

# Contraception Works Against Marital Act

The following is from an article by Father Tad Pacholczyk which appeared in the May 19, 2011 issue of *The Catholic Standard & Times*:  
<http://cst-phl.com/contraception-works-against-marital-act-p2571-84.htm>

The link between the conjugal act and a possible conception is a key source of meaning for our human sexuality. Sex, by its very nature, involves the capacity and driving energy to produce offspring. Anyone in a high school biology class already understands this.

Any time a married couple engages in sexual activity that has been intentionally rendered infertile by contraception, they are powerfully acting against the purpose of the sexual act they share.

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Contraception strikes at the heart of the marital act. When a couple impedes the inherent procreative powers of that act through the use of a condom, a pill or other means, they are engaging in disruptive and contradictory behavior by performing the act on the one hand, while simultaneously blocking it on the other.

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# Life Cycles



Summer 2011 The newsletter of the Philadelphia Natural Family Planning Network (PNFPN)

## What are You Doing for NFP Awareness Week 2011?

by Tara Plymouth

**J**uly 24-30, 2011, is **Natural Family Planning (NFP) Awareness Week**, which highlights the promotion of NFP and the Church's teachings on human sexuality, married love, and responsible parenthood. These dates correspond with the anniversary of the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (July 25), and the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne (July 26), the parents of the Blessed Mother. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) sponsors this week as a way to raise awareness about NFP. Dioceses across the country promote NFP in particular this week.

Many people are unaware that NFP even exists. What are some things you can do to promote NFP, especially during Awareness Week?

Here are some ideas: If you are NFP users, **tell your friends about its benefits**. Witness from trusted friends is important to people. If you are a health care worker, especially in a family practice or women's clinic, **put brochures about NFP in the waiting room** and **tell your patients** about NFP. **Talk to your parish priest** about NFP and *Humanae vitae* and how you would like it to be an important part of adult faith formation in the parish. Here's a link to **NFP hom-**

**ily helps** by the USCCB: <http://bit.ly/iXm93O>, which gives prudent suggestions on how to speak about it, even when children are present in the congregation. **Advertise** the Family Life Office's, and other local NFP organizations', **schedules of NFP classes** in the back of your church (get pastor's permission) or in other places they could generate interest (natural food co-op stores, etc.). Schedules can be found at [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org) and [www.flophila.org](http://www.flophila.org).

**Don't forget prayer and Eucharistic adoration**, for a *Humanae vitae* culture which respects life, marriage, and families. This is the soul of this apostolate, without which our efforts are fruitless. Go to <http://bit.ly/1CU2sB> for some great suggestions on prayers to the Holy Family.

The USCCB has also prepared a webpage filled with resources that pastors and parishioners can utilize to advertise NFP Awareness Week in their parishes. Beautiful full-color posters, articles, homily helps, articles, and couples' stories about NFP can be found on their site: <http://bit.ly/amG7NK>.

## Letter from the President

It is quite ironic that many phrases betray their true meaning. NFP Awareness Week is one of those phrases. Imagine that NFP is the **ONLY** method of family planning that is acceptable to the Catholic church and compatible with responsible parenthood and the only method that honors the integrity of the person. Imagine that the science of NFP has been evolving and advancing for over 50 years. Imagine that this week has been celebrated since the revelation of *Humanae Vitae* in 1968. Imagine that this week is celebrated the third week of July **EVERY** year on the anniversary of the release of one of the most controversial and watershed encyclicals of the Catholic church and **YET**, only 2 % of the population use NFP (liberal estimate), very few priests ever mention the celebration, very few priests or deacons ever give a homily on NFP (or against contraception) and hardly any parishes/bulletins recognize the week!

This is a teaching of the Catholic church. This is a document that explains **WHY** the Catholic church is against

contraception, but even more so, **FOR** life and love; babies and bonding. This is **NOT** just a passing event- it **SHOULD** be celebrated throughout the Church.

Please read the encyclical (available online for free at Vatican.org); ask your priest and deacons to give a homily on NFP during that week; go to the USCCB website and order some posters for your parish; put an announcement in your parish bulletin. Evangelize the way we are all called to evangelize: recognize NFP for what it is, why it is important and why it is that the Catholic church teaches it as the **ONLY** acceptable method of family planning. Celebrate NFP Awareness Week – July 23-20.

God Bless,  
Les Ruppertsberger, D.O.  
President PNFPN

## Life Cycles

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

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*Life Cycles* is a quarterly publication.  
Articles may be submitted to George Finnin:  
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## In The Trenches

### Father Matthew Habiger's fight to promote Natural Family Planning

Father Matthew Habiger understands why so many people turn a deaf ear to him. "If something is nonsensical to you and it requires self-discipline, why bother," he says matter-of-factly. "We have the technology, why not use it?"

He notes that 85 percent of Catholics of child-bearing age are using contraception. Of those Catholics, 40 percent have chosen sterilization.

*The above is taken from an article courtesy of Kansas Monks magazine. Find out more at:  
<http://www.nfpoutreach.org/>.*

## The "Net"works

### NFP Classes and Introductory Sessions

#### Free introductory sessions of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System

For more information, visit [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org) or call the number listed.

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#### Philadelphia Family Life Office classes in the Sympto-Thermal method of NFP

For more information, visit [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org) or call the Family Life Office at (215) 587-5639.

#### PHILADELPHIA, PA

JULY 14 & 21  
St. Dominic Parish, 8504 Frankford Rd.

#### DREXEL HILL, PA

AUGUST 6 & 13  
St. Charles Borromeo Church, 3422 Dennison Ave.

#### WAYNE, PA

SEPTEMBER 21 & 28  
St. Isaac Jogues Parish, 50 West Walker Rd.

## Introductions to the Theology of the Body

by Elizabeth Brunner, Ph.D.

Our parish recently did a study on the Theology of the Body. Week after week, we heard the same refrain from the members of our small group: "I wish I had known this when I was younger." The group members didn't stop there, though. They wanted to know if this was being taught in schools and marriage prep. Any answer less than a resounding yes was immediately challenged with a "Why not?"

These Catholics were finally getting a taste of the motivation behind some of the Church's teachings, ones many of them had ignored. And even though they still were having a hard time wrapping their heads around it and accepting all the repercussions, they realized just how important it was. Perhaps most significantly, they wanted their children to know this. They expected their Church to provide this knowledge.

Though parents are the primary teachers of their

children, when it comes to the Theology of the Body many parents do not feel capable of transmitting its message to their children while they're still digesting it for themselves. They need parishes and Catholic schools to assist them. Resources are available, through publishers

such as Ascension Press and Pauline Books and Media. There are Theology of the Body studies designed for a variety of ages, from middle schoolers to adults. There are programs for schools, small groups, and individual study.

When parents get a taste of the Theology of the Body, they deeply desire that someone teach it to their children, and especially to their teenagers. The PNFPN conference in March was a rallying cry for marriage preparation programs to include the Theology of

the Body as a matter of course. But the difficulties of catechizing at that point are large (though not insurmountable). The foundation of a right understanding of our creation as man and woman must be instilled in our children.



## Another Great Networking Opportunity

by George Finnin

The 9th annual PNFPN conference on March 19 was another great networking opportunity for those who attended. Around 80 NFP supporters were there. Here are some of the activities I observed.

- Two Couple to Couple league teachers, one from New Jersey and one from Pennsylvania, were comparing experiences.
- I met two engaged couples who actually understood the benefits of NFP prior to their marriage. One thing that seemed to help was their appreciation of teachings from John Paul II's Theology of the Body.
- I overheard two married couples discussing Home Schooling. While not quite about NFP it was a chance to share ideas on this topic.
- There was a couple from the Scranton area who attended. We discussed ways they could spread the good news about Natural Family Planning in their diocese.

- My home parish of St. Eleanor, Collegeville had a contingent of couples attending. We had 3 couples and myself. Hopefully other parishes will have little NFP communities forming in the future.

Please think about attending our conference next year. It will be our 10th anniversary and you will appreciate being able to meet other like-minded people and hear from some good speakers.

If you missed this year's conference, you can hear the presentations by going to [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org) and clicking on the 2011 Conference Presentations link on the left side of the home page.

P.S. I would love to get more articles about how YOU promote NFP. Please send me something from your area that I could share through our LifeCycles newsletter. You can mail it to me to the PNFPN address listed in LifeCycles or you can find my email address on [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org).