

GIANNA'S NEWS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF GIANNA'S CHOICE PREGNANCY OPTIONS AND SUPPORT



GIANNA'S CHOICE BRINGS HOPE

When a pregnant mother is facing an unexpected pregnancy, or finds herself in an unsupportive situation, among many other powerful feelings, she can feel very alone.

This is where *Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support* steps into the breach and offers hope and friendship, genuinely walking beside each woman in her greatest hour of need, letting her know that she is *not alone*.

Welcome to the first edition of *Gianna's News*, a newsletter keeping you—a great friend of mothers and babies—up-to-date with all that is happening in Family Life International's life-saving outreach to mothers and babies.

In this newsletter you will hear inspiring personal testimonies from mothers our team have assisted, learn about the different ways we are serving families in the community, and discover how your support assists mothers to choose life for their precious babies, despite their hardships.

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OUR STORY

Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support is a service which aims to reach abortion vulnerable women throughout New Zealand, encouraging and empowering them to choose life.

Previously known as *Family Life Crisis Pregnancy Centre* and run by Family Life International NZ for almost 30 years, the Gianna's Choice Centre is located in Auckland. However the team at Gianna's Choice serve mothers, babies, and families throughout New Zealand.

We achieve this nationwide assistance with the support of the *Mobile Life Centre*, along with friendly Pregnancy Advocates, and Helpers who are ready to serve in their local regions.

Some mothers require intensive support, and accommodation in order to meet their immediate needs. *Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies*, is the perfect place to provide this assistance.

Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Advocates are trained in the Love Approach, an internationally recog-

nised pregnancy help qualification developed by Heartbeat International.

Heartbeat provides pregnancy centres all over the world with up-to-date resources and training so that women everywhere are provided with real options that help her follow her dreams and give life to her baby.

Our Pregnancy Helpers volunteer their time in a variety of ways, and are an important support to the team.

Having served thousands of women over the years, and welcomed just as many babies, the team, led by FLI's Founder Dame Colleen Bayer, are well-equipped to navigate every unique situation that presents itself.

Each woman who approaches *Gianna's Choice* can be assured of privacy, a professional approach, and to be treated with compassion and respect.

In addition, the team at *Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support* work with medical professionals to ensure mothers and their preborn babies receive the best standard of medical care.



Top: Some of the team with mothers and babies served by FLI's pregnancy centre in earlier days.

Right: Gianna, whose picture as a newborn features on the front of this newsletter, is growing up fast! Here she is enjoying a trip to the café with her Nana!

OUR PLEDGE

We pledge to ALL women facing an unplanned pregnancy, regardless of creed or personal circumstance, every possible help with practical, moral, and financial support as necessary, in order that they may give life to their baby.



HOW WE HELP



The needs of the women who contact us at Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support are many and varied. We aim to meet each person in their present situation and provide the right support in their current circumstance.

We work with medical professionals to ensure mothers and their preborn babies receive the best standard of medical care.

Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support can offer the following assistance:

- Free pregnancy tests.
- Confidential information about pregnancy options.
- Pregnancy confirming ultrasound in some regions.
- Practical help, support and friendship for women, girls and families who are facing an unplanned or difficult pregnancy.
- Accommodation at Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies.
- Information, support and advocacy for families who have received an adverse prenatal diagnosis.
- Adoption information and advocacy if desired.
- Abortion recovery programmes according to individual need.
- Referral for Natural Fertility Regulation education.
- Sexual integrity (chastity) education.
- Life skills and parenting programmes.

GIANNA'S CHOICE OFFERS THIS SUPPORT THROUGH 3 SERVICE PATHWAYS

GIANNA'S CHOICE CENTRE



SAINT GIANNA'S HOME FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES



GIANNA'S CHOICE MOBILE LIFE CENTRE



Gianna's CHOICE
Pregnancy options and support

IS AN
OUTREACH
OF



AND
AFFILIATED
TO



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PREGNANCY ADVOCATE

Every day at Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support is different. Phone calls and texts from women needing help, new mothers to assist, and training of volunteers are all part of an active day of service. The following is the recent experience of Gianna's Choice Co-ordinator, Clare McClean.



Situated in the Wellington region, Clare travels north regularly to assist with the needs of the Gianna's Choice Centre in Auckland. Today, Clare is making her way up the North Island.

On her journey Clare stops to take a call from a woman in need. When she hangs up, she quickly checks her email and discovers a message from a young lady with questions about her pregnancy. The young woman is seeking information about the best solutions at this time for her and her unborn child. Because of the woman's particular circumstances, Clare forwards the email to FLI's Director, Colleen Bayer, who provides advice and support.

Clare continues on her way and finally arrives in Auckland where she prepares for the next day's work where she will follow through with women she is helping.

After a much needed rest, Clare must finalise the lessons for two of the eight volunteers who are being trained in the Love Approach. These women want to serve by becoming knowledgeable, professional, effective, and effective Pregnancy Advocates.

The next morning brings an early surprise as Clare takes a call from a desperate young woman who is living in a car after having been thrown out of home.

After chatting and listening to the girl's story, Clare arranges to meet her in the afternoon. During their meeting Clare will attempt to make a plan that is going to help this woman, in her dire circumstance. She aims to lead her to a place where she can give life to her baby and have something to look forward to, and live for.

No sooner has Clare finished this particular call when the first Pregnancy Helper arrives

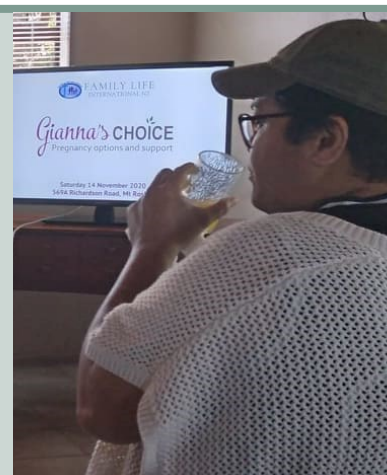


Top: Clare McClean is the Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support Co-ordinator.

Middle and Bottom: Two of the babies born to courageous mothers in recent years.

GIANNA'S CHOICE OPEN DAY

We are hosting regular Open Days at Gianna's Choice Pregnancy Options and Support. The Open Days are for Friends of Life who want to learn more about the Centre and what is involved in being a Pregnancy Advocate and a Pregnancy Helper. Please contact the team if you are interested in coming to our next one. We would love to see you!





for the day. Samantha's volunteer job is to clean the bathroom facility and ensure that both the meeting room and midwife's room are freshly attended to and ready for the clinic later in the morning.

Samantha does the washing and goes to the resource room to start making up more baby packs ready for distribution to pregnant and new mums who are feeling the pinch financially and just can't make ends meet.

Our Pregnancy Helpers always have twenty baby packs on the ready to give out at a moments notice. They also arrange for the collection of very good quality second-hand cots, prams and other baby things that go out

very quickly from the Centre.

Taking a cuppa on the run, Clare responds again to the woman who called her on her journey north. They make a mutual time to meet.

At 12 noon it is time for prayer, and Clare, Samantha, and the rest of the team head to the Chapel of the Annunciation. It is Wednesday, and Father Leo Doyle has come to offer Holy Mass. On other week days the Rosary and prayers of intercession are prayed. This time of prayer revitalises Clare, and gives her a chance to bring all the worries of those whom she is assisting to the Lord. At this time the team pray in thanksgiving for all of FLI's Friends for Life, and their families, remembering in particular any special prayer requests.

The afternoon is spent away from the Centre, visiting pregnant, and new mums.

By the time Clare returns it is dinner time. Having been working with people all day, Clare finds a few quiet moments to

GIANNA'S CHOICE PREGNANCY OPTIONS & SUPPORT CENTRE

The Gianna's Choice Centre is open for drop in appointments for pregnancy tests and to discuss pregnancy options every Wednesday.

10AM TO 3PM

569A Richardson Road
Mt Roskill, Auckland

OR BY APPOINTMENT

Phone 0800 367 5433
Text 027 448 80 70



BABIES DUE

NOVEMBER 2020

1

BABY

JANUARY 2021

2

BABIES

FEBRUARY 2021

2

BABIES

MARCH 2021

3

BABIES



APRIL 2021

2

BABIES

MAY 2021

1

BABY

JUNE 2021

2

BABIES

JULY 2021

2

BABIES

GIANNA'S CHOICE MOBILE LIFE CENTRE

Gianna's Choice Mobile Life Centre plays a crucial role in our outreach to women in need, allowing the team to reach out at a critical time in a woman's decision making, offering them the support they require to choose life for their little one.



THE PURPOSE OF THE MOBILE LIFE CENTRE IS FOUR-FOLD:

Pregnancy Care: In a culture where it is so easy to obtain emergency 'contraception' such as the Morning After Pill, or quickly arrange an abortion, it is vital for us also to provide a pro-life service

that is easy to access and quick to respond.

Education: Sharing the pro-life message and speaking on life issues around the country to large and small groups of various ages and interests. A major part of Family Life International's work is helping the public to be aware, and informed about life issues from conception through to natural death, equipping people with tools, and the knowledge they need to help build a culture of life starting in their own community.

One crucial role the Mobile Life Centre has played is in showing the reality of the life of the unborn child in the womb to secondary students.

The Centre provides a very tangible experience to young people, helping them understand their role in protecting life, and assisting them to make life-affirming decisions.

Importantly, in this situation, the Mobile Life Centre raises awareness among teachers, support staff and students of the options available to anyone who finds themselves facing an unexpected pregnancy.

Getting the message out there: The Mobile Life Centre acts as a 'moving billboard'. Being a visible service is so important in today's culture of advertising. The van bears the message, not only



Top: Gianna's Choice Mobile Life Centre outside Rotorua Hospital ready to assist pregnant mothers.

Above: Mobile Life Centre set up for educating secondary school students.

Right: The team at Tokoroa (from left) Fatima, Sharon, and Simon.



to pregnant women, but to all who see it, that there are people willing and available to accompany women in making a life-affirming choice.

Making friends: A space to connect with others who are passionate about the pro-life cause. Travelling around the country we are able to meet with our Friends for Life and others in support of our mission including volunteers who can accompany the women we serve and local area resources, and people such as doctors, midwives, local church or community groups.

THE MOBILE LIFE CENTRE CAN COME TO YOU

Covid-19 lockdowns caused major interruptions to our service this year, however, we are back on the road again and are taking bookings for 2021.

The Mobile Life Centre can travel to any destination in the North and South Islands (dependant on terrain), giving hope, and providing resources, and practical, life-affirming options to girls, women and their families.

Bookings are being taken now, DO NOT be disappointed, and get in while you can! These are critical times where pregnant mums, particularly those who are abortion-vulnerable, need as much support as we are able to give. We owe it to our children, our schools, our churches, our communities, and our nation to proclaim the Gospel of Life.

For further details and information please contact Colleen:

EMAIL: col.fli@xtra.co.nz **PHONE:** 027 448 8061

Alternatively, please reach out to Simon

EMAIL: simon@fli.org.nz **PHONE:** 021 400 729

MOBILE LIFE CENTRE TIMETABLE

The Mobile Life Centre team are available to assist pregnant mothers and those who think they may be, every Thursday in these locations:

ROTORUA

Thursday mornings - weekly
Outside Rotorua Hospital

TOKORO

Thursday afternoons - weekly
Dreghorn Place Carpark



BENEFIT CONCERT FOR ST GIANNA'S HOME

Saturday 12 December at 2pm

Family Life International is grateful to Fr Tony Dunn, and the Parish of St Michael's, Remuera for hosting a benefit concert for St Gianna's Home

Among others the concert features James Ioelu, a bass-baritone who performs internationally.



For more information contact
St Michael's Parish
(09)520 1226

thank you!

Family Life International and the Gianna's Choice team, along with the mothers whom we serve, are extremely grateful for all gifts received.

The hours of dedicated work crafting hand-knitted garments for the babies is always such a blessing.

As are the gifts of nappies, baby clothing, food, and good quality cots, prams and furniture.

May God bless you!



Liam and his mother are grateful recipients of the generosity of our Friends for Life.

SAINT GIANNA'S HOME FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES



Thanks and gratitude accompanied by great joy and hope was the order of the day at the Opening and *Blessing of Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies*. Bishop Michael Gielen officiated at the June 19, event.

As the home is very small, just a few invited guests attended. As well as some of our volunteers, Friends for Life, and mums and bubs, the team were honoured to have representatives attend from the Catholic Caring Foundation, Anne Marie Parker, Manager, and Loraine Elliott Vicar of Social Impact and Communications.

Everyone at Family Life International is deeply appreciative to each of our Friends for Life who have made sacrifices to provide this rented home. It is a stepping stone to a permanent, fully-equipped, fit-for-purpose Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies to which we aspire.

By opening Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies we have responded to the needs, challenges, hopes, and dreams so often quashed by broken friendships, unfortunate circumstances,

and unhealthy life choices.

For nearly thirty years, Colleen Bayer, and her husband Terry, along with their five children, (four of whom are adopted and have special needs), opened their home and hearts to countless pregnant mothers and their babies. They also opened their doors to adoptive families, and assisted local midwives who needed to place new mums and babies with them when they had nowhere to go after birth.

WHY A HOME FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES?

From time to time, most especially in the early days, FLI rented a few houses for this purpose. However, in those days, Colleen recalls it was much more cost effective to bring the women into their home and take care of them, rather than send the girls and women to kind people who had offered temporary accommodation.

Looking back on those days, Colleen recalls how she "came to learn very quickly that the needs of the women had changed a great deal from when I was a young woman".

The social climate has changed considerably since those early days, and the lifestyles of many of the women seen are a lot more complex.

Drugs, alcohol, promiscuity, dishonesty, and a myriad of societal problems are such that more is required if we are to save babies lives from abortion and assist women into a new and meaningful life. A life where they can truly pursue the hopes



Top: Bishop Michael Gielen holding baby Carlos, a resident, at the Opening and Blessing of Saint Gianna's Home.

Right: Baby Noah, also a resident, with Gianna's Choice Founder and Director, Dame Colleen Bayer, and midwife, Mary Seong.

and dreams for a better life for themselves and their babies, and where they can learn to live within their means and acquire skills that will set them in good stead for the rest of their lives.

Although the mission is tough, Colleen realised “I would have to do the hard yards myself and get a team of missionary hearted staff and volunteers together that would support this work.”

She goes on to say “I am very proud of the team we have and the grace that each person who has ever been involved with this mission has brought to the organization.”

“Throughout the past thirty years, none of the women who came to stay with our family took exception to our special needs family. We are a community of love and commitment and above all prayer.”

A few years ago tragedy fell on the Bayer family.

Colleen's husband Terry, had brain surgery for a brain aneurysm, and has never fully recovered. He suffers life-threatening and life-limiting conditions. “All of a sudden we were faced with caring for our provider, and our family had to learn to take one day at a time, and sometimes hour by hour,” Colleen says.

The family's faith has never wavered, but this change in life circumstance has meant the Bayer's can no longer bring mums and bubs into their home in the ways they previously had.

Living south of Auckland means Colleen commutes a fair bit to and from *Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies* and the *Saint John Paul II Centre for Life* in Mt Roskill South.

For all these reasons, the Saint Gianna's Home for mothers and Babies is a vital part of continuing to serve women in their greatest hour of need.



INTRODUCING THE MOTHERS WE HELP

A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDER, DAME COLLEEN BAYER

Over the years the team have helped thousands of mothers and families in their greatest hour of need. Today it is my absolute pleasure to introduce you to the first residents of Saint Gianna's home for Mothers and Babies. It is such a joy and privilege to be a part of these young ladies lives, and that of their children.

We presently have three residents in the Home. Here are their stories in their own words.

CLARA

”

Thank you for giving me the chance to bring my daughter into this world.

Gianna's Choice is a supportive environment and I wouldn't have been able to do it without you.

”

Gianna's Choice has been a wonderful place for my niece to be able to have her baby. She has been surrounded with knowledge, care and love. Baby has had extra concerns and Colleen has been able to guide through her own experiences and wisdom. We couldn't have done this without her at the helm. Thank you!

Donna, Clara's Aunt



Clara's name has been changed to protect her privacy.

CAROLINA'S STORY



Baby Carlos, Carolina's son, enjoying life.

I am Carolina. I met Colleen Bayer on December 2019. On those days I was living in a cabin, in a friend's backyard. On those days I was struggle [sic] with money to pay first needs for me and my son. So a friend of mine, who works as a volunteer for Family Life International, put me in contact with Colleen. We met, and from the first meeting and after I explained my situation, Colleen started helping us financially to support my baby and myself. So this was a huge relief to me and I am so grateful with Colleen for that.

But early on May this year, Colleen told me that there was a opportunity to move into a house. She told me that FLI was sponsoring to give accommodation for mums and babies. This is "Saint Gianna's Home". So we moved into this beautiful full furniture place where we had been provided with everything we had needed, food, clothing and baby nursery. Here we met this beautiful and young pregnant woman, who was expecting a baby girl. We cope very well since the first time, we have been sharing laughs and responsibilities like cooking meals for all of us and eating together as a family, and supporting emotionally each other like a real family.

My son it is turning 18th months old soon and I am hoping to move, with Colleen's help, onto my next step and be able to support my baby and myself. But it would not be possible without Saint Gianna's Home, FLI and Colleen's help. They have given us the opportunity to see life in a different way. They help me to build my lost relationship with God. We had felt family love. We know someone cares about us. Someone trusts in me and had never let me give up. I can not be thankful enough with God for these beautiful people who make this possible.

I am Giselle, a single mum of a beautiful and healthy son named Noah. Noah was born all thanks to the help of Colleen and my new friends at Family Life International.

When I found out that I was pregnant, the father of my son wanted to know absolutely nothing, and with the GP sent me to do everything to abort. I was in shock, I couldn't believe this was happening to me.

I always believed and did everything with love, but unfortunately finding myself alone since my family is in Argentina, it was a long dark road until I found the help of FLI.

From the first day I contacted FLI, Colleen sent me texts and made me feel that everything was going to be fine, that there was light on that dark path and that I was not alone!

FLI offered and continues to provide everything necessary for my son and me – where to live peacefully, clothes, furniture, nappies and everything I need for Noah and myself. Noah was baptised by Father Jeremy Palman, and Colleen agreed to be Noah's Godmother, because of so much love and dedication that she gave us.

This is a small part of everything that I have gone through in the hands of God, and I am very grateful from my heart for so much support and love. Today I am very blessed and happy with my healthy boy – living in St. Gianna's Home for Mothers and babies, such a beautiful home. Today I say thanks to God and to you because without your help, all this would not have been possible.

GISELLE'S STORY



Baby Noah, Giselle's son.

SECURING THE FUTURE FOR SAINT GIANNA'S HOME

The team are so very grateful to get Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies established and under way, through renting the current house in the City. By the grace of God we have excellent staff and volunteers who assist when required, and are willing to help the mothers on a day-to-day basis.

As every mother and baby who come our way have their very own special character, and needs, we tailor our approach to meet each need specifically. A personalized programme is developed for every mum. Our motto is to help one mum at a time. We assist them to become independent. We aim to help her give her baby a very good start in life. We do this by helping her learn mothering skills, and assisting her in looking at future career options, so she can learn and develop the necessary knowledge and skills to provide for herself and her family.

THE DREAM FOR A BIGGER AND PERMANENT HOME

While the current *Saint Gianna's Home* has been an amazing start on our journey to fulfilling our mission to serve mothers and babies, ***the reality is we've had to turn mothers away!***

So, we've launched a fundraising program to establish a fund enabling us to purchase a facility (or alternatively acquire a long-term lease) that can truly meet the needs of the countless women and their families who come our way for help.

We do not want to turn mothers away again!

We are actively searching for the right property where we have:

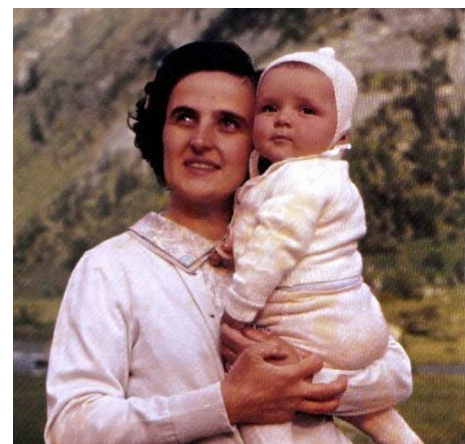
- Designated live-in accommodation for home managers.
- Private rooms for pregnant mothers while they prepare for the birth of their baby.
- Rooms for mothers and their babies after birth, as they begin their new life together.
- Transitioning accommodation as each mother and baby prepares to leave *Saint Gianna's Home* and transition into their own flat or home.

We are searching for a peaceful environment that is also close to a maternity unit, learning institutions, and public transport.

This development is essential right now! A permanent home will provide stability for mothers and ensure we can focus on serving each woman who turns to us for help in their greatest hour of need.

Through the intercession of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, we are confident that Our Lord will bring us to our permanent home where we have the security to put down roots, and be a beacon of light and hope in this sad and darkened world.

With thirty years experience of caring for the vulnerable and those facing unplanned pregnancies, the team are at the ready to grow and develop *Saint Gianna's Home for Mothers and Babies*, as an essential part of our overall mission.



The secret of
happiness
is to live moment
by moment,
and thank God
for all that He,
in His goodness,
sends to us day
after day.

SAINT GIANNA BERETTA MOLLA

Pregnant?

Need help?

**POSTAL ADDRESS:**

P O Box 27967
Mt Roskill, Auckland 1440

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

569A Richardson Road,
Mt Roskill, Auckland 1041

PHONE

0800 367 5433

TEXT

027 448 80 70

**We serve women
throughout New Zealand.**



0800 367 5433

pregnancyoptions.org.nz

*Dear Colleen and team, I would love to
be a guardian angel this Christmas for
mothers in their greatest hour of need,
and help them choose life for their
precious baby!*

Enclosed is my gift of:

☐ \$40 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250
☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ Other \$ _____

I wish to give via:

☐ **CHEQUE**

Made payable to Family Life International Trust
NOTE: KiwiBank cheques are no longer accepted.
Other banks will still accept cheques until July 2021.

☐ **INTERNET BANKING**

ACCT NAME: Family Life International Trust

ACCT NUMBER: 02-0248-0211768-00

BANK: BNZ **REFERENCE:** Your Surname

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

Charge my: ☐ **VISA** ☐ **MASTERCARD**

NAME ON CARD: _____

CARD NUMBER: _____

EXP DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

Please return this coupon in the enclosed freepost envelope to: Family Life International NZ

P O Box 27967 • Mt Roskill • Auckland 1440 • Phone 09 629 4361 • admin@fli.org.nz