



The Spirit

... Is Moving in Iowa

Issue 133

March 2004

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

1. What can we do to enrich our relationship with each other this Lent? HDIFAMA?
2. What can we do to enrich our prayer life this Lent? HDIFAMA?
3. When I think about the sacrifices Jesus made for me, HDIF?
4. Will we take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Lent? HDIFAMA?
5. HDIF when we read the Passion during Holy Week?
6. When I hear the psalm, "My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?"
7. How will we celebrate Easter? HDIFAT?
8. How do I feel when I see an overflowing church on Easter Sunday?
9. What are my feelings about having an egg hunt for the kids?
10. HDIF about Jesus' resurrection?

HDIFAMA: How Do I Feel About My Answer?

HDIF: How Do I Feel?

HDIFAT: How Do I Feel About That?



From the Executive Team:

Dear Lovers,

There are a lot of great things happening in our Worldwide Marriage Encounter areas of Dubuque/Davenport right now. Our first weekend of the year looks very exciting. We have gone through some challenging times in the past with cancelled weekends but the Holy Spirit is moving in wondrous ways now. God's marvelous world is getting ready for springtime and the grass and flowers are eagerly set to grow and bloom.

Our Marriage Encounter family is also preparing to nurture new relationships. As couples, priests and religious experience the weekend for their relationship, we are all empowered to love and support them as they continue their journey. Communities are the lifeline for this love and support for them as well as all of us. Our Marshalltown community has been a vital part of keeping our relationship growing. Father Joe has been a gift to us and his excitement for the Marriage Encounter movement is like a breath of fresh springtime air.

It seems like we cannot turn the television on with out being bombarded with negative news about church scandals or the sanctity of marriage. It is up to each one of us to demonstrate how the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders are alive and thriving in our world. We encourage everyone to call or write a letter of thanks and support for special couples, priests and religious in your lives. Let them know how they have touched your life.

The winter has been long and dreary for many of us and while it is probably not over, the signs of the approaching spring are popping up. The signs of an exciting spring in Marriage Encounter can also be seen. They are in the eyes of the sacraments that have been touched by Marriage Encounter. Let's see if we can keep these signs of spring and growth in our area blossoming all year round. Family, friends, co-workers and parishioners will want for their relationship what they see in all of us. We can live out our mission to renew the church and to change the world.

Love,
Craig, Lori & Fr. Joe

Des Moines Diocese Marriage Encounter Ministries 2003-2004

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From The Spirit Editors:

Dear Lovers,

We wish you all a blessed Easter Season. We hope you have enjoyed these last few issues of the newsletter. If you have any suggestions or ideas for us, please let us know.

Please remember to let us know if your Email address changes. Otherwise, we won't know where to send your copy of The Spirit to!

The next issue of The Spirit will be in **June**. Please submit articles to be included in the newsletter to us by June 1st. For those with Email, we'll send a couple of reminder Emails a few weeks before the deadline. Please send articles by postal mail or Email to:

John & Caroline Mockler
13738 Barrington Dr.
Dubuque, IA 52003-9637
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Phone: # (563)-556-8443

We look forward to hearing from you all soon and hope you enjoy this issue. Please note, if you are having trouble getting The Spirit as an Email attachment, you can always view it on the Iowa WWME website at <http://www.iowa-wwme.org>.

Love and hugs,
John & Caroline

Iowa WWME Weekends 2004

Mar. 26-28	* Des Moines
Jun. 4-6	Dubuque
Oct. 8-10	* Des Moines
Fall (TBD)	Cedar Rapids

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

Inviting

Dear Iowa Inviters,

Way to Go! As of this writing (Feb. 17th) there are 26 couples registered for the Waverly weekend to be held March 5th, 6th, and 7th. It is due to the efforts of lots of people that this looks to be one of our largest weekends we've had in a long time! And we are tickled pink to have this many couples registered three weeks prior to the weekend.

Thanks to the couples who gave pulpit talks, distributed bulletin announcements, displayed pulpit pals, personally invited, and anything else that was done to help these couples make the decision to attend a weekend. We know many seeds are planted long before most couples make the decision to go on a weekend.

Now, let's do the same for Dubuque in June! Invite! Invite! Invite!

We need your help! Could you email us at lyleries@iowatelecom.net and let us know if bulletin announcements are making it into your church bulletins or not?

With this being the season of Lent, it is time to reflect on many aspects of our lives. We have received the following email several times during the past few weeks and it is a good story to reflect on for Lent.

Dart Test...

A young lady named Sally relates an experience she had in religion class, given by her teacher, Dr. Smith. She says that Dr. Smith was known for his elaborate object lessons. One particular day, Sally walked into class and knew they were in for a fun day. On the wall was a big target and on a nearby table were many darts. Dr. Smith told the students to draw a picture of someone that they disliked or someone who had made them angry, and he would allow them to throw darts at the person's picture.

Sally's friend drew a picture of a friend who had stolen her boyfriend. Another friend drew a picture of his little brother. Sally drew a picture of a former friend, putting a great deal of detail into her drawing, even drawing pimples on the face. Sally was pleased with the overall effect she had achieved.

The class lined up and began throwing darts. Some of the students threw their darts with such force that their targets were ripping apart. Sally looked forward to her turn, and was filled with disappointment when Dr. Smith, because of time limits, asked the students to return to their seats.

As Sally sat thinking about how angry she was because she didn't have a chance to throw any darts at her target. Dr. Smith began removing the target from the wall. Underneath the target was a picture of Jesus. A hush fell over the room as each student viewed the mangled picture of Jesus; holes and jagged marks covered His face and His eyes were pierced.

Dr. Smith said only these words... "In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Matthew 25:40. No other words were necessary; the tears filled eyes of the students focused only on the picture of Christ.

How many darts have I thrown at Jesus during the past year, past month, past week or today?

Love,
Lyle and Lynn Ries

Inviting Coordinators for the Archdiocese of Dubuque
Phone: (641)-364-5201 Email: lyleries@iowatelecom.net

Retrouvaille Information

Do you know of couples who are having trouble in their marriage? There is hope! A program called Retrouvaille can help. Visit their web site at www.retrouvaille.org for more information.

Iowa Retrouvaille Weekends 2004

April 16-18	Dubuque
September 17-19	Marshalltown

Contact: Dick and Joyce Smith
 Dyersville, IA
 Phone: 563-875-8791 or 800-470-2230
 Email: smithretro@mwci.net

Community

Greetings to all Iowa Communities from Ken and Mickey Collison,

We are currently serving as your community coordinators and representatives from Northeast Iowa to Section 7. At our twice-annual meetings, we share goals and activities and new ideas with other couples and priests from the three other states which are part of section 7 to help World Wide Marriage Encounter communities continue to thrive. It is our job also to discuss and share successful ways of starting new communities/love circles in section 7. Of course, we are guided by the National Mission for Marriage Encounter which is to support sacraments (couples & priests), to promote the weekend and to renew the church (the body of Christ on earth).

Since March weekends are coming up for both the Waverly and Des Moines areas, we thought it might be a good time to share general information about community for all those new couples joining communities for the first time. We know the information may be in a slightly different form than you have seen before because it is part of a revised handbook for communities soon to be given to community leaders. We hope the information will be helpful for those who are longtime members of communities as well. **God Bless you all as you continue to love one another faithfully, celebrate your sacraments and invite other couples to do the same.**

If you have any questions about community, or even want to start one in your area, please contact us at (319) 984-5758 or e-mail us – darmstad48@aol.com.

COMMUNITY/CIRCLE MISSION STATEMENT

Community/Circle is a monthly gathering that provides support of sacramental spirituality through presentation, dialogue, prayer, sexuality, journeying with others with similar values & reevaluation.

Community/Circle provides enthusiastic support for the Weekend by being focused on the values and mission of Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

Community/Circle extends to its members the Lord's call to be Open & Apostolic

- inviting and encouraging members to help strengthen the Marriage Encounter Community
- being actively involved in promoting the Weekend through the local inviting structure
- supporting the Weekend as prayer sponsors or by participating in a prayer vigil for couples/priests/religious
- inviting members to consider other “ministries” in the community
- “angeling” new couples/priests/religious into Community/Circle

Through Community/Circle we hear and act on the final instruction:

“Go forth to Love & Serve”

Goals of Community/Circle

1. To renew the Church by showing and sharing our love with others.
2. To unite in community and sincerely try, as couples/priests/religious, to develop our spirituality through daily dialogue, sexuality and prayer.
3. To invite to the Weekend which allows us to spread our special gift of the Weekend to couples, priests and religious.
4. To provide monthly presentations that are challenging and motivating.
5. To enthusiastically support the needs of the Weekend (ie: responding to the Friday / Sunday night greeting, being a prayer couple for a couple/priest/religious, taking an hour on the 44 hour prayer vigil) and to support each other as we face the struggles in today's modern world.
6. To encourage couples/priests/religious to be open and apostolic in seeding God's plan in their relationship.
7. To recognize and call forth gifts that couples/priest/religious possess that benefit the WWME community.
8. To accept responsibility as part of the WWME Community by participating in community sponsored events.
9. To include family in community event.

Community Rules for Sharing

- Open sharing is voluntary. No one is required to share; however, what you share might help others in the group.
- Everything shared at Community/Circle is confidential
- Please don't comment on someone else's sharing.
- Stick to the sharing question and focus on sharing your feelings.
- Share for yourself with "I" or "me" messages.
- Please don't interrupt or finish someone's sentence.
- Please don't offer solutions. This is a time for listening & understanding – not fixing.
- Avoid saying "I agree or disagree". Please don't judge a sharing.
- Avoid witty remarks or comments in an attempt to ease the situation or change the subject. Such comments can discourage the person from sharing again.
- Avoid preaching, using "you should" or "you can't" statements.
- Try not to be uncomfortable with periods of silence. Some personality styles need time to process or formulate what they want to share.
- Share your feelings fully, but allow time for all to share.
- Listen without your motor running, with an open heart. We all want to be listened to.

Des Moines Community Corner Cannon Fodder

Christmas party pulls 'em in.

Ten couples, Fr. Felix and 14 youngens and grandyoungens turned out for the Christmas party Dec. 21 at St. Joe's. Everybody ate well. 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.

On the front page.

For some years the east side of Des Moines churches have been organizing Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners for folk who don't have a place to go or who can't get some place. On Dec. 26 we opened the Des Moines Register. There on the front page, was Maxine Murray giving a big hug to a gentleman at the Christmas dinner. The story explained that the man and his twin brother had both been to the Thanksgiving dinner. In early December his brother had passed away. Maxine's open-hearted willingness to share a hug and comfort the grieving are some of the characteristics that make her so precious to us. The story put in a plug for Mike Murray as well. It said he's good at mashing potatoes.

On the prayer list.

Bill Smith ran short on breath. He and Pat went to the hospital for an angiogram just before Christmas. Turned out, the next day he had open-heart surgery. If we have this right, that's Bill's third major heart surgery. Second and third surgeries are always riskier. Bill looked pretty tough when we visited him in the hospital. We saw him and Pat leaving church toward the end of January. Pat looked great. Bill looked a little draggie. Both agreed that he was somewhat better. By mid February, Bill wasn't perking up much. Back to the hospital they went for tests. Pat reports the doctors are challenged to figure out where Bill is losing blood. We want to keep those two precious lovers in our prayers.

Feb. 6, I, John Otte, had surgery. Deacon Dennis Luft came and sat with Maria for awhile during the surgery. His presence was a gift that we both appreciate. So far, recovery has gone about like I expected.

Condolences and prayers for grieving.

Back in the summer we reported that Bill and Pat had traveled out west to visit relatives, including Pat's brother and family in Washington state. We're glad that they made the trip. Pat's brother's wife has since passed away. Pat's brother brought his spouse back to Charles City for burial Feb 28.

On Feb. 15 Maria Otte got a call from Brazil. Her brother, Roque, had passed away. Long time Spirit readers may remember that I have written here before that it is hard to be so far away at times like this.

Community presentations.

In January, we, John & Maria presented on focusing on putting the big things in life first, but still leaving room to share a cup of coffee with friends. As I recall, about half a dozen couples attended.

Bernie & Kristi Evans presented in February. Four couples attended.

Why community couples are precious.

Over the years, we've had lots of fun with secret couple activities. We put names, key dates, birthdays, wedding anniversaries, encountered date on a paper at the Christmas party. Each couple draws a couple out of the hat. Over the course of the year, we send them cards or notes on appropriate occasions. We reveal who was our secret couple at the next Christmas party.

It's a voluntary activity. Couples don't have to participate if they don't want to. At the Christmas party I heard Maxine Murray say, "Mike and I don't want a secret couple." I was a bit disappointed because we've had a tremendous amount of fun trying to guess which couple was sending us those cards throughout the year. Why Maxine did not want to participate became obvious when she produced a sheaf of cards that they should have sent to their secret couple during the year, but were not.



Sections 6 & 7 are having a regional convention June 25-27, 2004 in Columbus, Ohio. The theme is "A Gift from His Heart." Visit the convention web site at <http://wwme2004.org/home.php>

A GIFT FROM HIS HEART

WWME 2004 Section 6 & 7 Convention

Columbus, OH June 25-27, 2004

Online registration available at <http://WWME2004.org>

For additional information refer to our website or call **614-868-2698**

Welcome!

WORLD WIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEEKEND

March 5-7, 2004

Red Fox Inn - Waverly, Iowa

TEAM

Fr. Bob Striegel
Davenport, IA

Bob & Sara Hrdlicka
Charles City, IA

Craig & Lori Diggins
Marshalltown, IA

Dennis & Deb Jones
Waverly, IA

PARTICIPANTS

Mark & Mary Bergene
Cedar Falls, IA

Michael & Jodi Hartz
Decorah, IA

Jim & Carolyn Burvee
Waterloo, IA

Lester & Debra Hyke
Cresco, IA

Jim & Stacie Cooper
Waukon, IA

Tim & Chris Kofron
Mason City, IA

Ken & Carol Cox
Cedar Falls, IA

Jason & Jessica Ledtje
Cedar Falls, IA

Michael Engelhardt & Diane Sadler
Decorah, IA

John & Karen Michels
Oelwein, IA

Chad & Cindy Folkers
Swaldale, IA

Joe & Vicki Ricken
Marshalltown, IA

Kenneth & Margaret Funke
Dubuque, IA

Jeff & Jenny Ryan
Cedar Rapids, IA

Dave & Lori Galligan
Decorah, IA

Kevin & Jeanette Steffen
Waterloo, IA

Jim & Janet Gorman
New Hampton, IA

Robert & Pat Theis
Riceville, IA

Jim & Doris Green
Riceville, IA

Scott & Linda Trimbell
Cedar Falls, IA

Marvin & Barbara Waterhouse
Manchester, IA

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


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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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