

# Where Do We Go From Here

**BY FRANK AND SUE STAROPOLI**  
Coordinators, Office of Family Life

Climbing divorce rates, continual stresses from social and economic forces of change and alternative life styles have raised questions in many circles about the viability of the family in the future of this society. Some have predicted the death of the family. But as Michael Novak, theological essayist, has written, "Choosing family life today is an act of courage and intelligence... marriage and family still express our highest moral ideals."

We salute you for your courage and intelligence, and most of all for your desire to make a commitment to each other, to God and to the Church in an age where such promises are seen as unnecessary, passe. We know the love you have for each other, so vibrant and alive now, is a cherished possession. We also know, as you must, that after the honeymoon that love will need to be constantly nourished and reaffirmed because it will be tested.

How will you keep it alive? How will you avoid the kind of hum-drum routine you see in so many marriages around you? How will you deal with the kinds of situations that are sure to test this precious love you share?

First, choose your friends wisely. Seek common friends, hopefully other married couples who share your convictions about commitment, family and faith. Such friends will be your support community in the years ahead. You will be enriched by them and in turn, will inspire them to live the beautifully idealistic life you envision now. This may mean difficult choices about your present friends, because you're entering a new life style, and old ties can create pressures.

Keep your priorities straight. Your husband or

wife and the faith you share must be number one. Build your lives around that relationship, and don't allow anything to take precedence — no jobs, or education, or friends, or even in-laws. Celebrate and renew that bond of love often. Work to keep it fresh and alive, because when you don't it doesn't stay fresh — it withers, slowly but surely.

Finally, know that the Church is always ready to support you, and to accept your support. There are programs in many parishes and throughout the Diocese to help you discover how to live the sacrament you will celebrate soon. We want to be a source of inspiration, hope, encouragement and healing for you when you need it. We also want you to share with us the freshness and excitement of your marriage. You can be inspirational for so many

couples who may have lost some of the glow you radiate.

So keep in touch, for our sake and yours. Become involved from the beginning in your parish. Learn about programs offered by the Office of Family Life (436-5450) and the Catholic Family Center.

The Family Enrichment program of Catholic Family Center was established to strengthen individuals and help families make the commitment to marriage and family life. Programs have been developed to assist individuals and families to cope and resolve the problems they face, and to nurture and foster communication skills.

The programs are led by family educators and marriage and family counselors from the Catholic Family Center and the Office of Family Life. They assist parish councils

or other parish leaders in the designs which are appropriate to the needs of their people.

Programs presented by the Catholic Family Center are in the area of human relations. More specifically they are Communication Workshops; Human Sexuality, Changing Roles; Pre-Marriage Relationships; Marriage Communication; Discovery Workshops for Young Married Couples; Separation and Divorce; Family Growth and Relationships; Parent-Child Relationships; Family Life Training for Counselors. Some programs require group participation; some develop skills for group leadership.

The sessions of these programs are held in facilities provided by the parish or sponsoring organization, or they are held at the Catholic Family

Center at 50 Chestnut Plaza.

There is a minimum of 12 persons necessary to conduct any of these programs. The fee is generally \$25 a session.

If you wish more information, contact either Thomas L. Hanson, or John Barnowski, 546-7220, or Frank and Sue Staropoli at the Office of Family Life, 436-5450.



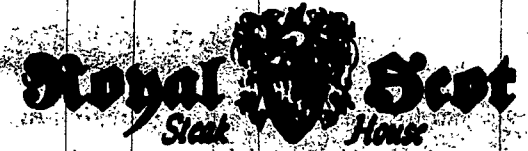
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## Some Trend Changes In Honeymoon Travel

Has the honeymoon trip become more exotic since the days of Niagara Falls? "Definitely," said Jeanne Benton, a travel agent here in Rochester. "The honeymooners are going anywhere and everywhere."

Another changing trend she noted was that more and more parents are giving the honeymoon trip for the wedding gift which enables the couple to expand on their travel plans.

According to Jeanne, Bermuda is always popular and honeymoon brochures list it as one of the idyllic honeymoon spots in the world. Airlines offer honeymoon packages to the island and through one in particular, a couple can spend seven days and six nights at one of 18 participating hotels, enjoying rum swizzle parties, tennis, nightclubbing, and cruises, from \$249 per couple.

In fact, the whole Caribbean area is popular with honeymooners and through special tour deals, couples have a choice of many paradises including Antigua, Martinique, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Maarten, St. Thomas. One Bahama Island package deal offers the couple a choice of three hotels for eight days and seven nights ranging from \$240 to \$341 per couple. The Bahamas not only have seclusion (700 islands, mostly uninhabited) but also civilization, particularly in Freeport where the newlyweds can bargain hunt for china, glassware, woolens and perfume. For sports enthusiasts there is scuba diving, parachute

sailing, water skiing and wind surfing.

There are also honeymoon packages which include Disney World and Hawaii beckons to some couples. Honeymooners are welcomed in Toronto with that city's hotels offering special packages which include one night accommodations, welcome refreshments, full breakfast, overnight parking, and in-door pool, for \$60 a couple.

Perhaps the ultimate in travel plans is the trip to Europe, not only for the honeymoon but for a year's extended living experience before returning stateside to set up housekeeping.

## A Team Look At Pre-Cana

**By LORI AND RICK LESZYK**  
Pre-Cana Team Couple

It was only a little over three years ago that we attended Pre-Cana as an engaged couple about to be married. We participated in a day long session. We shared, at that time, the same apprehension that many couples presently feel toward Pre-Cana.

The session changed our feelings toward Pre-Cana. It did not turn out to be what we anticipated — a day long sermon. Rather, it was a day of small group discussions, presentations, films and games. Five Pre-Cana team couples shared personal experiences with us on various aspects of married life. Also, we were given the opportunity for open and honest discussions. It was primarily due to those couples witnessing their marriages that we decided to become involved in Pre-Cana.

Our involvement on a Pre-Cana team has proven to be

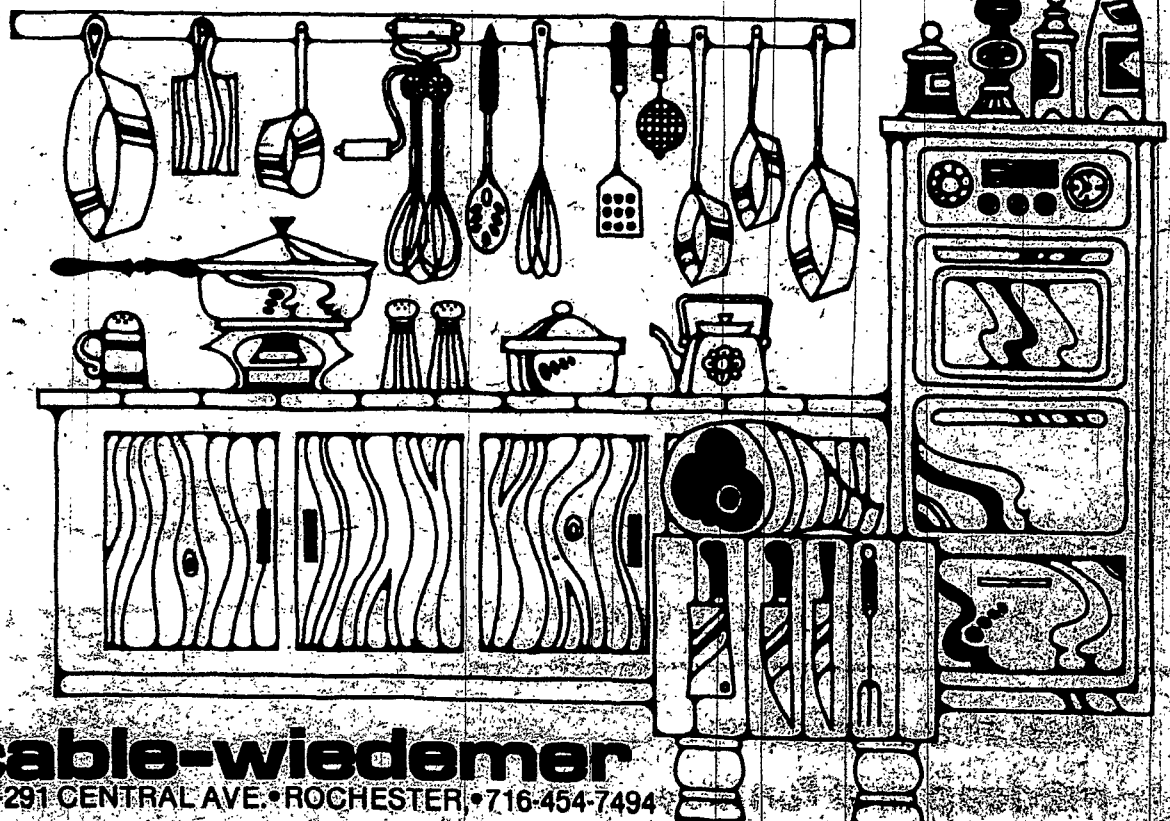
quite fulfilling and enriching. We have met many engaged couples close to our own age and have enjoyed sharing experiences and talking with them. The engaged couples, for the most part, have had realistic expectations of married life. Hopes and dreams are brought into realistic focus. One aim as a team couple, is to reinforce many traditional attitudes, principles and values. We discuss the need and place for such convictions in today's society.

Currently, in our society, the sacredness of married and family life is often times challenged. That is why Pre-Cana exists. It aims to prepare engaged couples to enter into the Sacrament of Matrimony — a relationship of love involving the husband, wife and Christ. Matrimony is a sacrament involving lifelong commitments and responsibilities. Yet, it is bringing this kind of reality to the engaged couples present at Pre-Cana that makes participating on a Pre-Cana team very gratifying and worthwhile.

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