

FAMILY MATTERS

E-Newsletter of the Family Life Office, Archdiocese of Dubuque
1229 Mount Loretta, Dubuque IA 52003

Sep-Oct, 2011



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Supporting Vocation of Marriage

Would you like some ideas to support marriage ministry in your parish with very little expense? How about trying a few of these suggestions...

1. Put photos of couples preparing for marriage on a bulletin board at an appropriate place inside the church. Ask that these couples be kept in prayer.
2. Include the name and the wedding date of engaged couples in one Sunday's Prayers of the Faithful.
3. At a pre-arranged Sunday Mass, ask engaged couples to stand and be acknowledged.
4. Get email addresses and connect once a week with info or

questions for couples preparing for marriage.

5. Have students create a card or letter for engaged couples.
6. Have couples preparing for marriage visit with a class of teens to share why they are looking forward to their wedding day.
7. Consider a box in the parish bulletin for listing web sites helpful to couples.
8. Schedule a workshop that helps build relationship skills for singles and dating couples.

More ideas to come in future issues of Family Matters. Reprinted with permission from Susan Vogt & Marriage Ministry Made Easy (more info on page 4).

Prepare Students for Success!

School Rules for Success:

1. Use the "YES! Count On Me" words: yes, I can, and I will.
2. To get ahead in school & in life-read more, learn more, do more.
3. Learn how to set and achieve goals and how to use these principles in the classroom.
4. No Vision = No Direction. Write down what you want to accomplish each month. Repeat every month.
5. Don't find a fault; find a solution.
6. These six words will hold you back from reaching your full potential: no, can't, won't, never, maybe, and if.

7. Eliminate excuses.

8. Regularly ask yourself: "Did I give my best effort to today's activities?"

9. Help others.

10. Remember: Luck comes to those who work hard.

These ten life skills will help your children develop a "YES! Count On Me" attitude that you can use in the classroom and in life. Good luck!

Author John Bishop started Accent On Success®, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping teenagers succeed. He has written Goal Setting for Students® which has recently won three national book awards.



Sharing Everything

A young man saw an elderly couple sitting down to lunch at a fast food chain. He noticed that they had ordered one meal, and an extra drink cup. As he watched, the older gentleman carefully divided the hamburger in half, then counted out the fries, one for him, one for her, until each had half of them. Then the man poured half of the soft drink into the extra cup and set that in front of his wife. The old man then began to eat, and his wife sat watching, with her hands folded in her lap. The young man decided to ask if they would allow him to purchase another meal for them so that they didn't have to split theirs. The old gentleman said, "Oh, no. We've been married 50 years, and everything has always been and will always be shared, 50/50." The young man then asked the wife if she was going to eat, and she replied, "Not yet. It's his turn with the teeth."

TRY THIS:

When your spouse shares feelings with you, value what he or she shared without offering solutions or unsolicited advice.

Tips for Fighting Fair

Every marriage experiences conflict. These tips will help to prevent a disagreement from permanently damaging your relationship...

Anger is an emotion - neither right nor wrong in itself. There is no morality to feelings. Try to understand what prompted the feeling. Morality comes into play when you take a destructive action as a result of a feeling.

Negotiation and compromise are essential in any marriage. During a calm, clear moment agree that neither partner should "win" a fight. If one wins, the other loses



and builds resentment. In effect, both have then lost because the relationship is damaged. Even when one spouse is wrong, permit him/her to salvage self-respect.

You can access the rest of these helpful tips by going to: www.foryourmarriage.org, search for 25 Ways to Fight.

Sharing the Faith with Your Child (cont.)

You may feel that your faith is not strong enough to be a spiritual force at home; you may feel inadequate to nurture your children's faith growth. Faith is a free gift from God - an invitation to respond in love was initiated by God. For centuries that gift has been passed from generation to generation. As parents, it's your privilege and responsibility to be a part of passing on this gift simply by being the best parents you know how to be.

Become involved in the formal education of your child. Some children will not want their parents to be involved, yet giving your time in some way will demonstrate the importance you place on faith in action. Continue to be the primary influence in your child's faith development during these years.

More to come in future issues. Excerpts taken from *Sharing the Faith with Your Child* by Phyllis Chandler & Joan Burney, available at the Archdiocesan Resource Center.

Understanding Spiritual Gifts

Important for a Christian is the discernment of charisms because these are the special areas in which God has equipped you to serve as an instrument of peace, love and providence for others. Discerning your charisms is a way of discovering God's calling in your life. They are clues to answering

the fundamental human questions: Who am I? Why am I here?

Would you like to develop a parish discernment team to help your parishioners discern their gifts? Contact Linda Manternach at the Office of Family Life for more information.

Helping Divorced & Separated



The Divorce & Beyond is a parish-based support program for separated and divorced Catholics. The objective of the program is to assist participants to move through the emotions of their loss to acceptance, healing, and forgiveness. Healing takes place in peer support groups guided by a trained facilitator whose role is that of a loving listener - not counselor, therapist or advice-giver. The approach helps participants find healing in sharing with others who are experiencing the same loss. Once participants are able to identify and verbalize their feelings, they can begin to move toward understanding and then forgiveness. The program is designed with eight weekly sessions plus two optional topics. If your parish or deanery would like to begin an outreach support to people in this group, there will be training sessions for facilitators coming to Cedar Rapids on September 15 and to Cedar Falls on January 12. Contact our office for the registration form.

F.O.C.C.U.S. Training

Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study is a pre-marital inventory that provides individualized couple feedback on topic areas important to marriage. A two-part training program (both nights are required) is scheduled from 6-9:00 pm on October 11 & 25, 2011 at St. Patrick, Cedar Falls. The fee of \$100 per person or \$150 per couple includes materials. Call our office to register.

Think about your relationships with those closest to you. Are you saying "I love you," but neglecting to show it on a regular basis? Sometimes it's easy to get into a routine with those who mean the most to us. If we aren't intentional about loving one another, not just in words, but also in deeds, our relationships will begin to suffer. How can you show someone your love - through words and through deeds - today?

Marriage Prep Weekends Begin Again in Fall

Archdiocesan programs to prepare couples for marriage will begin again this fall. Flyers have been completed and mailed to each church or pastor; in addition, the flyers can be accessed via the First Class Family Life Conference folder and via the web at: www.dbgarch.org/FamilyLife. Please make these brochures available to every couple!

These preparation programs provide an opportunity to concentrate on building a couple's relationship and offer them a chance to get a head start on a successful marriage through the process of sharing topics

vital to marital happiness, including communication, finances, sexuality, and more. There is also a program for couples entering marriage where one or both have been married before.

We frequently hear from couples who have attended that they didn't think the weekend would have many benefits, but upon completion their comments include, "We learned so much about the many topics covered", "It was a great advantage to get away together and focus only on our relationship", "What a wonderful opportunity to share with other couples

some of our concerns and questions", and the biggest compliment of all has been a simple "Thank You!"

Every engaged couple should enter marriage with as many tools to make it work as possible. See the calendar on page 6 for upcoming dates.



F.A.C.E.T. Training

The questions in F.A.C.E.T. (Foundations Applied Conversation & Education Tool) are intended to open up areas for discussion under thirteen different topics. There will be opportunities for couples to review their results with facilitators, but they are encouraged to begin a dialogue with each other as soon as they are finished. In addition, couples are given some open ended questions to take home that are intended to stimulate further discussion on the same topics. F.A.C.E.T is not a test, but an opportunity to keep communications moving in a positive direction between two people who plan to get married. A facilitator training session is scheduled for February 6, 2012 at St. Pius X, Cedar Rapids. Register with the Family Life Office.

Every marriage is a journey of discovery that began when you first met and will continue for a lifetime.



Marriage Ministry Made Easy

This site offers effective marriage ministry programs and ideas for your parish. Learn more about The Third Option, Foundations, For Better and For Ever, Parenting Pointers and more. Visit their website www.marriageministrymadeeasy.com and get them working for you!

No Time

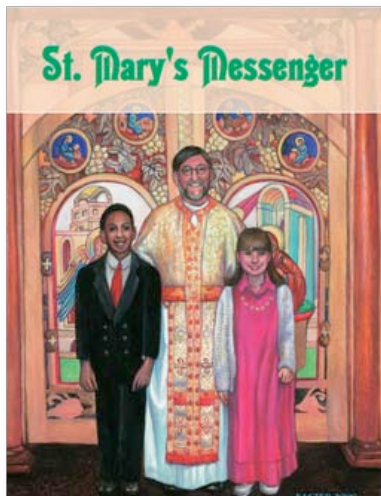
I knelt to pray but not for long,
I had too much to do.
I had to hurry and get to work
For bills would soon be due.
So I knelt and said a hurried prayer,
And jumped up off my knees.
My Christian duty was now done
My soul could rest at ease.
All day long I had no time
To spread a word of cheer;
No time to speak of Christ to friends,
They'd laugh at me I'd fear.
No time, no time, too much to do,
That was my constant cry,
No time to give to souls in need.
But at last the time, the time to die
I went before the Lord,
I came, I stood with downcast eyes.
For in his hands God held a book -
It was the book of life.
God looked into his book and said
"Your name I cannot find
I once was going to write it down...
But never found the time."

Morning Prayer

Open my eyes to see beauty
Open my ears to hear truth
Open my mouth to speak kindness
Open my mind to seek wisdom
Open my heart to love
Bless be God who gives us a new day
And the chance to begin again.
From the rising of the sun to its setting,
Let the name of God be praised.
God, today I offer you all
I think and say and do.
When I work and when I play,
Be with me all through the day.



Children's Magazine



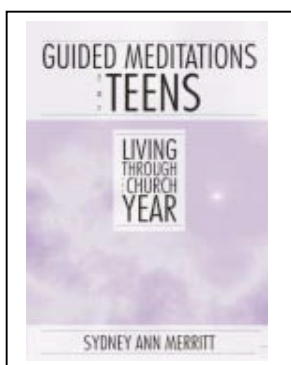
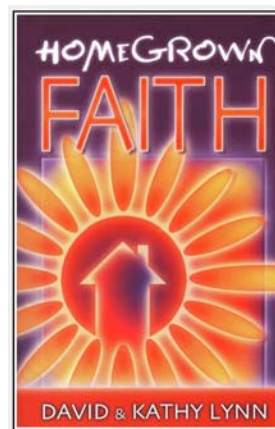
Have you subscribed yet to [St. Mary's Messenger](#), the new magazine for Catholic kids? Kris Weipert, Chief Editor of the magazine shares that the periodical will now be published as a full-sized, full-color, standalone, 32-page quarterly magazine featuring great stories and activities specifically targeted for Catholic children, ages 7-12. Subscribe now in time to receive the upcoming Fall 2011 issue. Learn more about this great magazine and subscribe online.

In short, St. Mary's Messenger is the type of educational tool the Catholic Church desires for the education of the faithful.

Tim Carpenter
Office of Catechetics
Franciscan University of
Steubenville

Parents Pass Faith to Children

Parents are the most influential people in the lives of their children—more than pastors, Sunday school teachers, youth workers, coaches or teachers. Yet, in our daily lives already swamped with the everyday activities of work, school, lessons and practices, we often feel that we don't have the time or the ability to pass on our faith to our children. The Lynns provide solutions to busy parents, offering up ideas for activities, research about passing on your faith, and encouragement for every step of the journey. Available at the Archdiocesan Resource Center.



Guided Meditations for Teens

If you want your teens to be more Christ-like, let them walk, talk and pray—via their imaginations—with Jesus himself. "Gospel values" takes on a whole new meaning when Jesus personally shares his way of life and challenges each of your teens to imitate him. They will watch Jesus model forgiveness, respect, patience and acceptance of all people. The electronic format makes *Guided Meditations for Teens* even more useful for catechists.

TRY THIS: *Once a week, ask your spouse for something specific that you could do that week to bring him or her joy.*

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*"The relationships within the family bring an affinity of feelings, affections and interests, arising above all from the members' respect for one another." (No. 2206)
Catechism of the Catholic Church*

The office of Family Life offers support and training to parishes and individuals interested in this ministry. We invite you to volunteer for any of these ministries or to offer suggestions to our office.

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.dbqarch.org/familylife

Upcoming Events

September:

- 8.....Birth of Mary
- 10.....PreCana, Dubuque
- 7-9.....Engaged Encounter
- 15.....Divorce & Beyond, Cedar Rapids
- 17-18.....PreCana, Cedar Rapids
- 24.....MATT, Cedar Falls

October:

- 1.....PreCana, Mason City
- 7.....Our Lay of the Rosary
- 7-9.....Marriage Encounter, Ankeny
- 11.....FOCCUS, Part 1, Cedar Falls
- 14-15.....PreCana, Cedar Falls
- 25.....FOCCUS, Part 2, Cedar Falls

November:

- 1.....All Saints Day
- 2.....All Souls Day
- 5.....PreCana, Dubuque
- 5.....MATT, Cedar Falls
- 12-13.....PreCana, Cedar Rapids
- 18-20.....Engaged Encounter, Cedar Falls
- 18-20.....Beginning Experience, Dubuque
- 20.....Feast of Christ the King
- 21.....Presentation of Mary
- 24.....Thanksgiving Day
- 27.....Advent Begins

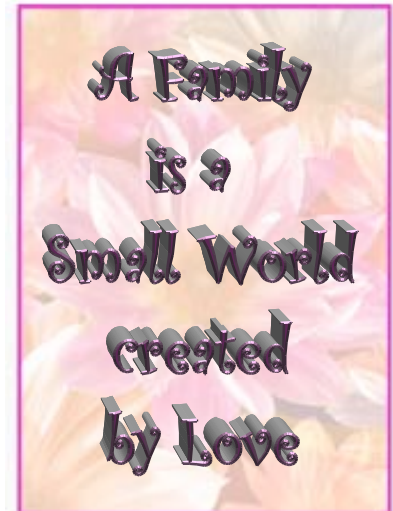
December:

- 6.....St. Nicholas
- 8.....Feast of Immaculate Conception
- 12.....Our Lady of Guadalupe
- 25.....Merry Christmas!

Advisory Committee

Deacon Gary & Kay Aitchison
Karen Bonfig
Jennifer Clancy
Michael Erikson
Janice Loecke
Katie Pfiffner
Fr. Phil Schmitt
Becky Shaffer
Amy Shannon
Eric Stromberg
Diane Walston

Please pray for the work of this committee. If you have ideas for outreach and/or ministry to families, please feel free to contact one of these people.



A Family Life Programs and Services flyer is available if you would like more details about the programs highlighted in this newsletter.