day at Mater Filius. They have been instrumental in preparing our

younger moms for delivery and the arrival of their babies. They also offer courses to help our women overcome many different challenges they may have encountered throughout their lives.

At Mater Filius, we value education and recognize the doors it can open. One of our moms is just one test away from finishing her GED! We can't wait to have a party to celebrate her achievement. The Learning Center of South Omaha and Catholic Charities have been a huge blessing to our Spanish speaking moms. They are helping our moms learn English and offer immigration assistance.

Our moms who come to us struggling with addiction have utilized the Stephen Center, Heart Ministries and AA classes. We just celebrated a 9-month sober anniversary in the house with a pizza party! That's a big deal!

Another group that we couldn't live without are our mentor moms (doulas) as well as our weekday and weekend volunteers. They are a steadfast group of volunteers who come once a week to mentor, love and guide the women and children of Mater Filius. Through their dedication, we see improvement each week and we love watching the little ones begin to trust everyone here, settle in, and begin their healing as well. We are thrilled that one of our moms will be attending an RCIA class with her mentor mom (doula) next year. God is good!

As our moms make their individual journeys, we surround each person with encouragement and love whether it's directly from Mater Filius or one of our trusted community partners.

We are patiently awaiting the arrival of three babies in May! Our moms are making great progress. We often remind them that change is a process. Instead of viewing change as a huge mountain to move, we like to use the analogy of one pebble at a time; eventually you will move that mountain. Thanks to Anne and Rita, our moms are aware of their PATH and they know they have a supportive team and lots of prayers behind them!

"SEW" Terrific

Staying busy without electronics or television is one of the expectations at Mater Filius. The fruit of this rule is the opportunity to learn new skills and how to



be in the quiet to focus on healing and the path forward. We have wonderful volunteers who come in to assist with learning new skills or improving upon existing skills. Carol Bilunas is one of those wonderful volunteers!



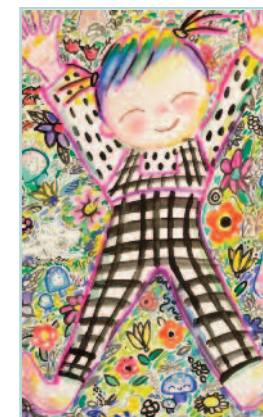
Once a month, Carol leads art classes and comes in for special projects when our moms are interested in learning something new such as embroidery,

crochet, knitting and making blankets. During conversation, she discovered that she and one of our moms share a love of sewing. A few weeks ago, Carol brought some fabric to the house to lead a sewing project. They set up tables and sewing machines and not much longer, they had sewn matching mother/daughter aprons.

Thank you, Carol for sharing your gifts with the women of Mater Filius!

Meet Kimberly! Our Day-Time Ima (House Mom)

Talk about an answer to prayer! When we pray, God answers in His incredible way. Kimberly had been a stay-at-home mom to three beautiful girls and felt it was a good time to head back to work. When the process took longer than expected, she began to think that God must have something great in store for her, so she continued searching with patience. In her searching, she ended up on the Archdiocesan website. The words "House Mom" intrigued her, and it sounded like this job could be the answer to her prayer, so she called our Executive Director to learn more about the position. After her interview and prayerful discernment, she accepted the position. We have been grateful for our mutually answered prayers ever since!



Kimberly brings many great qualities to Mater Filius of Nebraska. In her spare time, she is an aspiring illustrator for children's books. Her appreciation for mothers and children is evident in her joyful artwork. Her loving nature and organizational skills have truly made the house a home. Kimberly wants our moms and their children to know how precious they are to the Lord and that He has a beautiful plan in store for them. She enjoys challenging the girls to succeed and make positive changes in their lives. We all reap the benefits of having a "mom" here at the house. She makes the home a safe and loving space for all those who enter. Welcome, Kimberly!

