



Marriage and Family Life News

JUNE 2009

NEWSLETTER

Why use NFP???

-It Reflects the dignity of the human person within the context of marriage and family life.

-It is 100% natural and 100% safe.

-There are no negative side effects.

-It is 97%-99% effective in avoiding a pregnancy.

-It is effective in both achieving and avoiding pregnancy.

-It is a shared method, requiring mutual responsibility.

-It deepens intimacy, renews romance and strengthens marriages.

-It is virtually cost-free!

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Marriage and Natural Family Planning...a Divine Design!

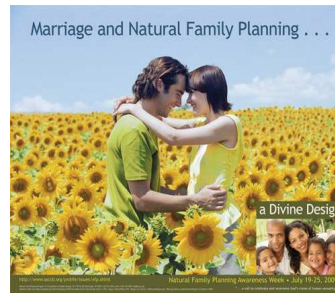
Natural Family Planning Awareness Week is a national educational campaign highlighting the anniversary of *Humanae Vitae* (July 25) which articulates Catholic beliefs about human sexuality, conjugal love and responsible parenthood.

The Natural Family Planning Program of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) develops a poster each year along with basic supportive materials to be used in parishes and communities nationwide. NFP awareness week is an opportunity to proclaim the truth and beauty about NFP in our parishes and communities.

Resources

It is our responsibility as leaders in the Church to share the commonly misunderstood message about NFP with the lay faithful and we are fortunate that the

USCCB has provided the resources to help us do it! Click on the USCCB website at the end of this article to find



2009 Natural Family Planning awareness week poster. Posters are available through the USCCB website.

resources that can be downloaded to bring NFP week to your parish. Posters are available as well as Homily notes and suggestions

for Prayers of the Faithful. NFP brochures that list the various NFP methods available in the Archdiocese of Denver are also available through the Marriage and Family Life Office. If you would like to make these brochures available in your parish, they can be purchased for .20 cents each in packs of 50, 100 or 500. You may also print these brochures in-house by contacting the Office of Marriage and Family Life to receive the PUB file.

We hope you utilize these resources during NFP week and beyond. Let us share the good news that those called to marriage can reflect God's love, given for us freely, totally, faithfully and fruitfully!

For 2009 NFP Week Resources visit the USCCB Website:
<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/>

Summer Family Retreat

The Christian Life Movement (CLM), a Catholic Lay Movement will be hosting a family retreat from June 26th-28th at St. Malo's Retreat Center near Estes Park. The Family Retreat will have as a theme *Silence and Action*. The idea of silence as self-mastery, as the deep harmony of all the aspects of our being goes together with the Spirituality of Action, which seeks to inform our activity with

God's presence, understanding our daily work as a constant liturgy and path to holiness. Going deep into these two characteristics of the Sodalit Spirituality, which are important for today's world full of noise and activism, we will gather as families to share a weekend of prayer, reflection and children's activities based upon age.

Rates Include: Lodging: \$180/room for the weekend



Meals: \$70 Adults (13 and older) \$35 Children (4-12 yrs)
FREE Children 3 and under
Check-in June 26: 3-5pm
Check-out June 28: 1 pm

To Make Reservations: Call: 303.747.0201 Deadline: June 17, 09

Visit at: www.saintmalo.org



COUPLES BY CANDLELIGHT

An Evening of Marriage Enrichment

With Greg & Julie Alexander

- ♥ Want to know more about God's Plan for Marriage?
- ♥ Seeking to revitalize your relationship?
- ♥ Interested in learning more about how you can improve your marriage and be a better helpmate?

Please join us for a special evening with your spouse as we reflect on God's plan for a joy-filled marriage

Friday, July 17, 2009, 7 - 9 p.m.

St. Thomas More ~ The Padre

Cost: Optional offering will be accepted *Childcare provided*

The evening will be presented by Greg and Julie Alexander, co-creators of the Covenant of Love marriage ministry and founders of The Alexander House, a non-profit organization that seeks to strengthen and unify couples as they live out their marriage promises. Dessert and other light refreshments will be served.

Space is limited. Please contact Mindy Dalton at Daltonkids6@msn.com or (303) 840-2772 to RSVP or for more information. *For childcare arrangements, please let us know how many children, their names and ages. Thank you!

August 7-9, 2009

Wichita, Kansas

Century II Convention Center

This year will mark the 10th Anniversary of the Annual Midwest Catholic Family Conference. This year's conference will be held at the Century II Convention Center in Wichita, Kansas and will feature programs, entertainment and speakers for all ages. Eucharistic Adoration, Mass and opportunities for Confession will also be available throughout the weekend. You and your family will not want to miss this opportunity to deepen in your relationships with one another and with Christ!

For conference details and registration information, please visit the Midwest Catholic Family Conference website at www.catholicfamilyconference.org



Upcoming Retrouvaille Weekend



"Retrouvaille" is a French word meaning "rediscovery." This weekend program (with follow-up meetings) is designed for couples with troubled marriages, including separated or divorced couples, who are willing to make an honest

effort to enter a process designed for resolution of conflict. It is not a retreat, sensitivity meeting, or "miracle cure." But it is very successful in fostering reconciliation. The next Retrouvaille weekend in the Archdiocese of Denver is scheduled for the weekend of September 25th-27th. For more infor-

mation call 303-973-2206 or 800-470-2230.

Official website:

<http://www.retrouvaille.org/>



Is a Strong Economy Dependent on Virtue and Strong Marriages?

Read Dr. Esolen's Post below: <http://merecomments.typepad.com/>



The brilliant Spengler (that's the pseudonym for the newest associate editor of *First Things*, Daniel Goldman) has written recently in appreciation of Pope Benedict's assertion that an economy not based on moral values will end by destroying itself. Theologians, says the Pope, must pay heed to economic laws, but economists for their part must cease pretending that the "laws" they discover have the same force and uniformity as those of physics. Economists and theologians must talk to one another. Spengler notes that the most powerful evidence that the Pope is right is the imminent demographic collapse of many European nations. The laws of supply and demand take new and unexpected forms when the next generation of suppliers does not show up to meet the exaggerated economic demands of their elders. It is not, in other words, simply the case that economies exist in a Platonic world of mathematics, or in a Rawlsian world of rational choice. They exist among people, with all their strengths and weaknesses, their intelligence and folly, their desires and their virtues and their vices. It is not the economy always that determines the culture, but the culture, or the degradation of a culture, that drives or derails the economy. This thesis is hardly new -- Edward Banfield wrote about it in *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, and of course its sunny form is the basis of the Whig view of history. It is at least as old as Plato's cold analysis of the vices, both political and economic, attendant upon different forms of political government.

I believe that a similar claim ought to be put forth about marriage. Banfield had noted, long before Francis Fukuyama wrote *Trust*, that in economically backward countries you can trust your kin but not those beyond, certainly not "foreigners," meaning somebody from the town ten miles away. One is admired for putting one over on a stranger, while not allowing the same to happen to oneself; just as a man who sleeps with his enemy's sister while keeping his own sister a virgin is some sort of a hero. In such a place, the very idea of complex and long-lasting business relationships extending beyond kinship is smothered in the cradle. Such countries (among them my beloved southern Italy) do not simply have bribe-taking and back-stabbing because they are poor. They also are poor because their culture encourages the shifty taking of bribes and stabbing of backs.

What about marriage? Let's suppose you have a society that prizes duty. Children are taught that they will never be happy if they pursue their happiness; they can only be happy if they do what is right and generously give what is due to others, in real and thriving charity. They learn that the lowest creature on earth is one who breaks a promise just because he thinks he can get a better deal some place else; just as a soldier knows that you don't want to have to rely on someone whose sole object in battle is to save his skin, regardless of what happens to his buddies. They grow up admiring examples of patience, and of the small daily kindnesses and sacrifices that are the stuff of duty. They are told, with parables from Christ, or from Socrates, or from Confucius, that it is better to suffer injustice than to practice it. Let's add that they have a Christian view of marriage: that it is holy, because in the beginning God made man and woman for one another; and they follow or they are encouraged to follow Saint Paul's teachings regarding obedience and love.

Now such people will probably pass strict laws against divorce, but even supposing that a tyrant from abroad had conquered them and repealed their laws, they still would probably not divorce very often, and for an absurdly obvious reason. There would be a lot fewer people worthy of *being* divorced. The culture of bribe taking produces not only people who do take bribes, but people who would go on to take bribes no matter where you put them. A culture of divorce, I'm suggesting, produces a lot of divorces, true, but mainly by producing a lot of people whom only a fool would trust. It makes everyone worse, because it attacks at the root the principal means by which the common person can do something godlike in its freedom and nobility: to cast one's lot forever with another human being, loving not by seeking one's own pleasure, but instead seeing that the greatest delight is only to be found in that freedom-tossing and therefore liberating love.

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**Our marriage
betrayals and
our economic
betrayals are all
manifestations of
a culture of
betrayal...**

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It produces a culture of people who cannot be trusted with money, or with paper profits from supposed future investors, because they cannot even be trusted with rings; they are as good as their word when keeping their word profits them, or when breaking their word would cause them too much trouble. But make the price right, in money or in pleasure or in those vanities called "my dreams," and they can be bought out.

I believe we are now lost in the mists of the play-acting and pretense that are but the opposite side of the supposedly hard utilitarian coin. We say, "I will be with you until I die," but we hold tight instead to the chain of self-will, reserving to ourselves the right to leave, should market conditions dictate (meaning, should I find somebody else for my golden parachute). That allows us to pretend at marrying; marrying becomes but a part of "my dream," that vanity with the miser's fist and heart to finance it. We think we will paper-push our way out of our economic slough, while not seeing that an economy can finally only thrive if people work an honest day's work at producing something, and in the end a tangible thing, that other people need and want. Our marriage betrayals and our economic betrayals are all manifestations of a culture of betrayal; and we lay the flattering unction to our soul, saying that people have always been exactly as shiftless as we are, only we are smart about it.

Anthony Esolen is Professor of English at Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island. He has translated Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (Johns Hopkins Press) and Dante's *Divine Comedy* (Random House). He is a senior editor of *Touchstone*.

Want to strengthen your marriage?

Marriage Encounter's Mission of renewal in the church and change in the world is to assist couples and priests to live fully intimate and responsible relationships by providing them with a Catholic "experience" and ongoing community support for such a lifestyle.

Upcoming Marriage Encounter Weekends:

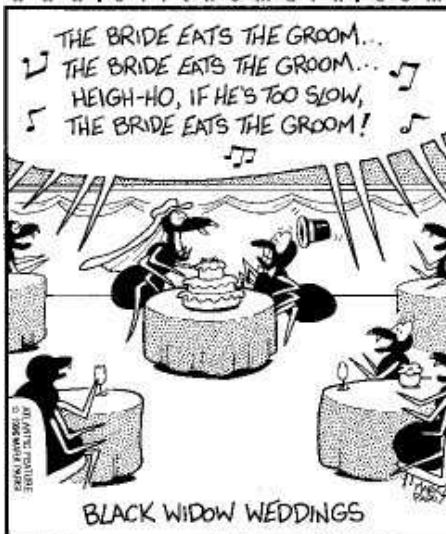
August 14-16 St. Malo Retreat Center
September 18-20 St. Malo Retreat Center

Contact Pete & Danielle Smith at (303) 627-4411 or smittenpet@msn.com



Just for Laughs...

off the mark by Mark Parisi
www.offthemark.com



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www.offthemark.com

