

# The Spirit

**... Is Moving in Iowa**

**Issue 148**

**Oct/Nov/Dec 2007**

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

1. What brought me the most fulfillment today? HDI FAMA?
2. How have I encouraged or affirmed you today? How did that feel?
3. What did I most look forward to today? HDI FSTWY?
4. How did I know you love me today? HDI FSTWY?
5. When was a time when our love as a couple touched someone else's life?  
WAMFAT?
6. What do I want most for our children? WAMF?
7. What attitude do I want to change in myself? HDI FA changing that attitude?
8. Is there anything I am doing by myself that I could involve you in?  
HDI FA involving you?
9. How would our children describe our marriage? HDI FAMA?
10. Matthew 18:19-20: "Again , [amen,] I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

HDI FAT: How Do I Feel About That?

HDI FSTWY: How Do I Feel Sharing This With You?

HDI FST: How Do I Feel Sharing This?

HDI FAMA: How Do I Feel About My Answer?

**Vision and Mission  
Of Worldwide Marriage Encounter**

**VISION:** "Love one another as I have loved you."

**MISSION:** Worldwide Marriage Encounter's mission of renewal in the Church and change in the world is to assist couples and priests to live fully intimate and responsible relationships by providing them with a Catholic "experience" and ongoing community support for such a lifestyle.

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**Iowa WWME Weekends - 2008**

**2008 Weekends**

February 8-10 Cedar Falls

February 8-10 Des Moines

May 30 – June 1 Dubuque

May 30-June 1 Des Moines

October 10-12 Cedar Rapids

October 10-12 Des Moines

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**Iowa Retrouvaille Weekends**

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Email: [mike.jackson@hotmail.com](mailto:mike.jackson@hotmail.com) Website: [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org)

We invite you to visit our National Website:

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter** at [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org)

When you visit this website, be sure to double click onto the picture for already encounter couples to explore the many different Marriage Encounter resources.

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter Resource Library Website:**

<http://erl.wwme.org>

Lots of great resources: dialogue questions, topics and outlines for presentations, inviting and community ideas, gifts, etc. Be sure to share this with your community!

**EMatrimony:** this is another website that can be very helpful for resources

[www.ematrimony.org](http://www.ematrimony.org)

To view our local website for news / information from **Marriage Encounter in Iowa**, check this website: [www.iowa-wwme.org](http://www.iowa-wwme.org)

## **World Marriage Day is Sunday, February 10, 2008**

You are encouraged to celebrate this day in your parish. It is a great time to honor all married couples in our lives. The Sacrament of matrimony has touched all of us in some way in our life. There are ideas on how to celebrate this day on [www.ematrimony.org](http://www.ematrimony.org) Just scroll down and click on the World Marriage Day logo. All Iowa communities are encouraged to get involved in this day.

## Great Gift Ideas

**Full Circle Wood** at

[www.fullcirclewood.com/pages/marriage.htm](http://www.fullcirclewood.com/pages/marriage.htm)

are custom woodworkers and have designed numerous products, using God's natural colored woods of the world in creating wood pieces in the likeness of the WWME logo.

**Mailing Address:**

**Attn: Norway**

**Full Circle Wood, LLC**

**291 Smith Street, Suite 301**

**South Windsor, CT 06074**

**Email: [wayne@fullcirclewood.com](mailto:wayne@fullcirclewood.com)**

**Telephone: 860-648-9114**

### **Gifts From Your Heart**

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2900 Government Way

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(208) 676-0267

Visit our on-line catalog and ordering site at [www.wmegifts.com](http://www.wmegifts.com)

## **From The Executive Teams:**

From Our Dubuque/Davenport/LaCrosse Area Execs.....

We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas, and had some time to spend with family and friends. This is a wonder filled time of year when we celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is a time when God's love is shown to us. This is an opportunity for us to spread God's love and to spend some quality time each day with our spouse in dialogue. This is a special time for us to step away from the hectic lifestyle that we all lead and get in touch with our feelings and share those feelings with the one we love.

As we begin the New Year, we pray that 2008 will be the best for everyone. When you make your New Year's resolution we hope that improving your dialogue will be one of your priorities, to strengthen your relationship and rekindle that spark!!

The next weekend will be February 8-10, in Cedar Falls. Please invite!! We need everyone's help to fill these weekends. A personal invitation is always the best! Every couple deserves a weekend. What a great Valentine gift this weekend would be.

We have a witness talk at Mass scheduled January 29/30<sup>th</sup> at St. Mary's in Waverly, to promote World Wide Marriage Encounter weekends. If you would be interested in doing a witness talk in your parish, please let us know. We would be happy to assist you.

There will be new leadership selected for Section 7, which we are a part of, on January 5/6<sup>th</sup>. Please keep this process and those involved in your prayers.

There are many great resources available to you, please visit [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org) also the Iowa website [www.iowa-wwme.org](http://www.iowa-wwme.org).

Love,

Fr. Lou Jaeger, Dennis & Deb Jones

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter international convention in Ontario, California on June 27-29, 2008. Registration is available online. Go to [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org) and click on the convention link. By registering early, you can save money!!!!

## Welcome

### Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend Cedar Rapids, Iowa October 12-14, 2007

#### Presenting Team

Father Lou Jaeger  
Waterloo, IA

Dennis & Deb Jones  
Waverly, IA

Bill & Kathy Gianoli  
Coon Valley, WI

Orlando & Michelle Reyes  
Cedar Rapids, IA

#### Participants

Ed & Virginia Barnes

Dan & Sandy Clark

Todd & Christine Damon

Jamie & Amanda Deaner

Dale & Jamie Easley

Keith & Amy Gaul

Mike & Laura Goodwin

Gordon & Mary Kaltenbach

Jayne & Tracy Kiernan

Jim & Tracy Langhurst-Matsuda

John & Kathy Martin

Joe & Mary Merchant

Mark & April Tigges

Clark & Ann Williams

## **Community News - Family Friendly Communities**

Here are some ideas we found on the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Electronic Resource Library (<http://erl.wwme.org>) for promoting family friendly activities to help keep couples with children engaged in their local communities. The focus in community is still to provide the support couples need to support their dialogue, their need to belong and a way to offer their newfound couple love to the world by supporting the weekend. It needs to be a group of married couples and priests who come together to support one another, to share their joys and struggles, and to live out their sacramental vows. And within all these activities we need to find ways to support couples with young families. Look over the ideas below and see how you can incorporate some of them to make your community more appealing and family friendly for couples with children at home.

There are a few communities in Iowa who have found ways to allow couples to bring children to the meetings. They have a separate room or area where the children can play or watch a video, while the presentation, dialogue, and group sharing take place. The older children help supervise the younger ones. The children then join the couples for snack. If you are interested in talking to someone from one of these communities, please let us know.

Happy New Year!

Lyle and Lynn Ries

Dubuque/Davenport/LaCrosse Community Coordinators

# **Making Worldwide Marriage Encounter More Family Friendly**

One of the issues facing our sharing/support circles throughout the country is the difficulty in attracting and retaining couples—especially young couples. Right after their Weekend, they are excited about their dialogue and about the possibility of being involved in community. As time goes on, however, they find it increasingly difficult to get sitters or sacrifice family time to attend gatherings. Some never make it to the first gathering. They see community as something that strengthens their relationship, but not as something that supports their family life. With this issue in mind we asked ourselves:

How can we promote a more “family friendly atmosphere in our WWME communities?

Below is a list of suggestions for making your sharing/support circles more friendly for couples with children.

## **MEETINGS**

Provide babysitting for meetings if possible

Meet at a location that has a separate room for the children

Have community all pitch in to help with childcare if paying teens at team meetings

Create & present a circle presentation on family dialog

Include family values and parenting skills in enrichment or circle presentations

Promote “it takes a village” mentality for parenting

Point out advantages to children associating with children of other parents who are committed to WWME

Form couples to the realization that children are better off when the parents take time away from them to enrich their marriage, they come back to the children better for them

Help young families find the balance between the mission of WWME and the responsibilities of parenting.

Encourage balancing time with children and time for each other as a couple.

Keep re-evaluating how we are being attentive to the needs of our young couples. Bring this topic up at meetings. Ask our young families what we can do for them...

Get young couples to come together to brainstorm solutions to their problems.

Emphasize that strong marriages make strong families

When leaving children for a WWME event, explain value & importance of what you & they are doing!

## **ENRICHMENTS**

Learn from couples who home school –look at the wholesome activities they use

Offer evenings for parents in parishes

Offer special events for families like Advent Days that have presentations and activities

Family retreats or special weekends for families (outlines available)

Languages of Love for families

Utilize parish based cooperative babysitting with parish youth groups

Some community events to include children with portions together and portions separate.

Some community events with babysitting for little ones and presentations for parents and older children together

Create specific family friendly activities at gatherings

Involve teenagers in planning events

Survey what kids want and put it into action.

Include family dialogue whenever possible

Start a baby-sitting ministry

Conventions should be family friendly and include events for children

Workshop couples with children at their homes

## **INVITING**

Pulpit talks can be presented by families

Compliment families in the pews –affirm their parenting

When young couples are giving pulpit talks, other WWME couples should offer to sit with young children in pew

Families hand out brochures after mass

Posters & registration forms with pictures of families

Stress what ME has done for your family

Romance nights, i.e, dances for young couples, provide baby-sitting.

Inexpensive fun nights focused on young couples, provide baby-sitting

## **WEEKENDS**

Kids help with weekend setup

Encourage kids to pray and sacrifice for Weekend couples and priests—no

Nintendo, no sweets, no MTV, etc—make a big paper banner with sacrifices listed, decorated by kids involved

Greet Off at end of Weekend—encourage families to participate

At Weekend Reunion, set up movie for children in separate room or ask

Community to babysit—or provide a short age-appropriate “presentation” for children.

Prayer chain with children

Children make banners to support Weekend

## **EVENTS**

Picnic Day where families focus on children

Kid's Day—a day of presentation & activities by kids for kids, including 10/10 with younger children “drawing” their feelings and then sharing aloud

Annual Kids Day celebration! April 30<sup>th</sup> (or weekend day closest) with games, prizes, etc.

Promote Encounter Kids groups & activities

Candy grams—create message using specific brand name candy bars taped to paper to create a love message—kids love it!

Family dances

Family Advent Day or Posadas

Christmas parties

Christmas Cookie Baking events

Family caroling

Family Epiphany Party with King Cake

Family Float in a parade

Family theatre trips

Family hay rides

Family camp out

Family fishing events

Family swimming parties

Parent-child ball games

Family bowling event

State park event

Sports events with encountered children. Parents do the cook-out, sell tickets, umpire, referee, ME T-shirts.

Family treasure hunts.

## **PARISH/COMMUNITY VISIBILITY**

Visit the pastor as a family to talk about the impact of WWME on family life & marriage

Encourage WWME couples to help in parish family life activities & ministries

Have encountered families sponsor booths at ministry days or parish fairs.

Write articles on positive impact of WWME on families for diocesan papers or newsletters

Advertise our family events in parish bulletins and other diocesan media.

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

If you know of Encountered Couples who wish to start receiving The Spirit by either

Email or U.S. Postal mail, please have them contact us.

For those who still want to receive The Spirit via U.S. Postal mail, please check the section below for how many issues remain on your subscription. If it says "0", this is your last issue unless you renew your subscription. Subscription has been reduced to \$5 for 4 issues or \$10 for 9 issues. The Spirit is planned to be published 4 times per year

(March, June, September, and December).

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***Send to:***

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