

and asked if there were any doctors who did reversals in our area.

One doctor was in, and he promised to send a brochure and referred us to his web site, which I visited right away. From the opening Scripture quote, to the testimonies of success stories, to the details of the procedure, I was sold. We called for an appointment. Then I visited other web sites and saw prices of \$5,000 to \$15,000. Whoa! "God, are you sure you want me to do this? Where will the money come from?"

More Miracles

We arrived at Dr. Leverett's office the next day and told him about what had been happening in our lives. He told us about his own conversion and how just a few short years ago he used to perform vasectomies. One day while reading Scripture he heard God telling him that he was to stop doing them. He came to build a practice and ministry solely for performing reversals. I was so moved as he told his story with tears streaming down his face. It didn't take long for me to decide that I wanted Dr. Leverett to perform my reversal surgery, and I asked him how soon he could do it.

He looked in his appointment book and said, "How about next Tuesday morning at 7:50?"

I said, "GREAT, let's do it!" In the meantime, I was trying to figure out how we were going to pay for it. Julie had the same thought. She waved her hands saying, "We are both confident in your work, but we'll need to work out some sort of payment plan."

The good doctor sat back in his chair; he looked up at the ceiling for a moment, slowly leaned forward, and said, "I think you two are

a wonderful couple, and I like the ministry and the work that you want to do. In fact, I like it so much that I'm going to invest in it." He paused and said, "Come next Tuesday and bring \$500!"

Julie and I cried the whole way home, thanking God for the angel He had placed in our lives. The following Tuesday came quickly. Julie, the doctor, and his scrub team gathered over me and prayed. I slowly closed my eyes and prayed with them and relaxed while the good doctor went to work. With all of the prayer, I wasn't surprised when I learned the operation was a success.



That was September 14, 1999. On February 9, 2001, Julie and I gave birth to our third child, Katharine Marie Alexander. What a blessing! I cannot even begin to put into words what joy she brought to us. To think that

we were once opposed to being open to such a gift. But there's more! On February 24, 2005, we welcomed our fourth child, Michael Gregory Alexander. God is so good!



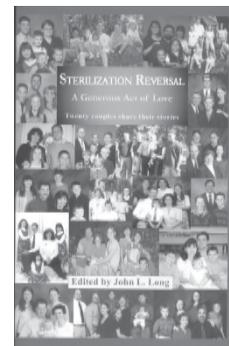
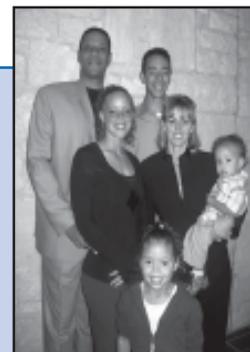
Once we had re-prioritized our lives and began to do everything with God in the forefront of our hearts and minds, our everyday challenges and frustrations seemed to disappear. Once we began to live in communion with God, we received the grace to live in communion with one another. Trusting in God and making Him the center of our lives where He belongs made a huge difference in our lives. Today our marriage is better than ever, and our family life and relationships with our children have improved tremendously.

Do we still have difficulties and hard times? You bet! The difference is that now, with God, we feel we can handle anything. God never stops molding us into the persons He wants

us to be. We are so grateful to all the people who contributed to our conversion, especially our families who prayed so hard for us, and we thank God for all the wonderful people He sent us to bring our family back to Him.

Edited for publication by Rev. T.G. Morrow

Greg and Julie Alexander offer a Christian marriage coaching service through the *Alexander House Apostolate*. You can find them on the web at www.thealexanderhouse.org.



The Alexanders' story is one of 20 testimonies in the book *Sterilization Reversal: A Generous Act of Love*. This book, as well as *Physicians Healed*, is available from *One More Soul*.

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We Had Everything... But Happiness



By Greg Alexander

We had our health, six-figure salaries, a beautiful house, two great kids, and a vasectomy. And we were miserable.

We were married in 1987 and had our first child, Christopher, in 1988. In 1989 we gave birth to Lauren. The doctors told us we were the "perfect family" with two children, one boy, one girl. So, I had a vasectomy. We were Catholics, but we really didn't know much about the Church's moral teaching.

After several months of staying at home with the children, my wife Julie began to feel empty and restless. This, coupled with the pressure of friends, drove her to take a job outside of the home. We didn't need the money, but she needed to be "fulfilled." Her self-worth seemed to come from her job and the money she made.

Little by little, our relationship and family as a whole began to suffer. Careers became the most important thing in our lives. We were still going to Mass every Sunday, but it was more out of habit than anything else. Needless to say, God was not at the center of our lives. We prayed only in times of need, or when things weren't going right. Then we would ask, "God, why is our life like this?"

We allowed money and material things to become our god. We sacrificed anything and everything to achieve it. Our lives were inundated with networking, happy hours, and any event where we could meet and rub elbows with those who had attained the wealth we were seeking. Needless to say, we began to grow apart, and we started finding ways to fill our days so we wouldn't have to be together.

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For four years we maintained this lifestyle. We started buying more things to fill the void in our relationship. When that didn't work, we tried to find happiness in other ways, and eventually in other people. Little did we realize at the time that what was missing in our lives was God.

When Julie was offered a job more than an hour from home, she took it and came home only one night a week and on the weekends. The money she was making was so good that it became the excuse for continuing to work out of town.

Eventually our feelings of not wanting to live without the other became thoughts of how to avoid each other, and Julie's new job made it very easy. Even our sexual life became a selfish act of pleasure without meaning or feelings attached, not a self-surrender in love. Not only were we growing apart from each other, but we were growing further away from God as well. Eventually things got so bad that I suggested the unimaginable: divorce. I felt that I couldn't take it any longer. Julie agreed, so it seemed like a done deal. We would get a divorce.

We went to see our priest to tell him about our decision. To show you how ignorant we were, we were hoping to win his support. He sat there quietly as we tried to justify our actions, and when we were finished he asked us a series of questions: "What is God's

intention for the marriage covenant? What does the Church teach? What are some of the writings of St. Paul on marriage?" Julie and I looked at each other, shrugged our shoulders, and replied with a big "I don't know." All we knew was that we were Catholic, had been baptized and confirmed, fell in love, and got married, but now we felt we couldn't live this way anymore.

Our priest suggested that we go home and do some studying and praying before we made this decision final. Even though we felt that we could not go on in our relationship, something inside us said, "Let's give it a try."

Amazing Grace... And Now I See

I not only had to find our Bible, but I also had to dust it off before I could begin to read. I started with the writings of St. Paul. Then I went to the writings of some of the early Church Fathers and on to the various encyclicals, in particular John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio* (The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World). The grace of God literally began to come over me. I guess you could say that scales fell from my eyes, and I began to see our situation and life itself through God's eyes for the first time.

I went to Julie and said, "What were we thinking? This is not at all what God intended marriage to be like." We immediately went to God and prayed the following: "God, we're tired of trying to live our lives as society says we should, and we're tired of trying things our way. It just hasn't worked. So, we ask you to come into our lives and show us how you want us to live our marriage." I even went further, saying that if He delivered us from this mess, we would dedicate the rest of our lives to working in marriage and family ministry.



Well, you've heard the saying, be careful about what you pray for.... From that day on, amazing things began to happen. Every day became a new journey for us. We had no idea what a jewel we had in our Catholic faith!

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We began to overflow with an excitement that we had never felt before.

We mutually made the decision to quit our jobs because we knew that not only were they taking us away from each other, but they were taking us away from our children and God as well. We had found out where we had gone wrong, and anything that would interfere with our marriage had to go. We made God number one, each other second, the kids third, family and friends next, and everything else lesser priorities.

As we began to strengthen our relationship with God, our marriage relationship began to get stronger. We began to celebrate the sacrament of marriage the way He intended, and the graces began to flow.

Julie and I began a non-profit organization committed to the enrichment of marriage and family life. We felt the need to share with others what we had learned in the hope that we could save other couples from the heartache that we had experienced. Soon afterward we were offered jobs to be co-coordinators of the Family Life Office for our diocese.

I Give You ALL of Myself

We had finally put our priorities in order and were developing a personal relationship with God, as a couple and as a family. However, our sense of happiness didn't last. As we delighted in discovering all the wonderful teachings of the Church, I became aware of the teaching on contraception and sterilization. I felt heart-rending remorse for my sin of sterilization. How could I have been so selfish?

How could I want to symbolize a turned-in love every time I had relations with Julie? I asked our priest what I should do, and he told me that since I had acted without knowing it was wrong, I did not have to have the vasectomy reversed.

That set my mind at ease... until six months later when we attended a marriage conference in Denver with Julie's brother and his wife. On the morning of the conference, as we were driving along, my sister-in-law asked me if I had ever thought of getting a reversal. I told her what the priest had said, but she asked what about what God intended. By the time I heard Christopher West speak on how contracepting couples were in effect saying to each other, "I give you all of myself except my fertility," I felt God tugging at my heart again... big time. Then Julie's brother and his wife encouraged me to pray about the possibility of a reversal.

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The ride back home was a quiet one. I had to tell Julie there was no way I could continue in our non-profit mission to married couples if I myself was not living the things we were teaching. When she heard that, Julie began to panic since we had put everything we had into this ministry.

I decided to take it to God in prayer, asking Him to give me a sign if He desired that I have a reversal. Meanwhile we started working for the diocese. As Julie was rearranging the bookshelves in our new office, she discovered a book entitled, *Physicians Healed*, a collection of stories about doctors who had turned away from prescribing contraceptives, performing sterilizations, etc. The Natural Family Planning office number was on the back so Julie called them

