

Become a member of the PNFPN

For the past five years the PNFPN has existed solely on the generosity of a few people and never asked its members to pay dues. While we believe that news and information regarding NFP in the Philadelphia region should remain free, we realize that our promotional efforts are severely limited without a source of income. Therefore, we are appealing to our members to consider a yearly donation to enable us to continue our efforts in spreading the good news of NFP. We ask that you send \$15 for an individual membership, \$25 for a couple and \$10 for students. Those of you who donate will become members and will be eligible to vote for the executive board members each year. The PNFPN still intends to provide free copies of LifeCycles to everyone on the mailing list. We believe that the distribution of this publication is a valuable service. Please clip out the following form and send your check to PNFPN, P.O. Box 220, Jenkintown, PA 19046.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Would you agree to have your name, address and phone # listed in a directory for PNFPN members only? Yes No

Any additional information or comments _____

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 kindly share with us announcements of births or adoptions. For more information on how to submit news and information call Barbara Rose at (215) 884-2922 or e-mail: savro@verizon.net.

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Life Cycles



December 2006

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

President's Message

I have seen good things happening in our efforts to promote Natural Family Planning again this year. Our mailing list has grown to more than 500 addresses. It is reassuring to know many people are interested in our promotional efforts. We have a presence on radio through WISP. *The Catholic Standard & Times* has run some very good articles. We had more than 100 people who attended our annual conference, which was an opportunity to network with others.

Through your membership dues and some donations we have been able to publish our Life Cycles newsletter and run ads in various places. Our Web presence through www.pnfpn.org has a small but steady following.

Last but not least, I want to thank all of you who mentioned NFP to friends or family. Your efforts don't make the newspapers or radio, but personal contact is one of the best ways to spread the good news.

For next year, I ask that you send us ideas for getting the word out because there are many people who still haven't heard about NFP. We need everyone to help broadcast the message.

God Bless.

George Finnin

Fifth TeenSTAR International Congress Held in Austria

By Sister Nora Dennehy

The fifth TeenSTAR International Congress was held August 24-29 in Vienna, Austria. The theme for this year's Congress was Consciousness of Fertility in Times of Contraceptive Mentality. TeenSTAR (Sexuality Teaching in the Context of Adult Responsibility) is a value-based educational program for adolescents and young adults in cooperation with their parents. TeenSTAR's curricula is developmentally appropriate for:

1. Junior high: ages 13-14 (two semesters)*
2. High school: ages 14-18 (two semesters)**
3. College: Holistic Sexuality (a one semester college-level program, single sex or mixed)
4. Teen Parent Programs (secondary prevention)

* Specific religious objectives may be added at the discretion of the site provider

** Anatomy and physiology taught separately to males and females

Teachers in this program must be trained to deliver the developmental, self-discovery programs. A one-week training workshop, followed by a supervised practicum, is required. The TeenSTAR program helps students to:

- Reflect on their personal feelings and desires
- Improve their identity and self-esteem
- Understand better feelings and attitudes of the opposite sex

- Examine and interpret sexual messages from the media
- Strive towards developing healthy sexual attitudes
- Become aware of their own fertility
- Begin to recognize the power of procreation
- Develop a respect for the gift of life
- Be able to recognize the positive and negative consequences of sexual behavior
- Be able to understand that sexual activity only finds congruity within a totally committed relationship (marriage)
- Be able to recognize the importance of quality communication within the family

The TeenSTAR program was started in 1980 by Hanna Klaus, MMS, M.D., who is now the Executive Director of the Natural Family Planning Center of Washington, D.C. The program operates in 35 countries on five continents with representatives from 18 countries in attendance at the Congress. U.S. attendees included Laura DiJoseph, TeenSTAR Board Member, Washington, D.C.; Elizabeth Heyne, Parkland Hospital and the University of Dallas; Maryann Fennell, P. Paul VI High School, Fairfax, Va.; Mary Lou Bryant, Louisville, Ky.; and Sr. Nora Dennehy, CORA Services, Philadelphia, TeenSTAR Board Member, Member of PNFPN.

Without "preaching" abstinence or promoting condoms, the program continues to show posi-

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Life Cycles

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

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Holy Trinity Parish hosts event for NFP week

By Barbara Rose

Holy Trinity Parish in Morrisville, Bucks County, celebrated NFP week in style this year by hosting an event on Saturday, July 29.

PNFPN member Joe Tevington started the evening's festivities by giving the audience a fascinating look at the history behind the Church's teaching on Natural Family Planning. The opening visual, "The 20th Century, A Crisis of our own Creation," summed up the past 70 years of popular culture that turned against traditional Catholic teaching in the area of sexual morality. As Joe shared with *Life Cycles*, NFP week seemed "like a particularly opportune time to present Church teaching on these matters."

During his presentation Joe had quotes from Msgr. John Ryan, moral theology professor, Dorothy Day and Dietrich Von Hildenbrand.

The rest of the evening focused on the new women's health science, NaPro Technology. Dr. Brigida de Guzman, OB/GYN physician from Springfield, Delaware County, described the change in her medical practice since she became a Creighton Model Medical consultant. The FertilityCare Practitioners of Southeast PA provided information on Creighton Model services available in the area and distributed their newest publication: *Women Healed in Philadelphia*, a booklet of testimonials from women and couples in the greater Philadelphia area who benefited from the Creighton Model Fertility *Care*™ system.

Participants had an opportunity to ask Dr. de Guzman questions on index cards (to provide anonymity) and enjoyed refreshments afterward. The most gratifying part of the evening was meeting the "NaPro babies," children who were born as a result of answered prayers and the intervention of NaPro Technology during their gestational period.

see picture on page 3

UPDATE ON NFP WITNESS COUPLES SPEAKERS CENTER

By Michael Castagno

Since our initial meeting in October 2005, The Family Life Office has conducted two training sessions for perspective witness couple participants. The first gathering on 6/06/06 was held at the Archdiocese Offices in Philadelphia, and the second on 9/19/06 at St. Charles Seminary.

To date, ten couples have participated in training. All couples will be provided with a packet of slides, information and resources to use when giving their witness at various parish pre cana or marriage prep sessions.

We expect the center to be up and running by Summer 2007.

Family Life Office Director, Dominic Lombardi conducted a series of workshops in October and November for clergy. The purpose of the workshops was to educate clergy about requirements under the new Archdiocesan Marriage Preparation Policy. One of these requirements is that each couple must receive a significant introduction to Natural Family Planning.

Given the new prominence that NFP will now (thankfully) have in marriage preparation in the Philadelphia Archdiocese, we need to be able to provide a significant resource of couples to priests, deacons and pre cana teams.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS. The more participating couples we have, the better we'll be able to meet the expected demand. Working together in great numbers we can insure that the message and blessings of NFP is heard loudly, confidently and, most importantly, accurately!

All that is required is a willingness to speak passionately to engaged couples about NFP. Training will be provided to you. As far as the time commitment; it will be whatever you determine. You are free to choose how often you want to speak, and where you want to speak.

If you are interested in attending a training session, please contact Michael Castagno @ 215-884-8555 ext 10.

Vasectomy Reversal Ministry in Philadelphia

By Dr. Joseph Harrybill

I'm a pro-life Catholic urologist practicing in Philadelphia and have done vasectomy reversal surgery for 15 years. Currently, microsurgery is a rather small part of my surgical practice since vasovasostomy and vaso-epididymostomy are not "covered" by most health insurance plans. When I was a surgeon in the military, I did many reversals (more than 75 in three years), partly because cost was not a factor. Now that I have been in civilian practice for more than 10 years, the opportunities I've had to help couples restore fertility have been few and far between.

Statistics show that as many as 500,000 men undergo a vasectomy each year in the United States, and that about one-half of married couples choose surgical sterilization for birth control in our country. However, a growing number of couples experience regret over their decision to submit to this "routine" surgical procedure, and some seek to reverse their sterilizations. In my own practice, I decided to discontinue performing vasectomies six years ago and now feel the need to expand my "vocation" to help couples who are contemplating the possibility of restoring God's gift of fertility.

Until now I've done the operation in the hospital, but facility fees are very high, and the total "out-of-pocket" cost for couples may exceed \$12,000 in the Philadelphia area, a significant financial burden for many. As a result, I have recently begun doing such procedures at a nearby ambulatory surgery facility where the costs are more affordable. The total sum (facility fee, anesthesia, surgeon's fee), payable prior to the surgery, will be \$4,500.

My experience has been that general anesthesia given by qualified personnel works best, since the procedure takes more than two hours -- a long time to lie still under a microscope using just a local anesthetic. The surgical technique involves reconnecting both tubes with a very fine monofilament suture. Because of the delicate nature of the suture material, patients need to rest and allow 5-7 days for healing before returning to work, driving, etc. I advise patients to avoid heavy exercise and lifting for two weeks and abstain from sexual activity for one month.

The success rate for vasectomy reversal depends upon several factors, including the age of the patient and the length of time from when the vasectomy was performed. Results of clinical

studies show that sperm is present in the semen in more than 75 percent of patients following reversal surgery, and that approximately 50 percent of couples achieve a pregnancy.

One of the consequences of having a vasectomy is an increased pressure within the epididymal tubules near the testicle, which, over time, can lead to a rupture of this delicate structure and cause a secondary obstruction (in addition to the one caused by the surgeon who did the vasectomy!). When this occurs in a patient who wishes to restore fertility, a vaso-epididymostomy procedure may then be required at the time of reversal. Such surgery is technically more difficult and has a lower success rate, with about 20 percent of couples achieving pregnancy.

The Wills Surgery Center in Northeast Philadelphia will have operating dates available to us on Friday mornings, and we should be able to schedule cases with 3-4 weeks notice. Couples who travel to Philadelphia from out of the area may wish to arrive the day before surgery. We can then meet at my office on Thursday afternoon for consultation and to complete the necessary paperwork.

If you're interested or have more questions, feel free to call me at my office or contact me by e-mail. For additional resources about the medical and spiritual aspects of restoring fertility, check out Steve Koob's excellent Web site, One More Soul, at www.omsoul.com.

Dr. Harrybill's vasectomy reversal service began this past summer, the first case performed at the Wills Surgery Center Northeast Philadelphia, which is located on Roosevelt Boulevard, across from Nazareth Hospital. He reports that he is receiving inquiries from couples in Atlanta, Florida, and Tennessee who are considering coming to Philadelphia to have reversal surgery. MCH Urologic Associates is located at 299 S. 8th Street in Philadelphia, PA, office number: 215-829-3409. Dr. Harrybill can also be reached at jharrybill@pol.net

tive behavioral outcomes among students and demonstrates its ability to postpone sexual involvement.

The recent study presented at NASPAG (North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology) May 20, 2005 in New Orleans showed again that the TeenSTAR program was effective in delaying sexual activity in teenagers (primary abstinence) and in increasing discontinuation of sexual activity (secondary abstinence) among sexually active youth.

The results of another study, conducted in Chile and published in the Journal of Adolescent Health 36 (2005) 64-69, showed that the TeenSTAR sex education reduced the rate of unintended adolescent pregnancy by more than five times. The study included 1,259 girls from a Santiago high school, randomly assigned to control and intervention groups and followed up for four years.

A further study on the "Usefulness of Monitoring Fertility from Menarche" by Pilar Vigil, MD, PhD, Francisco Ceric, PhD, Manuel E. Cortes, and Hanna Klaus, MD, was presented at a recent meeting in Atlanta, Ga., and can be found in the Journal of Pediatric Gynecology (2006) 19:173-179.

Kudos to Our Members

Elena La France, PA, for completing the 13-month program to become a FertilityCare Practitioner

Marcia Niznan for being accepted to the FertilityCare Practitioner program conducted by

St. Joseph's Hospital, Nashua, NH



Children who are grateful for the power of prayers and the intervention of NaProTechnology. Names from left, Mick Meredith, Matthew Niznan and Gabriel Hallowell.

God's little blessings

Margaret Mary born June 28
to Mary Kate and Tony Hayden

Erin Elizabeth born July 31
to Stacey and Jamie McCormick

Eli Thomas born August 2
to Kristen and Randy Colton

Isaac Gerard born August 17
to Angela and Peter Meyers

Ryan Michael born August 18
to Kate and Ray Vandergrift

Margaret Theresa born August 12
to Kelly and Lee Cole

Niamh Teresa born August 23
to Quentin and Mary Cole

John Paul born August 31 to
Michael and Amy Fontecchio

Theodore Rex born September 28
to Darren and Beth Poley

Vincent Michael born September 29
to Megan and Joseph Mc Cabe

Sean Francis born October 5
to Elena and Paul Perri

Welcome to our newest board members

Kelly Cole has lived in the Philadelphia area for two years after having grown up and attended college in Michigan. She and her husband Lee were married last July, and they had their first child Margaret Teresa on August 12. Prior to getting married, they took classes in the sympto-thermal method through the Couple to Couple League. Kelly has had a longstanding interest in natural family planning, and while in college she wrote her honors senior thesis on the cultural, familial, and spiritual harms of contraception in contrast to the cultural, familial, and spiritual benefits of NFP. She has volunteered for many pro-life causes and previously served on the board of directors of a crisis pregnancy center for two years. Currently, she is employed in the development department of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute in Wilmington, Del. She and her husband attend Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Media.

Kimberly Petrucci and her husband Christian have been married for nine years and live in Wynnewood. They are members of Presentation B.V.M. Parish. They have four children, Joe, 7, Mikey, 6, John, 3, and Anna, 6 months. They received NFP training from the Philadelphia Archdiocese Family Life Office during their engagement. It has been a true blessing to their marriage, and they strongly support the mission of the PNFPN to promote the methods and benefits of NFP. Kimberly has been home caring for her children since the birth of their oldest son. She is involved in other activities and committees through their parish and their children's school. Kimberly believes it would be an honor to serve on the board helping to keep the work of PNFPN alive and strong while continuing to spread the important news of NFP to others.

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NFP CLASSES and INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS

Pennsylvania

January 10, Springfield

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at the Springfield Health Plex, Suite 209, 196 West Sproul Road. Please call (610) 338-2715 for registration.

January 16, Broomall

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 7PM at the Thomas P. Dowd Center of St. Pius X Church, 220 Lawrence Rd. Please call Marcia Niznan, FCPI at (610) 789-4547 for more information and registration.

January 17, West Chester

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 606 East Marshall Street, Suite 205, Please call Helen LaFrance, PA, FCP at (610) 436 - 8323 for registration.

January 19, Norristown

First part of a two course series sponsored by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Family Life Office. The class will be held at Mercy Suburban Hospital, 2701 De Kalb Pike. For more information and registration please contact Mary Ellen at (215) 587 - 5639

January 19, Chalfont

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 800 Manor Drive, Chalfont, PA. Please call Liz Parrish, RN, CFCP at (215) 249-9829 for more information and registration.

February 6, Langhorne

First part of a two course series sponsored by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Family Life Office. The class will be held at St. Mary Medical Center location TBA. For more information and registration call Mary Ellen at (215) 587 - 5639

February 7, Springfield

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at the Springfield Health Plex, Suite 209, 196 West Sproul Road. Please call (610) 338-2715 for registration.

February 13, Broomall

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 7PM at the Thomas P. Dowd Center of St. Pius X Church, 220 Lawrence Rd. Please call Marcia Niznan, FCPI at (610) 789-4547 for more information and registration.

February 16, Chalfont

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 800 Manor Drive, Chalfont, PA. Please call Liz Parrish, RN, CFCP at (215) 249-9829 for more information and registration.

February 21, West Chester

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 606 East Marshall Street, Suite 205, Please call Helen LaFrance, PA, FCP at (610) 436 - 8323 for registration.

March 13, Philadelphia

First part of a two course series sponsored by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Family Life Office. The class will be held at St. Dominic Catholic Church, 8500 Frankford Avenue. For more information and registration call Mary Ellen at (215) 587 - 5639

March 14, Springfield

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at the Springfield Health Plex, Suite 209, 196 West Sproul Road. Please call (610) 338-2715 for registration.

March 21, Wynnewood

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at the parish center of Presentation BVM Church, 240 Haverford Rd. Please call Marcia Niznan, FCPI at (610) 789-4547 for more information and registration

March 21, West Chester

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 606 East Marshall Street, Suite 205, Please call Helen LaFrance, PA, FCP at (610) 436 - 8323 for registration.

March 23, Chalfont

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 800 Manor Drive, Chalfont, PA. Please call Liz Parrish, RN, CFCP at (215) 249-9829 for more information and registration.

March 24, Philadelphia

First part of a two course series sponsored by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Family Life Office. The class will be held at St. Augustine Catholic Church, 4 th and South of Vine Street. For more information and registration call Mary Ellen at (215) 587 - 5639

April 18, West Chester

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at 606 East Marshall Street, Suite 205, Please call Helen LaFrance, PA, FCP at (610) 436 - 8323 for registration.

April 18, Springfield

Free Introductory Session of the Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System will be held at the Springfield Health Plex, Suite 209, 196 West Sproul Road. Please call (610) 338-2715 for registration.

New Jersey

NFP instruction is available through 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) 583 6120 or e-mail: nfpoffice@camdendiocese.org.

January 25, 7-9:30 PM at the Barry Brown Health Education Center, Carnie Blvd., Voorhees.