



The Spirit

... Is Moving in Iowa

Issue 137

March 2005

Dialogue is an important part of our relationship! Here's this issues "Top 10":

1. God already knows my heart. HDIFAT?
2. If I were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict me? HDIFST?
3. HDIF when we attend Stations of the Cross?
4. What meaningful sacrifice can I make that will enrich my spiritual life? DFILD
5. HDIF when I am forgiven?
6. HDIF when I see washing of the feet on Holy Thursday?
7. HDIFA venerating the cross on Good Friday?
8. Do I recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread? HDIFSTWY?
9. It is said that we are an Easter people. Are we an Easter couple? HDIFAT?
10. HDIF when you make a sacrifice for me?

HDIFAT: How Do I Feel About That?

HDIFA: How Do I Feel?

HDIFSTWY: How Do I Feel Sharing This With You?

DFILD: Describe Feelings In Loving Detail.

HDIFST: How Do I Feel Sharing This?



From the Executive Team:

Dear Lovers,

As we sit down to write this, we are reflecting on the growth we have experienced in our relationship as execs. We ask for everyone's prayers during this time as new leadership for the Dubuque/Davenport area will be selected in late April. There have been joys as well as struggles over the past two years and now we are looking forward to concentrating on our Sacramental relationship. Our relationship is strong and dialogue will keep it that way. We are very thankful for the relationships that we have formed and the friendships of very special couples, priests and religious in our Marriage Encounter family. As we reflect, we realize we could have done some things differently and sadly, hindsight is 20/20. There were difficult decisions to be made and there were joyous events as well. Ultimately, we did what we thought was best for the Dubuque/Davenport area of Marriage Encounter.

The very difficult decision was made to cancel the March weekend in Waverly and by the time this is printed, a decision will be made on the April weekend in Cedar Rapids. Over the past two years, the toughest things we had to do were to cancel any weekend. We tried to follow the guidelines of our movement and we prayerfully discerned before a final decision was made. Many different factors went into that final decision. We know that those decisions were not always popular and we apologize if we offended anyone.

The strength of Marriage Encounter rests with you, the encountered couples, priests and religious. It is very easy to get discouraged when weekends are cancelled or communities are small in number. We would like to take this time to thank you for living this radical lifestyle and sharing the gift of Marriage Encounter with others. We are changing the world and renewing the Church even though it may not seem like it in the challenges we face. Remember that special couple that made a weekend because of you. They can make a difference and you are the shining light they saw.

We (Craig & Lori) celebrated our 6 year anniversary of being encountered on Valentine's weekend and it is the greatest gift we ever gave ourselves. One thing that we have discovered is that we can all invite others to a weekend throughout the year. Prayer is also an important part of inviting and we ask God to open the hearts and minds of those who are considering experiencing a weekend.

We have enjoyed a great relationship with the Des Moines area and are grateful for their help, input and prayers. We wish that we could have had more time to work with their new leadership team. Iowa is very fortunate and blessed to have a committed and loving Marriage Encounter family. We are looking forward to seeing you in the future. We thank you for your love and support over the past two years.

Love,
Craig & Lori & Fr. Joe
Dubuque Ecclesial Team

From the Executive Team:

Dear Iowa Lovers,

New Leadership selected for the Des Moines area Encounter

Art and Rose Behrens have been selected to a 2 year term as the Executive couple for the Des Moines area Encounter. Section 7 Executive couple Scott and Karen Seaborn from the St. Louis area were in Des Moines January 15th to conduct the selection. Art and Rose are from the Carroll area and have been encountered since 2001. Art and Rose are shown below (left) with Registration Couple John and Deb Seeman (center) and out-going Executive couple and new Community Coordinators Bernie and Kristi Evans (right) at a recent Section 7 Marriage Encounter meeting in St. Louis. Art and Rose have big plans for Marriage Encounter in Iowa so please join us in welcoming them as the new Des Moines area Encounter Executive couple.



Hugs,
Bernie & Kristi & Fada Felix
Des Moines Ecclesial Team

Inviting

Hi Iowa Inviters,

We hope everyone is actively inviting for the April 8-10 weekend in Cedar Rapids and the June 3-5 weekend in Dubuque! Encourage couples to register at least 4 weeks prior to the Cedar Rapids weekend.

On the weekend of February 19th and 20th we attended the Section 7 joint meeting of the Inviting Coordinators and Community Coordinators in Waterloo, Ill. We always enjoy getting together with these Spirit filled couples.

The main topic of the weekend was Marriage Enrichment. Marriage Enrichments are afternoon or evening sessions about 2 to 3 hours long in which 2 or 3 presentations are given to the couples in attendance (these couples most likely have not attend a Marriage Encounter weekend). WWME believes that this is a way to be open and apostolic, to give back to our parishes, and to draw couples to the WWME weekends.

The Enrichment would be parish or cluster based. Most couples are not doing anything to enrich their sacrament, so it is the belief that we need to provide them with some sort of enrichment. Hopefully they will want more and will want to attend a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. We were given some ideas of materials to use. (There are good materials already available, so no need to reinvent) We were also given suggestions about approaching your parish and deanery priests. A sample packet for the priests and couples were also made available to us. Also some ideas were shared for surveying your parish to see what topics would be of interest and what day and time would work best. It is highly suggested that child care be provided. (Check with your parish about what training would need to be completed for child care providers).

We have heard that some of your parishes are doing Marriage Enrichments. We would like to know what you are using for materials, how you have it set up, etc. Please email us at lyleries@iowatelecom.net or give us a call at 641/364-5201.

We have been busy delivering “Share the Dream” inviting boxes to the ME communities in the Dubuque and Davenport dioceses. We have the majority of them distributed, but have a few to go. It is also our goal to provide each community with a Pulpit Pal (Inviting display board) to display in the parishes in their area. We are encouraging each community to do an Inviting Activity at each meeting. This could be sharing a successful personal inviting activity, saying an inviting prayer, filling out a Top 10 List of couples you would like to invite, etc. **BE THE LIGHT, GO INVITE!**

We hope all of you are having a blessed Lent and will have a wonderful Easter!

Hugs,
Lyle and Lynn Ries – Inviting Coordinators for Dubuque/Davenport Dioceses

A Daily Prayer: “Thank you, Lord, for entrusting Your Movement, to us”.

Community

New communities meeting in the Des Moines area

The Des Moines area (loosely defined) has been blessed with 3 new opportunities for post-weekend dialogue. Recently (and some not so recently) encountered couples have gotten together and formed communities in Boone, Panora and Rockwell City. If you are planning on being in the Panora area, contact John and Deb Seeman (641-755-3667) to find out when and where they are meeting. For encountered couples in the Boone area, Kris and Eric Seeman (515-432-6945) are who you need to contact. Our most recently formed community is in Rockwell City and the contact couple is Steve and Lisa Wozniak.

Our motto is "Have community? Will Travel!" We have met lots of great couples and had lots of fun going to as many communities as we can fit into each month. If you can't drive 30 or 40 miles to go to community but would still like to attend one, please contact us and we'll help you get a community going in your area.

Bernie and Kristi Evans (515-986-4335)

Des Moines area Community Coordinators

Iowa WWME Weekends 2005

April 8-10	Cedar Rapids
June 3-5	Dubuque
October 15-17	*Des Moines

Contacts

Roger & Marsha Luensmann

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Email:

RLUENSMANN@IOWATELECOM.NET

* John & Deb Seeman

Phone: (641)-755-3667

Email: JDCMAN88@NETINS.NET

Iowa Retrouvaille Weekends 2005

April 15-17	Dubuque
September 16-18	Marshalltown

Contact:

Dick and Joyce Smith

Dyersville, IA

Phone: (563)-875-8791 or (800)-470-2230

Email: smithretro@mwci.net

Website: www.helpourmarriage.com

Des Moines Community Corner Cannon Fodder

Christmas party pulls 'em in. Ten couples, Fr. Felix, Fr. Emanuel who recently arrived from Nigeria and five youngens turned out for the Christmas party Dec. 19 at St. Joe's. Everybody ate good. Santa came with gifts for the youngsters. Couples swapped white elephants, defined as too good to throw away, but not good enough for you to want to keep yourself. Uhm, some of those same items might turn up again this year.

Tragic crime. You may have read about the fire at the Rosemount Church in Milo. It's one of Fr. Felix's parishes. It turned out to be arson. Even before the alleged arsonist was identified, he was killed in a shoot-out with Des Moines police in an unrelated incident. We pray that the parishioners and families will progress with the grieving process for their losses.

On the prayer list. Fr. Felix had surgery on his knee. We don't think it was due to an old football injury.

The plot thickens. Fr. Felix was in his car getting ready to preside at a funeral. He got back out of his car, went into the rectory, up the stairs to get something he had forgotten. At the top of the stairs was a plastic runner. You guessed it. Father fell. As he was tumbling down the stairs, he got his arm between the uprights on the railing. Now he's having surgery on his shoulder, March 29th, we think.

If that isn't enough, Father was sitting in his recliner, leaned back. Sure enough he flipped out of that.

ME population explosion. Mary Dietrich gave birth to Matthew Paul Dietrich Jan. 9 at 10:30 a.m. He was 7 lbs., 4 oz. and 19 inches long. Dad Dave is as proud as a peacock of mom's delivery.

Mary Beth Vedane gave birth to Joseph Lee Vedane on Saturday Jan. 22. He was 7 lbs., 5 oz. And 20 inches long. Mitch, Mary Beth and soon to be born little Joseph all attended community night Jan. 21.

Photo shoot. For years Jerry & Mary Russell have been sending a picture of the family with a note as their Christmas card. Also, for years, Jerry has been explaining to anyone within earshot that he has the most beautiful grand children in the world.

The 2004 picture arrived. It had 30 people in it, some of whom we could identify. On the back Mary had penned, "This is the 'gang.' I had complaints about using this picture, but some people just don't know how to smile nicely at the right time!"

I eyeballed through the photo, concentrating on the grandkids, figuring they'd be antsy during the photo shoot. They were all adorable, just like Jerry claims. Then, I noticed, right in the middle of the photo, sat Jerry, looking like his shorts were two sizes too small and had cockleburs in besides.

In Jerry's defense, I've taken thousands of pictures. I have learned that if you have one or more people in the picture, it's tough to get them all looking decent at the same time.

Welcome to Des Moines. While we were at St. Joe's community night Jan. 16, we got a message on the answering machine. A voice on the machine said, "Hi, I'm Rich Chamberlain. We moved here from Fargo. We're looking for a marriage encounter community."

We rang them back. "You should have called two hours earlier. We would have taken you along," I said.

It turns out, Rich and Jessica arrived in Des Moines the first of the year. They were among the 10 couples that turned up at Holy Trinity Jan. 21. If I'm remembering this right, Rich and Jessica have four youngsters under the age of five.

February weekend has 12 couples. Three weeks before the Feb. 11-13 Des Moines weekend, three couples had registered. Things looked bleak. Then God took over. Twelve couples started the weekend on Friday. Twelve couples were still there Saturday. All 12 couples were greeted by their respective prayer couples Sunday. "It was a miracle," says Pat Smith.

Among the couples were Joan & Lewis Hazelwood. Joan is a daughter of Jerry & Mary Russell. The reunion for the weekend was scheduled for Feb. 27 at Wozniak's house in Rockwell City.

Working on Ames weekend. Plans are underway to have a weekend in Ames Apr. 15-17. We need to invite more couples. Also on the wish list are:

- * Someone to help check couples in. Joe & Evie Nemecek will be out of town. They're going to Arizona some time.

- * Loving couples to tote suitcases Friday night. The regulars on the suitcase tote for the Des Moines weekend were out of town or down in the back or both.

- * Up ahead of all that, we need couples to make mass talks and other lovers to provide support and hand out brochures at the church entrances after the talks.

We've done the latter two. They're great fun.

Priest ordained. Matthew Luft, son of Deacon Dennis & Sarah Luft, was ordained Jan. 23 in Minnesota. Bill & Pat Smith traveled to Minnesota in a snow storm to attend the ordination.

Fr. Matthew gave his first mass in his home parish St. Augustine's in Des Moines. Joe & Evie Nemecek, Bill & Pat Smith, John & Maria Otte and Donna Schreier attended the mass at Jan. 30.

Life chain representatives. Mike & Maxine Murray traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the life chain toward the end of January. They brought about three envelopes of pictures to community night. It looked like they also went to Arlington Cemetery.

World Marriage Day events. The basilica of St. John invited all couples who were married in the basilica to come back and renew their vows on World Marriage Day Feb. 20. The event was one of activities St. John's has planned to celebrate its 100th year as a parish.

The church was full with couples from at least five other parishes. Couples were invited to stand and face each other. The couples listened as Joe & Evie Nemeč, centennial chair people, read the Marriage Creed. Next Fr. Aquinas led the couples in renewing their vows, and then he gave a blessing.

"We were inspired to have about 100 couples recommit their love and lives to each other," says Evie.

MEers in the T.V. news. Early in St. John's World Marriage Day planning, someone suggested organizers might contact Shirley Ragsdale, Des Moines Register religion editor, about promoting the event. Joe & Evie Nemeč chatted with several couples that had been married at St. John's. Evie helped set up some interviews. Shirley started out to write a couple paragraphs for the Saturday Register religion section.

As events unfolded, Shirley ended up with most of the front page of the Metro & Iowa Section of the Feb. 20 Sunday Register, with the story jumped to another page inside. She wrote about five of the couples. It was a great tribute to the sacrament of marriage and World Marriage Day.

On Sunday, during the mass, a Channel 13 news crew turned up. They wanted to interview some couples. Evie Nemeč invited the crew downstairs for the reception after the mass. Interviews were conducted. It turns out Joe & Evie were stars of the 6 p.m. news that night, again at 10 p.m. and finally on the Monday morning news.

Wow!!!! What great spokespeople for marriage.

Looking for WWME gifts and trinkets?

Try the web site for "Gifts From Your Heart". They are at WWW.WWMEGIFTS.COM. It is run by Dave & Joan Fister.

If you would rather call for a catalog or to order something, they can be contacted by phone at # (208)-676-0267.

Iowa website: <http://www.iowa-wwme.org>

Worldwide website: <http://www.wwme.org>

Welcome !

WORLD WIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEEEKEND
FEBRUARY 11-13, 2005
BEST WESTERN
DES MOINES

PARTICIPANTS

Babbitt, Mike & Joyce
Rockwell City, IA

Hazlewood, Lewis & Joan
Johnston, IA

Boyle, Mark & Marilyn
Danbury, IA

Ingram, Jay & Jane
Danbury, IA

Boyle, Craig & Sherrie
Danbury, IA

Lipinski, John & Margot
Iowa City, IA

Collison, Tim & Lori
Rockwell City, IA

Meier, Kevin & Dana
Adel, IA

Rude, Joe & Elliot, Wende
Colo, IA

Pereira, Horace & Angie
Amana, IA

Schneider, Charles & Lisa
West Des Moines, IA

Zenti, Louis & Karen
Des Moines, IA

Worldwide Marriage Encounter National Convention
July 8 thru 10, 2005 in Towson, MD

Visit the convention site on-line at: <http://convention.wwme.org/index.htm>

Any questions? Please contact: Steve and Karen Bow, 703-878-0104, or Nick and Dianne Monje, 703-771-9765, you can e-mail them at: ingodwetrust@convention.wwme.org

Special prayers are asked for Sarah Simon, daughter of Jerry and Linda Schroeder of the Dubuque Community. She is serving our country overseas. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers, as well as all service members.

***** IMPORTANT SPIRIT RENEWAL INFORMATION *****


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