

Life Cycles



Summer 2007 The newsletter of the Philadelphia Natural Family Planning Network (PNFPN)

President's Message *Spreading the Word: NFP Awareness Week*

This is the first of my “official” messages as the newly elected president of the PNFPN. I have been a member of this organization for over five years, and I humbly thank God and all those who have placed their trust in me by selecting me for this labor. I am firmly committed to furthering the message of NFP throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia through marketing, teaching, prayer, and networking—which is the mission of the PNFPN.

Please note that **NFP Awareness Week** is just around the corner: July 22-28. Don't let the week go unnoticed at your church! The theme this year is “Life. A Gift of Married Love... A Call to Celebrate and Reverence God's Vision of Human Sexuality.” Posters promoting this theme are available through the USCCB for \$2.75 each and can be ordered by calling (866) 582-0943 or e-mailing customerservice@ifcucb.com. Think of all the people we can reach if everyone who gets this newsletter

buys two posters and asks their pastor to display them in church and at all wedding preparation classes.

If you do nothing else, please write a letter and request that the priests and deacons in your parish give a homily on NFP between July 22-28. The USCCB website has daily suggestions for relating the scripture readings to NFP, most especially for July 26, the feast day of Saints Joachim and Anne. I have written my pastor for the past three years, and every priest and deacon has responded. Please help us spread the word about the blessings of NFP.

Finally, I would like to inform you that the PNFPN board and its advisors are working on a business and marketing plan to increase NFP awareness in the Archdiocese. We will soon request an audience with Cardinal Rigali to get his permission and support. Please pray for the success of that meeting, and please support our efforts financially by joining and contributing to the PNFPN.

God bless you and thank you,
Les Ruppertsberger, D.O. FACOOG

Why NFP Awareness Week is so Important *A recent testimony sent to the PNFPN*

I am a victim of the lack of Church teaching on this subject and feel especially motivated to help get the word out to other Catholics. I pulled my pastor aside on Friday morning and told him that in nineteen years of being a Catholic, I had never heard that artificial contraception was a grave sin. It was not taught during RCIA or pre-Cana (this was in 1988), and I have never heard it preached on Sundays. I did not find out until I cracked open the Catechism five months ago. I feel as if my generation of Catholics is part of some strange experiment that has gone bad. I felt it was my responsibility to tell my pastor about this, but he did not seem too concerned. He did not understand that it is difficult, if not impossible, to get couples to change old habits after twenty years.

Please help us spread the word about the blessings of NFP!

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The newsletter of the Philadelphia
Natural Family Planning Network (PNFPN)

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The “Net”works

NFP Classes and Introductory Sessions

ORELAND, PA • JULY 11 • AUGUST 8
Free introductory sessions of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 88 Pennsylvania Avenue. Contact: Barbara Rose, RN, FCP, at (215) 884-2922.

VOORHEES, NJ • SEPTEMBER 27
A Sympto-Thermal Method NFP class taught by Couple to Couple League instructors will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Barry Brown Health Education Center. This is a series of four classes spaced one month apart. For directions and registration call (856) 583-6120 or e-mail nfpoffice@camdendiocese.org.

ADDITIONAL LISTINGS ARE REGULARLY
UPDATED AT www.pnfpn.org

NFP: Fertile Lifestyle in a Desert of Secular Wasteland

“The Sahuaro cactus begins life from the size of a poppy seed and lives to be hundreds of years old. They don’t even develop an arm until they are at least sixty years old. That reminds me of our modern NFP movement—we’re not old enough to develop arms yet, but as we stay alive (and faithful), we will last long enough to grow our arms and grow taller.... The cactus can go up to two years without water and sometimes it also seems like a long drought in the NFP desert. But, we learn how to use the little we have to our best advantage. That was a good visual image for me to keep persevering (after all, it’s against our religion to be pessimistic).”

—Cecilia LeChevalier,
Camden Family Life Office

Despite the fact that NFP is the best kept secret of the Catholic Church, a recent article appeared in a mainstream medical journal advocating NFP. This does not happen often in the medical world. The article is entitled “The effectiveness of a fertility awareness based method to avoid pregnancy in relation to a couple’s sexual behaviour during the fertile time: a prospective longitudinal study.” It appeared in the *Journal of Human Reproduction*, Vol. 22, No. 5, pp. 1310-1319, 2007.

The conclusion of the study should come as no surprise to any one who is knowledgeable about NFP: “The Sympto-Thermal Method is a highly effective family planning method, provided the appropriate guidelines are consistently adhered to.”

Over 900 women were followed over 17,638 cycles and the pregnancy rate was 0.6 per 100 women, with a dropout rate of 9.2 per 100 and an “unintended” pregnancy rate of 1.8 per 100.

Although the study does not address the utilization of the same method to achieve a pregnancy, it does speak volumes to the small “oases” that do occur within this desert through which all NFP supporters travel.

Mark Your Calendars

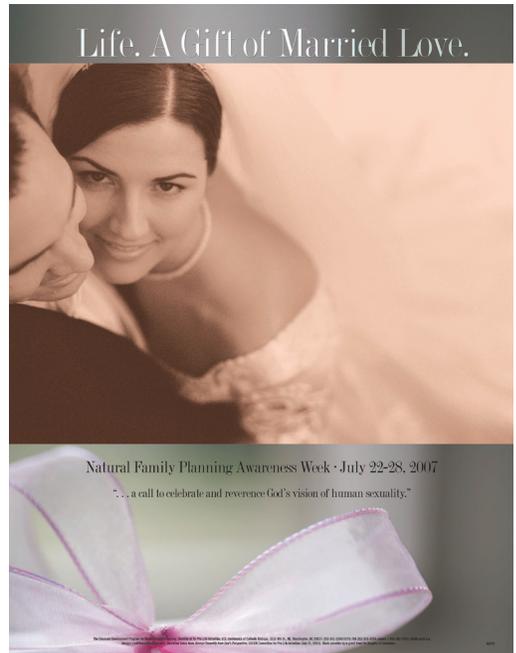
National NFP Awareness Week is July 22-28, 2007

Natural Family Planning Awareness Week is an event that was begun by the American Academy of NFP (now American Academy of FertilityCare™ Professionals) and is promoted by the Diocesan Development Program for NFP (DDP/NFP), the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The week highlights the anniversary of the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (July 25) and marks the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne (July 26). Through a variety of educational formats, the dioceses focus attention on Natural Family Planning and Church teachings which support its use in marriage.

Help spread the good news about NFP by placing an announcement in your parish bulletin, distributing NFP brochures, and talking to your pastor about preaching on the topic and using a special “NFP edition” of the prayers of the faithful (available at the website listed below). The poster to the right can be ordered by e-mailing customerservice@ifcweb.com or calling (866) 582-0943. Additional promotional ideas are available at:

www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/nfp/nfpweek/index.shtml



Welcome New Members

Barbara Brandt • Camp Hill, PA
Gonzald and Cecilia Escobedo • Bear, DE
Patti Katzenmoyer • Camp Hill, PA
Kimberly Lane • Camp Hill, PA
Dr. James Long • Camp Hill, PA
Dr. Ann Marie Manning • Camp Hill, PA
Bill and Virginia Martin • Collegeville, PA
Mary McMenamin • Sea Girt, NJ
Mary Pat Meyer • Newtown, PA
Dave and Betsey Russo • Audubon, PA
Barbara Shenble • West Trenton, NJ
Josi Skimkus • Neptune, NJ
Dr. Mark Stegman • Camp Hill, PA
Grace Targonski • Camp Hill, PA
Izabella Zathureczky • Yardley, PA

Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters

A book review by James Volpe

I received the book *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters: Ten Secrets Every Father Should Know* from my daughters for Christmas. I chose not to take that as commentary on my parental skills up to that point and read the book.

Dr. Meg Meeker writes from a unique perspective. She seems to have a thorough grasp of the inherent differences between men and women, and she is not ashamed to say it. In an era when men and women are repeatedly told to conform to some androgynous mold, she encourages men to be real men. She does not tell them to be weak-kneed, henpecked ninnies or beer-filled, testosterone junkies, but attentive guardians to the treasure of their daughter's lives. She relates some of the astounding stories which girls have told her over the years and provides valuable insight into how young women's lives are forever affected by their fathers' behavior. Dr. Meeker does not hesitate to let men know the stakes involved in being a good father. Although she makes many salient points, her tone is the most important part of the book. She wants men to know that fathers can't be too strong as they protect—and love—their daughters.

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Become a Member of the PNFPN

In the past, the PNFPN existed solely through the generosity of a few people and never asked its members to pay dues. While we continue to believe that news and information regarding NFP in the Philadelphia region should remain free, our promotional efforts are severely limited without a source of income. Thus, we are asking our members to consider a yearly donation to assist our efforts in spreading the good news of NFP. We request \$15 for an individual membership, \$25 for a couple, and \$10 for a student. Free copies of *Life Cycles* will still be distributed to everyone on the mailing list, but those who donate will be eligible to vote for the executive board members each year. To make a much-appreciated contribution, please clip out this form and send it with a check payable to PNFPN, P.O. Box 220, Jenkintown, PA 19046.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

Can we list your name and phone number in our directory of PNFPN members? Yes No

ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/COMMENTS: _____

Life Cycles

P.O. Box 220
Jenkintown, PA 19046

Do you have any news?

Life Cycles is *your* newsletter. Please remember to contact the editor or staff whenever you have information that would be valuable to PNFPN members. Please share with us your NFP training sessions, fertility appreciation programs, and outreach activities. We also love to hear about God's little blessings, so please send us announcements of births or adoptions. For more information on how to submit news and information, contact George Finnin at grfinnin@verizon.net.

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