

Evie's Story

A little-known service that Mater Filius provides is respite care for families who have chosen life and need support from the pro-life community. In November we were able to witness a beautiful story of life unfold in our home after we received a call from Brittany who would be staying in Omaha while she received amniotic infusions for her baby. They had just received bleak news from a doctor in California and were given options: terminate the pregnancy, deliver a stillborn, or continue the pregnancy and have limited time with their newborn.

Terminating the pregnancy was not an option for Brittany and her husband, Brandon. They wanted their baby to be born and experience life. They wanted to hold her, love her, and meet her here on Earth. To them, this was the most obvious answer, and they were going to do all they could for their baby.

Their plan led Brittany to Omaha to receive prenatal care from a perinatologist. She was to be alone for two weeks while Brandon moved their family of four to Nebraska for an extended stay. Needing a place to stay, she began to make calls and one call came to Anne Raynor at Mater Filius of Nebraska. After learning of Brittany's situation, Anne immediately offered her a room. Brittany was grateful to be in a pro-life home that shared her family's values, offered support, and surrounded her with people who were so willing to help. She felt at peace at Mater Filius. Brandon also felt at peace as he went home to pack up the family for their extended stay in Omaha, as he had the comfort of knowing that they had found the right place for Brittany.

While at Mater Filius, Brittany received a tranquil place to stay, home cooked meals, transportation to and from her appointments, and the daily comfort and compassion of our house mom, Kimberly. Brittany stayed in the house just under two weeks. She was a joy to have in the house, and her presence reminded us that life is precious.

Once the family was reunited in Omaha, Brittany moved in with her family, but continued to receive benefits from Mater Filius.

Her sons stayed at the Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) during her doctor appointments and treatments. They were able to receive supplies for the family from the Diaper Pal program at the ECLC as well as clothes for the family from the boutique. A generous donor adopted them for Christmas and their family enjoyed "The Best Christmas Ever". They were in awe that another family would bless them with gifts being so far from home.

Their daughter, Evie, was born emergently on December 29th after alarming findings at Brittany's doctor's appointment. Hours after Evie's birth, the couple received disappointing news from the neonatologist. They were told that Evie's lungs were woefully underdeveloped, and she would not be able to breathe on her own. Brittany was wheeled into the NICU in her hospital bed, and she was able to hold Evie's hand for the first time. What a joyful, yet emotional moment for Evie's parents. Within a few hours of life, they had Evie dedicated to the Lord by their minister. Skin to skin contact helped regulate her fragile vital signs.

Brittany describes the bonding time as a "Mom High" where they were both content. Evie was able to open her eyes and look at Brittany when she spoke to her. "Evie was more than a floppy little thing, she was a person, she turned her head to look at me. I could tell she didn't want to die, she wanted to live." Brittany states "This was the happiest time in my life. We were happy and sad at the same time. We held her, kissed her, and hugged her all night long. This was the best feeling in the world." At 2:00 am on Dec. 31st, 2023, the tubes were removed, and she took her last breath and passed from this Earth knowing she was loved!

This is what they had to say about the experience: "This is the best decision we've ever made. We are still going through grief, but we felt God's hand the whole way though. Evie and God chose Nebraska. A weekend of continuous prayer led us to Nebraska. It is amazing how God's hand has been over us through all aspects of our marriage. This experience revealed God's hand."



SPRING
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NEWSLETTER

A Letter from the Directors



Greetings from the Mater Filius house in Omaha and we hope that you had a Blessed Easter season. We continue to be busy at the home and we currently have 6 mothers and 8 children living in the house. In the last six months, two babies were born, our first set

of twins! These beautiful faces will be added to our photo wall in the house. If you are ever able to tour the house, you will find photos of all the babies born at Mater Filius in the hallway. Their photos serve as a reminder to the mothers as well as the volunteers as to the reason we are here. We all feel fortunate to be able to help in this work. Our journey as Executive Directors continues to bring us many blessings.

Mater Filius accepts pregnant women of all faiths. Our program involves spiritual formation, and we encourage women to deepen their faith during their time here. We are also a Catholic Apostolate, and we help interested women in an exploration of the Catholic faith as well. The Easter Vigil was extra special for the house this year as we had two baptisms and a confirmation this Easter. Our prayer for

Gianna and her baby Mateo is for God to bless them throughout their lives.

We continue to be supported and blessed by the generosity of the community that supports Mater Filius in so many ways. Thank you for your generous donations of time, talent, and treasure, as our work would not be accomplished without them. Elsewhere in the newsletter, you will hear from our Director of Volunteers about the many great things that are happening within the house. Our mission is driven by the many hours of work by our volunteers, as well as the generous donations, both small and large, that we have received! You all make this mission possible, and we are grateful for your gifts.

We have had many success stories and we have highlighted a few in the newsletter. We hope that you will enjoy what's inside! Please continue to pray for the success of our mission: Defending Life with Love! Mater Filius US is busy planning for a National Conference which will be in Omaha Sept. 22-24. All the Mater Filius branches in the United States will come together to share experiences, pray together and work to forward the mission of Mater Filius. An added blessing will be the attendance of our founders, Miriam and José Manuel at the meeting. We are thankful to be founded by and covered by the Sweet Love of Mary.

Steve and Anne Raynor

Two Baptisms and a Confirmation!

Easter was especially joyful for the Mater Filius of Nebraska family! We witnessed two baptisms and a confirmation. Gianna moved into the house in June of 2022 and Mateo was born in July. Gianna says her prayer for her infant son is for him to grow up to be a Godly man, and she knew the first step would be baptism. Gianna has been attending RCIA classes with our Spirituality Director, Rita Sawin, who is also her confirmation sponsor under the guidance of Father Nicholas Mishek of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish. Asking Rita to be her sponsor speaks to the importance of having a Spirituality Director. When faced with difficult situations, it is helpful to be able to give everything to God and ask Him for some help. When a woman expresses a desire for a deeper relationship with the Lord, the Mater Filius team can help make connections such as the RCIA team at Sts. Peter and Paul.



Spotlight on the ECLC!



Busy, busy, busy! Karen and her staff at the ECLC have been celebrating holidays with the children by incorporating art and other tactile projects. Playing in the snow, science experiments, and making a mess or two kept everyone busy this winter, but we are excited to get outside and discover spring! If you need to smile, these cute kids will surely put a smile on your face!



We believe in making the most of every dollar so we can utilize donations to help mothers and children in need. We continue to be amazed at how God is at work by sending us His very best! If you are interested in filling any of the needs listed below, please call us at 402-933-3466 or email us at materfiliusne@gmail.com.

- Sunday Volunteers
- ECLC volunteers
- Boutique volunteers
- Transportation Team (Drivers)
- Mowing and Snow Removal
- Car mechanic

Volunteer Corner by Anne McGrath Raynor, Director of Volunteers

Mater Filius of Nebraska is blessed to be supported by our volunteers. When I took the position of Director, it seemed daunting! I was filling the shoes of Anne Raynor, who was moving into the Executive Director role. If you know anything about Anne, whatever she does, she does with her whole heart and she does exceptionally well! I guess you could say we were both moving into a position knowing the only way we could do it justice, was to partner with the Blessed Virgin Mary. We both knew the success of the entire program could only happen with her help.

My first task as Director of Volunteers was to fill the Sunday vacancies. Being green behind the ears, I was pleasantly SHOCKED at the willingness of the women to sign on to a Sunday shift. That just seemed a little unreal! I began to realize; these volunteers are VERY supportive to our Defending Life with Love! mission. Their response was so affirming!

The 4pm-8pm shifts during the week were established and running well but there was a need for drivers. Our daytime Ima, Kimberly, wanted support taking the Mathis to their different appointments. Within a short amount of time, Jim Lameroux came to a Wednesday morning Mass and basically volunteered for any driving needed (except when there was a Creighton basketball game). I was beginning to understand, in this mission, we are not operating alone! The Sweet Love of Mary is working with us to fill the care needs for our moms and babies.

There are times when my heart beats a little faster and my blood pressure goes up a couple of notches. Volunteers do move on (after many many years)! And they do have to have medical procedures. (Seriously, do you really need a new hip?) It is then when I can picture Our Blessed Virgin Mary shaking her head as if to say, "Trust me, that position will be filled in my timing and everything will be fine."

If you wrote a job description of the ideal volunteer, I could point to any one of our volunteers saying, "That describes her or that describes him." They are the most dedicated and caring people that I know! I love working beside them.

Even though I was pulled out of retirement to be the Director of Volunteers, my prayer was always that God would call me into the trenches to protect the unborn. I'm grateful to find there are many other people in the trenches with me!

I am honored to staff Mater Filius of Nebraska with incredible volunteers that have signed on to strengthen our mission, Defending Life with Love!

Thank You Knights of Columbus!

The Knights of Columbus from St. Vincent de Paul made a very generous donation to assist with purchasing new beds that will replace the beds that have been in the building since it was used as a convent. This will be a fabulous upgrade! Thank you so much. Lots of sweet dreams will happen in our home.



First Set of Twins!

In February, we were blessed by the arrival of twin girls, Mia and Mayra. They were just over 3lbs. when they were born. After a stay in the NICU, they were able to join us at the house on April 13th! What a joy-filled day. We look forward to watching them grow and develop.



“ We continue to be amazed at how God is at work by sending us His very best! ”

— Anne McGrath Raynor

