



# Worldwide Marriage Encounter Central New Jersey Trenton-Metuchen (888)827-NJME

Winter 2008

## Welcome Lovers

Dear Lovers,

Happy New Year and welcome to the first edition of our new and improved newsletter, (*insert name here*)! We are very excited to bring this back (in non-electronic form) after a long absence. We are hoping to publish quarterly, giving you all the important dates and facts you'll need to be completely up to date on all things "Marriage Encounter".

We are John and Shawna Singler, the Central Jersey Coordinators. We have been Coordinators since November 2006. We live in Millstone Township, Monmouth County, Trenton Diocese. We have been married for 22 ½ years and made our original weekend in April 1991. We have been a presenting team since February 1992. We have 4 children – Ryan 18, Allyson 16, and 13 year old twins Kevin and Nicholas. We are thankful every day for the gift of our weekend and daily dialogue. As you can well imagine, with a large family, there is always something going on that requires attention and takes away from our time together and challenges our relationship. Daily Dialogue helps us reconnect at the end of many a long, hectic day. It is our prayer that each of you experience the intimacy and strength that comes from daily dialogue.

As we begin this New Year, we look forward to 4 full weekends being held in our area and many couples joining our local sharing groups and helping to change the world. We are committed to growing ME in the Central NJ area and to doing all we can to bring ME to every corner of the Trenton and Metuchen Diocese.

You are in our prayers each day and we ask you to pray for us as we make decisions to strengthen and grow our area.

Love and Prayers,  
John and Shawna

### Save These Dates: June 27th—29th

After each Super Bowl. Some asks the MVP, "John Doe, you just won the Super Bowl! Where are you going?" They typically answer, "Disney." I think it might be staged. Let's try it my way.

"John and Jane Doe, you've just survived another school year! Where are you going?" My answer is to Ontario, California for the 40th Anniversary of Marriage Encounter. Clear your calendar. Reward yourself and your marriage, and be with your friends. Go to <http://stores.homestead.com/MEConvention/StoreFront.bok> and make your reservation today. Hint: You can visit that D place from here.

### Christmas Wishes from Africa

Dear John and Floss,

My warmest greetings from Johannesburg, South Africa. After spending over five years in Congo, I have been assigned, at least for a time, to help out in South Africa where the Consolata missionaries are a small group of 12 priests serving in several Parishes in various dioceses and planning the opening of a theological seminary by January 2009. I have arrived here at the beginning of December. In the transition period between Congo and South Africa, I spent some time in Italy visiting my family, attending some ME meetings and presenting a Retrouvaille weekend. I was joyfully impressed by the progress of Retrouvaille in Italy since its beginning in 2002. I also had the opportunity to spend some time in Rome and meet all the Kenyan Bishops (a few of them were my students when I was teaching in Nairobi) who were there for the "ad limina" visit to Pope Benedict. It is too early to give you a picture of South Africa, and I plan to do it at a later time after a little more experience. I have been warmly welcome by my Consolata confreres and also by some ME couples I had met during the pan African meetings. During this season of Advent I am helping out in our Parish of Dave ton, in the large suburb of Benoni near Johannesburg. This parish is composed of 3 parish communities and we are two priests. These days I have been visiting the elderly and the sick in their homes. They were very happy to receive the visit of a priest and to receive the Holy Communion. For me it is a wonderful experience of meeting people in their homes and praying with

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## Area Contacts

Area Coordinators/ Pillar Workshopping/ W/E Scheduling/ Presenting Couple	John ♥ Shawna Singler
Supply Couple/ Middlesex North Deanery/ Presenting Team	Russ ♥ Janet Baker
Middlesex South Deanery/ Jewelry	Jim ♥ Helen Rivera
W/E Pillar Monmouth	John ♥ Floss Booth
Community Pillar	Dan ♥ Pam Perez
Registration Mercer	Jack ♥ Annarose Parra
Dialogue Prayer Chain	Tom ♥ Debbie McCann
Financial Couple Presenting Team	Ron ♥ Jackie Cialino
Area Webmaster Somerset/Hunterdon South Deanery	Roger ♥ Diana Sieberg
Pulpit Talk Coordinators Presenting Team	Lou ♥ Barb Carcich
Newsletter Presenting Team Warren/Hunterdon Deanery	Frank ♥ Fran Hoh
Ocean Deanery	Dan ♥ Donna Weeks
Ocean Deanery	Owen ♥ JoAnne Mohaghan
Somerset North Deanery	Fred ♥ Jean Marie Dour
Bulletin Announcements Presenting Priest	Manuel ♥ Margarita Trujillo Fr. Andy Szaroletta
Presenting Team	Jonathan ♥ Maria Wood

***(insert name here)!***

Help us to name this bulletin. Submit your ideas to us and your's may be the winner. Send your idea to [franapn@patmedia.com](mailto:franapn@patmedia.com). Winners will be selected by the team and will win a wonderful prize. No purchase necessary. Please submit by February 28th.

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them.

Our Consolata theologate of Kinshasa is doing well with 18 seminarians and 2 priests. Before leaving Congo I asked a confrere, Fr. Nestor, to replace me as team priest for Marriage Encounter and I promise the ME community that I would still continue, with the help of my friends, to support them financially, as the Congo ME community grows to be self-supporting.

I wish each one of you Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year, thanking you for your friendship and support and assuring you of my love and prayers. God bless you  
Fr. Mario

My new postal address is: (here in SA the postal service works)  
Catholic Church Dave ton  
P. O. Box 25525 – Lakeside Mall  
1527 BENONI NORTH (RSA) ;

## Community Activity

Stations of the Cross for Couples  
March 8, 2008

At

St Francis Cathedral  
Contact your deanery rep for  
details

## Remaining 2008 Weekend Dates

April 25-27  
Hosted by  
Somerset-Hunterdon South

July 18-21  
Hosted by  
Middlesex North

November 7-9  
Hosted by  
Middlesex South

# Convention Memories : Life Changing and Lifelong

By Roger and Diana Sieberg

On the 25th anniversary Housing committee (convention theme: "Companions on a Journey") we continued our *international* journey by opening our small home to a 21 year old woman, Daughter of an encounter couple in *Chile*. She stayed in our home for 3 months to practice her English. We have also invited a couple from *Spoken, WA* and a couple from *Oakland, CA*, that we had met at the *Minnesota* National Convention. (A Saturday convention small group sharing can be enough that you become close friends.) Each of them had brought another couple. Father Paul, who was in charge of the *East Coast* Spanish section of ME, stayed that Thursday night. Then father Javier From *Mexico* arrived with no place to stay. Lucky we had enough beds. It was like playing musical beds. Our *international* journey does not end there. The journey continues when the executive ME couple from *Bombay India*

grabbed us and a *New York* couple for Saturday sharing where they told us that they share for as little as \$8.00 a couple for a weekend in *India*.

This got Roger thinking a few years later. "Our weekend is \$320.00. That amount could put on a whole weekend somewhere." We took this idea to the world leaders Bill and Maryanne Boylan. (Lucky for us they were living close in *Philadelphia, PA*.) They liked it and since they were scheduled to go to the *Pan African* Convention they requested \$10 a couple. We got our area to come up with money and a stack of prayer letters. One of the highlights of the world team going to the *Pan African* convention was getting to personally carry this gift over *Africa, Madagascar*, then 2,000 miles out to an island in the *Indian Ocean*, where they then presented it to the *Madagascar* leaders, the gift of a fully paid group weekend. They

returned with a thank you note for us, first written in *Madagascanese* then translated to *French* before being translated to *English*. Afterwards the thank you note was written on a hand painted card with a picture of a native couple dancing.

At the National Convention in *Baltimore* we heard from the leaders that they needed money to help get the Marriage Encounter in the *Amazon in Brazil*. By luck at Sunday breakfast we got to sit down with the world leaders from *New Zealand* and a priest from *Australia*. We shared our *African* story with them and suggested challenging an American group to help financially. Now we wonder if God had challenged us personally to help or was this a challenge for us New Jerseyans or couples from the National Convention. We look forward to seeing a lot of new faces and old faces at the national convention and enjoy the international flavor.

## Tips for being a Vigil Hour Prayer Couple

As a Marriage Encounter Couple you are called to a constant journey towards intimacy and unity in your spousal relationship. By being a Vigil Hour Prayer Couple for those making the weekend, you are helping them start on their journey and changing their world.

### To Be A Vigil Hour Prayer Couple

This is an important ministry for those couples and priests making the Marriage Encounter Weekend.

### Why do we need you to be a prayer couple?

As Jesus said "All things whatsoever you ask in prayer, believe in, you shall receive" (Mathew 21:22) Prayer can work miracles, especially when offered unselfishly for the benefit of others.

### As a Prayer Couple what could you do?

Start praying for the weekend when you agree to be a prayer couple for a vigil hour. A few suggestions for what you might do during the vigil hour are: read scripture, go to Mass, recite the rosary, dialogue, and celebrate your Sacrament.

### After the Weekend

Show the newly encountered couples and priests that there are others that are choosing to live a new radical life style. Help us welcome the couples off of the weekend by being at the weekend facility on Sunday no later than 3:30pm, if at all possible, to greet the couples and priests as they finish the weekend.

If you can be a prayer couple for the coming weekend, please contact your deanery rep.

## Tips for Inviting to a Weekend

1. Be active in your church and community. Don't keep the light hid under the basket.
2. Smile at people. Most don't bite and if you smile; they will smile back.
3. Don't be shy by telling someone that you were out because you were at a "Marriage Encounter thing."
4. This is the hardest one. Ask them to go on a Marriage Encounter Weekend.; give them a brochure with the dates. Don't answer too many questions, let the registration couple do it.
5. Every other time you see them ask them if they have signed up yet.

# A Collection of Dialogue Questions

A collection of dialogue questions from WWME communities, compiled by Pat and Debye Galaska - share the wealth!!!

## Dialogue Questions You Could Use Every Day

Beside the old stand-by of "What was my strongest feeling today?", try making one of these your NEW "old stand-by".

1. What is my awareness of us as a couple right now? HDIFAMA?
2. What is it like being married to me today? HDIFAMA?
3. What is the most difficult situation facing us as a couple right now? HDIFA this situation?
4. What stage of relationship do I see us in right now - romance, disillusionment, or joy? HDIF?
5. What did I most look forward to today? HDIFSTWY?
6. What is my biggest challenge right now? HDIFSTWY?
7. HDIFA our sexual relationship?
8. HDIFA our couple prayer?
9. What do I most need from you today (tomorrow, right now)? HDIFSTWY?
10. What do I think you most need from me today (tomorrow, right now)? HDIFSTWY?
11. What brought me the most fulfillment today? HDIFAMA?
12. What is my dream for tomorrow? HDIFSTWY?
13. What feeling have I not shared with you yet today? DTF.
14. How have I encouraged or affirmed you today? How did that feel?
15. When did I feel closest to you today? HDIFAMA?
16. How did I know you love me today? HDIFSTWY?
17. Please forgive me for \_\_\_\_\_. HDIF?
18. What was the center of my life today? HDIFAMA?
19. What is the most vulnerable thing I could share with you today? HDIFSTWY?
20. HDIF reflecting on the Scriptures used at today's Mass?
21. What do I most need to take responsibility for today? HDIFSTWY?
22. What attitude am I struggling most with today? HDIFSTWY?
23. How was your love life-giving to me today? HDIFAT?
24. In the last 24 hours, when was I most aware of God's presence? How did I feel before, during and after that moment?
25. In what areas do I feel vulnerable to you? HDMAMMF?
26. Where do I feel the need to be reconciled with you? HDMAMMF?
27. Where do I feel the need to be reconciled with myself? HDMAMMF?
28. What about you am I grateful for today? HDMAMMF?

### KEY:

DTF : Describe This Feeling  
HDIFAMA: How Do I Feel About My Answer?  
HDMAMMF: How Does My Answer Make Me Feel?  
HDIF: How Do I Feel?  
HDIFA: How Do I Feel About...?  
HDIFSTWY: How Do I Feel Sharing This With You?



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