

# Family Life Ministry Update

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A publication of the Office of Family Life Ministry, Catholic Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston  
[www.archgh.org/familylife](http://www.archgh.org/familylife)

*Committed to strengthening the family as the basic unit of Church and society*

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## JUNE—

**COUPLES COMMUNICATION WORKSHOPS** for Spanish-speaking couples, African-American couples, and English-speaking couples will be offered **this summer**. All workshops are free and open to couples who are married, engaged or considering marriage. Financial assistance is available for childcare expenses for children under age 12. The workshops are sponsored by the Greater Houston Healthy Marriage Coalition. For more information, including dates and times, please call Dr. Daphne Lambert at (713) 802-7852.

**NEW LIFE**, a marriage preparation program for remarrying couples in which one or both partners have lost a spouse through divorce or death, will be held **Saturday, June 23**, at the Cameron Retreat Center at St. Dominic Archdiocesan Center. The program also will be offered August 11. Contact FLM at (713) 741-8706 or [mcostner@archgh.org](mailto:mcostner@archgh.org). See [www.archgh.org/familylife/marriagepreparation](http://www.archgh.org/familylife/marriagepreparation) for details and a registration form.

**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE MINISTERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE** will be held **Tuesday evening through Thursday afternoon, June 26-28** in Denver at the Adams Mark Hotel. It precedes the annual Smart Marriages Conference to be held at the same location June 28-July 1. The theme of the NACFLM Conference is "Taking Our Ministry to a New Altitude." Among the featured speakers are the Most Rev. Joseph Kurtz, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Knoxville, and chair of the USCCB Committee on Marriage and Family; David Thomas, Ph.D., co-director of the Bethany Family Institute, and Elizabeth Marquardt, M.Div., director of the Center for Marriage and Families at the Institute for American Values. The Smart Marriages Conference provides opportunities to learn about a wide variety of educational programs designed to build happy and healthy marriages and families. For more information see [www.nacflm.org](http://www.nacflm.org), [www.smartmarriages.com](http://www.smartmarriages.com) or contact FLM at (713) 741-8708 or [dfowler@archgh.org](mailto:dfowler@archgh.org).

## JULY—

**SUMMER FAMILY RETREATS—** Want to treat your family to a summer vacation that everyone will enjoy? Attend a Summer Family Retreat for five days in July at Circle Lake Retreat Center, just 40 miles north of Houston in Pinehurst. Each summer, Circle Lake Retreat invites families to pray and play together on its beautiful grounds, to get to know other families as we form a Christian community, and to grow closer to God and one another through retreat activities. If you're looking for an opportunity for your family to take a vacation that will make a difference in your lives, then Circle Lake is the place for you **July 2-6, July 9-13, July 16-20 or July 23-27**. Cost: \$150 Adults/teens; \$100 children 4-12; and free for children 3 and under. Reserve by May 1 and receive the Early Bird Rate: \$125 adults/teens, \$85 children 4-12. Space is limited, register early! For more information and/or to register, please call Monica Frazier at (281) 356-6764, ext. 202, or see [www.circlelakeretreat.com](http://www.circlelakeretreat.com).

**RSVP PLUS**, an informal evening of sharing for English- and Spanish-speaking persons separated, divorced or widowed, **begins July 10 and continues Tuesday evenings through August 14** at the Cameron Retreat Center at St. Dominic Archdiocesan Center. Many persons in these circumstances need someone to listen and this program provides such an opportunity. For more information and/or to register, contact John Tuohy at (713) 914-0864 or FLM at (713) 741-8710.

**MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER**, a special weekend experience, is designed to make good marriages better. It offers communication techniques useful for a lifetime together and offers couples a unique opportunity to look deeply into their relationship together away from the distractions and the tensions of everyday life.

Its aim is to revitalize Christian marriages. Marriage Encounter will be offered from **Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, July 20-22** on the south side of Houston. It will also be offered September 7-9. For more information and/or to register, contact Gary & Maribel Arribe at (281) 992-8494 or garbel\_wvme@yahoo.com.

**RETROUVAILLE**, a seven-week program beginning with a weekend retreat **Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, July 27-29**, is designed to help struggling couples make their marriages work. Couples discover how listening, forgiveness, communication and the dialogue process are powerful aids for building a loving and lasting relationship. The program also will be offered October 12-14. Call the Houston-area coordinator, 1-800-470-2230. See [www.helpourmarriage.com](http://www.helpourmarriage.com).

**NATIONAL NFP AWARENESS WEEK JULY 22-28**—Natural Family Planning Awareness Week will be celebrated **July 22-28**. In parishes and other venues across the Archdiocese, volunteers will be hanging posters, passing out information, answering questions, and inviting people to live their marital relationships according to God's plan by learning and using Natural Family Planning. Archbishop DiNardo will be the celebrant at a special Mass honoring NFP volunteers and users **Sunday, July 29** at 4:30 p.m. in the Warren Chapel at St. Dominic Archdiocesan Center. NFP is safe, healthy, effective, inexpensive, health-promoting, morally acceptable, good for marriages, good for achieving or avoiding pregnancy, and good for children.

**CONVALIDACIÓN:** Este programa está dirigido a parejas que conviven sin estar casadas, o que sólo han contraído matrimonio civil y que desean bendecir su matrimonio por la Iglesia Católica. Los próximos cursos disponibles se llevarán a cabo: el **28-29 de julio** y el 8-9 de septiembre de 9:00 a.m. a 4:00 p.m. en el Centro Arquidiocesano de St. Dominic; deben asistir los dos días. Para mayor información comuníquese con la Oficina Arquidiocesana del Ministerio de Vida Familiar, al número de teléfono (713) 741-8710 o envíenos un correo electrónico a [lgarcia@archgh.org](mailto:lgarcia@archgh.org).

## **AUGUST—**

**CONFERENCIA PARA NOVIOS:** Es un programa de preparación matrimonial en español. Se llevará a cabo los días **25-26 de agosto** y 29-30 de septiembre en el centro Centro Arquidiocesano de St. Dominic en Houston. Para mayor información sírvase llamar a la Oficina Arquidiocesana del Ministerio de Vida Familiar al (713) 741-8710 o envíenos un correo electrónico a [lgarcia@archgh.org](mailto:lgarcia@archgh.org).

## **SEPTEMBER—**

**RSVP**, a 10-week support program in English and in Spanish for persons in the initial stages of separation, divorce or the death of a spouse, begins **Tuesday, September 4** at the Cameron Retreat Center at St. Dominic Archdiocesan Center. The trauma, pain and agony that accompany a loss can be made bearable and the grief process worked through more effectively with the assistance of others who have had a common experience. Contact John Tuohy at (713) 914-0864 or FLM at (713) 741-8710.

**MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER** (see program description in July), will be offered from **Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, September 14-16** on the north side of Houston. For more information and/or to register, contact Zeke and Ashley Metzler at (281) 356-2204 or [eametzler@houston.rr.com](mailto:eametzler@houston.rr.com).

**THE BEGINNING EXPERIENCE**, a special weekend program for those who have lost a spouse through separation, divorce or death, will be held Friday evening through **Sunday afternoon, September 21-23**, at St. Dominic Archdiocesan Center. It is designed to help make a new beginning in life through a powerful, intense and positive experience of hope. The program also will be offered November 9-11. For more information and/or to register, call (713) 440-3440. See [www.beginningexperience.org](http://www.beginningexperience.org).

**A MOTHER-DAUGHTER PROGRAM** about sexuality and fertility will be presented **Sunday, September 23** for 10- to 12-year-old girls at The Chancery at St. Dominic Archdiocesan Center, Houston. Cost is \$20 per family and registration is required 10 days in advance. To register, contact the archdiocesan Family Life Ministry at (713) 741-8706 or [mcostner@archgh.org](mailto:mcostner@archgh.org). See [www.archgh.org/familylife](http://www.archgh.org/familylife) for details and a registration form.

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### ***For your information...***

**MARRIED LOVE AND THE GIFT OF LIFE** is a new, 20-page brochure on God's plan for marriage approved for publication by the U.S. Catholic bishops at their November 2006 General Meeting.

Developed by the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities in collaboration with the committees on Doctrine and Marriage and Family Life, the brochure, in a question-and-answer format, strongly supports natural family planning, saying it "enables couples to cooperate with the body as God designed it." Copies are available in English and in Spanish through FLM at the discounted price of \$1 each. Contact FLM at (713) 741-8708 or [dfowler@archgh.org](mailto:dfowler@archgh.org).

**NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING** classes in English and in Spanish are offered at many locations throughout the archdiocese. Modern methods of Natural Family Planning (NFP) are based on scientific understanding of the ovulatory cycle in women. NFP is a good technique by which married couples can plan their families consistent with Church teachings on sexuality and responsible parenthood. To register and/or for more information, contact Joe DeVet at (281) 723-5686 or [nfpflm@aol.com](mailto:nfpflm@aol.com).

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**FLM Information Lines:** 713.741.8706 (English); 713.741.8714 (Spanish)

**FLM Web Site:** [www.archgh.org/familylife](http://www.archgh.org/familylife)