

Research Shows You Probably Haven't Had a Date in a While

On Valentine's Day of 2019, *The Washington Post* highlighted research showing that young people are dating 56% less than previous generations, in part because of social media and smartphones. How depressing is that?

We're not even dating anymore; we're just texting and living virtually and vicariously via pictures and videos on our phones. Had aliens been monitoring us over the years, they might be bewildered by how boring we have become.

The decrease in real human interaction represented by this decline in dating is dangerous for the future of the family.

A culture where dating is on the decline as promiscuity and abortions are on the rise is a dying culture. We have forgotten how to court, impress, romance and all the little awkward, fumbling nuances that go along with real human relationships. When we plan dates with our significant others, plan fun family outings or surprise a love interest with flowers, we help to promote a culture of connectedness that values family and togetherness.

This is one of the reasons why the pro-life community should celebrate Valentine's Day. Although it's now been heavily commercialized to the point where it mostly represents chocolates, roses and rom-coms, Valentine's Day means much more than that, as represented by the man for whom the day is named.

After the Roman Emperor Claudius II banned engagements and marriages, the priest St. Valentine fought this by secretly marrying young couples seeking marriage. In case that is not romantic enough, he was caught by Claudius, defended his actions, and was thus beaten and beheaded on Feb. 14, 270 AD.

If St. Valentine died defending authentic love and marriage, surely we can plan a date for a loved one in our life!

It may sound ridiculous to some that St. Valentine had to die for authentic love. Without relationships, we neglect to see the dignity in every human person. We also forget that we are made to love, be loved and sacrifice for our beloved. This commitment is worth a date, a night out or a candlelight dinner at home.

So, surprise someone with flowers, a bottle of wine, dinner out, cooking in, candlelight or a picnic. It is easy to dismiss these things as unnecessary, but the impact is lasting and needed to build a culture of life. {eo}

Shawn Carney *is president of 40 Days for Life.*