

Dear Supporters/Members:

This year's PNFPN conference was a great success! We had increased attendance, excellent speakers, and the presence of Cardinal Rigali, who offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and gave a challenging homily. Although we reaped no profit from the event, it permitted us to further the purpose of the PNFPN: to help people understand God's plan for human sexuality, spread awareness of Natural Family Planning, and facilitate the spread of NFP training.

Our newsletter, *Life Cycles*, is published 4-5 times per year, with articles on NFP and information on training and local events. Most of the printing and mailing costs of the newsletter are donated, and all board member positions are volunteer. We also sponsor advertisements, when we are able. But since we have no regular income, we are very restricted in our ability to fulfill our purpose. For example, a recent ad in the Standard & Times virtually wiped out our account. We can hardly function as an organization that spreads the word on NFP and God's plan for sexuality if one ad financially exhausts us for months to come.

Therefore, we the PNFPN board are making an appeal for donations. Any donation will be greatly appreciated. A donation today will give you the privilege of voting for next year's board members.

There are, of course, other ways you can share in our work. We ask you to pray for us and for all those who are working to bring about a healing

in our culture. We welcome submissions to our newsletter, and we always look for new ideas for spreading our message. And we encourage you to purchase tapes from the conference on our web site, PNFPN.org, and share them with friends and family, and especially priests! (Please remember that we do not make money off the tapes.)

These activities will make you a part of spreading a Culture of Life!

God Bless You for your generosity,

PNFPN Board

Yes, I want to help with the valuable work of the Philadelphia NFP Network. Enclosed please find

___ \$15 for an individual

___ \$25 for a couple

___ \$10 for a student

___ _____ other

Please mail to: PNFPN
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Life Cycles



December 2004

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

A Message from your President

In this last issue of the year I want to thank all who have helped in our mission of promoting Natural Family Planning. One of the advantages of being president of this network is to hear many stories about how the good news of NFP is spread. It is truly impressive to see how we have grown in our 6 years of existence. We now have nearly 400 addresses on our mailing list. 215 of you have agreed to list contact information in our directory. (The directory is included in this issue.) Part of our New Jersey contingent is investigating starting a state-wide NFP organization. We are mailing to people outside of the Philadelphia area. Our mailing list includes people from Rocky Hill, CT to Menomonie, WI to San Diego, CA. These "outside" people are interested in our model and may use some of our ideas to start up initiatives in their own areas.

As you will see in future issues, we continue to see our outreach expand. With Christopher West as the primary speaker at our spring conference, we should see a greater attendance than this year's 140+. There are several initiatives that are just starting which we hope to report success in the next year.

Please remember to pray that Our Lord will continue to lead us.

God Bless

George Finnian

Welcome New Board Members of 2004

Congratulations to Christopher Meredith, Anne Mielnik and Elena Perri who have been elected to serve the PNFPN board for the next three years. The following is the biographical information for those of you who were not able to vote this year.

Christopher Meredith has been married to Maria for over 6 years and both are currently enrolled in the instructor training for the Archdiocese NFP program. Maria is a Philadelphia area native, born and raised in Rosemont, PA. She works as art teacher for Greene Towne Montessori School in Philadelphia. Chris is originally from Neosho, MO, settling in the Philadelphia area while in the Navy, and meeting Maria here. He works for PNC Bank, where he is the principal network design architect for PNC's Mutual Fund accounting business. Maria and Chris have been using the Sympto-Thermal Method of NFP throughout their marriage, and are currently learning and using the Creighton Method, to help in their effort to achieve a pregnancy. Once their NFP instructor training is "official", they hope to begin a ministry within their parish to help educate other couples interested in or currently using NFP to instruct, provide "chart support", and general fellowship.

Chris' hobbies include mountain biking, music (he plays all of the brass instruments as well as guitar and bass), graphic print and web design, painting, photography, Bible study, and working on their beautiful home.

Anne Mielnik is a third-year medical student at Jefferson Medical College in Center City, with a strong interest in NFP-only obstetrics and gynecology. While a student at Jefferson, she has worked to increase awareness of both right-to-life issues and Natural Family Planning and was one of the founding members of the pro-life group for medical students at Jefferson. As president of this group, she organized talks by pro-life speakers, helped plan fund-raisers for local Crisis Pregnancy Centers and has laid the groundwork for a physician mentoring program for pro-life medical students. She is presently helping to organize a city-wide network of Catholic and pro-life medical students and she is particularly interested in promoting NFP among young adult Catholics in the Philadelphia area. When she is not studying or reading about pro-life issues, she enjoys reading classic novels, hiking along the beautiful trails of southeastern PA and taking long leisurely drives through the beautiful countryside around her old hometown in Lancaster.

Elena Perri has worked in public relations and journalism for the past 15 years. A former copy editor at *The Catholic Standard and Times*, Elena was a photojournalist in the Army Reserve for 12 years. She currently operates a home-based editorial/public relations business, CJ Communications, and works primarily with non-profit organizations in the Philadelphia region.

Elena lives in Havertown and serves as a

Life Cycles

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

Life Cycles Staff:

Editor: Barbara Rose RN, MSN, FCP
Contributing writers: George Finnin, Barbara Rose
Proofreader: Jeannette Williams
Computer graphics: Parker Design
PNFPN logo: Elena Cippola

Life Cycles is a quarterly publication. Articles may be submitted to Barbara Rose at PNFPN P.O. Box 220, Jenkintown, PA 19046, (215) 885-8150.

Life Cycles can be viewed online at www.pnfpn.org

Board Members of the PNFPN:

John Cogan
Eileen Finnin
Sr. Sheila Galligan
Liz Parrish
Phyllis Stanton
James Volpe
Jeannette Williams

Officers of the PNFPN

President: George Finnin
VP: Barbara Rose
Treasurer: Michael Castagno
Secretary: Lester Ruppertsberger

Spiritual Adviser

Rev. Msgr. Samuel Shoemaker

lector at Sacred Heart Parish, and she is a member of the stewardship committee, Web site committee and Pre-Cana team. She also has written articles for the *Life Cycles* newsletter.

A graduate of Temple University's School of Communications and Theater, she is a member of the Editorial Freelancers Association, Catholic Press Association and the Catholic Leadership Institute and is a past president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.

Elena has been married to her husband Paul for five years, and they have one son, Christopher John.

Kudos

To Phyllis Stanton for faithfully serving on our PNFPN board.

Phyllis and Kevin Stanton moved to South Carolina in August.

To Nancy and Steve Brandt, CCL couple of Lansdowne for their contribution. The Brandts were active members of the PNFPN upon moving here from Peoria some 5 years ago. Nancy was a board member from 2001 to 2003. Many blessings to Nancy, Steve, Juliet and Noah as they move to Louisiana.

Life Cycles Accepts Ads

Life Cycles continues to accept advertising from our members and from those outside organizations which subscribe to our philosophy.

If you are a business owner, please consider advertising with us. Our mailing list is currently 400. Cost of an ad is just \$ 25 per issue or \$ 100 for the year.

For further information, please contact Michael Castagno, treasurer of the PNFPN at (215) 885 – 8388. Please note: when submitting ads send camera ready art or high resolution digital files that are at least 300 dpi such as eps files or tifs to ParkerDesi@aol.com. Do not send other files such as jpegs and gifs since they can be poor quality and will not reproduce clearly.

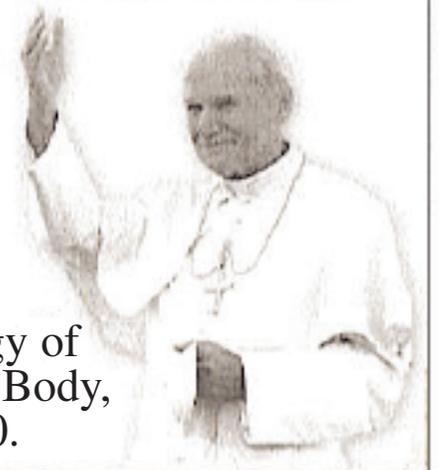
Feeling Lucky ?

Why not buy a ticket for our first annual 50/50 fund raiser? This year's drawing will be held at the Third Annual PNFPN Conference at St. Mary Medical Center, April 2, 2005. First prize winner gets \$ 1000! All monies support our non-profit organization for the promotion of NFP education.

For ticket sales, please call Michael Castagno at (215) 885-8388 or, if you wish to assist us in selling tickets, please contact Dr. Lester Ruppertsberger at (215) 680 -0141 .

Who's the World's Greatest NFP Instructor? Answer: Pope John Paul II

Okay, so maybe he doesn't know how to teach "charting", but he does understand—perhaps better than anyone else—why Natural Family Planning is in accord with God's plan. The topic of NFP is one of hundreds of truths the Pope speaks about in his landmark collection of works known as the "theology of the body". To learn more about the Theology of the Body, visit www.LuminousMedia.org or call 800-376-0520.



The "Net" works

NFP CLASSES and INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS

Pennsylvania

January 8 - Meadowbrook

The Philadelphia Family Life Office will sponsor a class in the Sympto-Thermal method of Natural Family Planning at Holy Redeemer Hospital, 1648 Huntingdon Pk. For more information or registration please call (215) 587-5639.

January 10 - Perkasio

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System. Please call Liz Parrish, RN, FCP at (215) 249-9829 for more information and registration.

January 11 - Linfield

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System. Call Elizabeth Kauffeld, FCP at (610) 495 - 8821 for more information and registration.

January 13 - Orelan

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be located at 88 Pennsylvania Avenue in Orelan, 19075. Please call Barbara Rose, RN, FCP at (215) 884-2922 for more information and registration.

January 14 - Norristown

The Philadelphia Family Life Office will sponsor a class in the Sympto-Thermal method of Natural Family Planning at Mercy Suburban Hospital, 2701 DeKalb Pk. For more information or registration please call (215) 587-5639.

January 27 - Downingtown

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be located at St. Joseph's Parish, Downingtown. Please call

Dorice Millar, RN, FCP at (610) 873-8334 or e-mail kdmillar@erols.com for more information and registration.

February 1 - Yardley

The Philadelphia Family Life Office will sponsor a class in the Sympto-Thermal method of Natural Family Planning at St. Ignatius of Antioch, 999 Reading Ave. For more information or registration please call (215) 587-5639.

February 5 - Wynnewood

The Philadelphia Family Life Office will sponsor a class in the Sympto-Thermal method of Natural Family Planning at St. Charles Seminary, 1000 E. Wynnewood Rd. For more information or registration please call (215) 587-5639.

February 7 - Perkasio

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System. Please call Liz Parrish, RN, FCP at (215) 249-9829 for more information and registration.

February 9 - Linfield

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System. Call Elizabeth Kauffeld, FCP at (610) 495 - 8821 for more information and registration.

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New Jersey

The following classes listed are sponsored by the Camden Diocese. Each course is taught in a series of four classes spaced about one month apart. Pre -registration is required. For information call: (856) 756 - 7900 ext. 6315 or email: nfpoffice@camdendiocese.org

Wednesday, February 16; 7 - 9:30 PM at Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing, Magnolia
Thursday, March 31; 7 - 9:30 PM at St. Peter Church, Merchantville

Thursday, May 19; 7 - 9:30 PM at St. Joseph Church, Hammonton

Welcome New Members

Drew & Laurie Ruppensberger
Yardley, PA

Susan Brinkman
Horsham, PA



Joseph F. Hare, CPA

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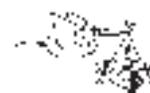
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So, How Did We Do?

That's the question we ask each year when we compile all of the NFP class statistics from around the region. For the purposes of comparison, we asked all of the NFP instructors and FertilityCare Practitioners to tell us how many clients they served from the first week of September 2003 to September 2004. This year we have had some changes and a few surprises.

Since the PNFPN covers all of Philadelphia, including the suburbs of NJ, we'll look at what is happening on the east side of the river first. The Camden diocese has been providing instruction in the sympto-thermal method of NFP through the Couple to Couple League (CCL) and currently has three active instructor couples. According to Cecilia Le Chevallier, the NFP coordinator of the Camden Diocese, over half of their client couples were engaged (28 of 42). Cecilia reported that three couples enrolled in the classes specifically to achieve a pregnancy. To help those clients who may suffer from sub-fertility, the Camden Diocese offers a new course entitled "NFP Class for Couples Trying to Conceive." This series of three classes is scheduled to begin in November 2005 at Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing in Magnolia, NJ.

Cecilia lamented that most Philadelphia NFP classes are held in the far northern and western suburbs, often too far for any of the people in Southern NJ to travel. She

continues to refer client couples to the PNFPN website, however, when there is a request for dates and times that she does not have available.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia Family Life Office reports instructing 63 couples this year with just four teaching couples.

According to Lisann Castagno, NFP coordinator, "Since our last training program, we now have eight teaching couples". The Archdiocese program teaches a sympto-thermal method that was developed by the Harrisburg diocese. Lisann shares with us that the Spanish NFP program will soon be underway as Hugo and Estrella Prieto will begin their NFP ministry of teaching to the Hispanic community.

In Philadelphia and the five county region there are six active teaching couples for the Couple to Couple League (CCL). In this past year, they have instructed a total of 46 couples and one priest. A good number of the client couples learn of the CCL classes through their national website, www.ccli.org. They also are recruited from the instructor couples themselves, along with a few referrals from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. While none of the instructor couples for the CCL identified the PNFPN website as a significant source of referrals, most encouraged potential clients to view it to find alternative class schedule dates. The CCL course of instruction requires four classes about a month apart,

during which time the couples are charting and learning the instructions for the various reproductive stages that the woman may enter into, including breastfeeding, post partum and perimenopause.

Let's look at the caseload of one particularly active CCL couple, Kristen and Geoff Federmeier of St. Maria Goretti parish in Hatboro. The Federmeiers have taught a total of 21 couples this year; 11 were married, 10 engaged. Says Kristen, "Nine were required to take the course by their priest prior to marriage." This is particularly encouraging news for those of us who believe NFP instruction should be offered before marriage.

We are pleased to report that there is a relative newcomer to the Philadelphia region. Our first and only Billings Ovulation of America (BOMA) instructors, Kristen and Randy Colton, have taught 2 couples and 10 college aged women this year. Kristen explained that both she and Randy gave a talk at Eastern University, in St. Davids, PA and then followed up with a class the next week. All of their statistics for this year were derived from that one class, which is a group introductory session, followed by individual counseling sessions. The two couples they instructed were engaged to be married but the women participated primarily to gain information and to learn for the first time how their

fertility was designed by God. Says Kristen, "These women are hungry for this knowledge." While she and Randy offered individual follow up sessions for each of the student participants, most of the women dropped out early on as they were not utilizing the information for family planning. This course offering was so successful, says Kristen, "We hope to do this again in the fall or the spring." Please note that none of the Colton's participants identified themselves as being Catholic. The FertilityCare Practitioners of Southeast PA (FCPs of SEPA) have reported instructing 75 couples in the Creighton Model FertilityCare System. This was their first full year of operation and they were surprised by the fact that 75 percent of their clients were already practicing a natural method of birth regulation. So while we are counting the number of couples enrolled in NFP classes for the Philadelphia region, we may not be able to say that all of them are new to NFP.

At the present time there are four FCPs in our area; three of them were still interns during the time of the survey and one of them had been pregnant most of the year. Clients are obtained mostly through self-referrals – women learn about the Creighton Model after reading an article, listening to radio or television broadcasts or talking to friends and acquaintances. According to Elizabeth Parrish, RN, FCP, there were 56 telephone and e-mail inquiries in the four weeks following the broadcast of Dr. Thomas Hilgers' interview

on television in August. Dr. Hilgers is the director of the Pope Paul VI Institute in Omaha, and the principle researcher of NaProTECHNOLOGY, the medical and surgical women's health science that is based on the Creighton Model FertilityCare System.

Our final tally then: 240. How does this compare with previous years? Well, that's where the surprise comes in. Last year we taught 204 couples, so that would be an increase in 36 couples. But remember, some of those couples may not be new to NFP instruction, due to the high volume of clients who see FertilityCare Practitioners after they have already been instructed in another method of NFP.

This is still encouraging news when one considers the fact that in 2003 we saw an increase in the number of people trained by 18. Therefore, we can say that the number of couples learning NFP has been consistently increasing over the past three years.

Increasing class attendance, as modest as it may be, is just one indicator of successful NFP promotion. Another significant indicator would be in the number of advertisements. Indeed, the PNFPN logo is getting recognition as it is seen in newspapers, program guides, and even banners!

Our website has had 2095 hits this year – the most ever – with an average of 100 hits a month. Another indication of our success in promoting NFP is seen in the growing number of our NFP-only and NFP-friendly

health care members. While this has been increasing steadily since our inception, some of our newest physician members have joined the network in part due to the recent national promotion of NaProTECHNOLOGY and the research that has been coming out of the Pope Paul VI Institute.

It is hoped that in our life time, there will no longer be a need to keep records of how many people attend classes, or belong to an NFP network such as the PNFPN. But until then, we have each other and the sincere hope that we are bringing people to better understanding of their gift of fertility as God intended.

Plan to Attend the Third Annual PNFPN Conference

Mark your calendars now for April 2, 2005. That's the date of our third annual PNFPN Conference which will be held once again at St. Mary Hospital Medical Center in beautiful Langhorne, Pennsylvania. You won't want to miss this year's speakers: Christopher West, Father Tim Christy, Father James Otto and Phyllis Stanton.

As always there will be wonderful book sales and the latest information about NFP in the Philadelphia region. Networking opportunities abound during our lunch and the day is completed with Mass in the Chapel. Please join us this year. More information will be sent to you in the following weeks.