

# More Facilities Needed For Natural Family Planning

By Richard C. Dujardin  
Religious News Service

Providence, R.I. — Natural family planning programs have not yet caught on in the United States because there are not yet enough facilities available for people to learn the methods, a natural family planning expert said at a workshop here recently.

Mary C. Martin, a nurse and a consultant to the World Health Organization in Geneva and to International Federation for Family Life Promotion in Washington, said a study by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta found that seven to ten percent of the U.S. population would use natural family planning now if they were exposed to it in hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities.

(Therese Petracca, director of Natural Family Planning of Rochester, agrees with Mrs. Martin's basic contention. She points out that there are more than 320 NFP programs across the United States and some are diocesan-sponsored or hospital-based and "some are just one couple teaching from a home." She is "aware that some hospitals in other dioceses are taking the initiative and recruiting people who teach it. The hospital or clinic approach would definitely give NFP more credibility — just having our office in a hospital (St. Mary's) helps us.")

Natural family planning is a relatively new form of birth control partly developed by Australian physician John Billings in which couples can learn to prevent or regulate births without artificial

devices. By recording their temperature changes on a daily basis, or by observing changing changes in cervical mucus, or a combination of both, women can pinpoint the fertile days of their cycles and thereby avoid pregnancy.

Mrs. Martin said one of the keys in keeping the effectiveness of NFP at a high level is better instruction and better programs.

(In Rochester, Mrs. Petracca said, "We use only volunteer teachers who use the method themselves, and who are trained and certified to teach it. Under those conditions, NFP works whether to avoid or postpone a pregnancy or to achieve pregnancy. The trouble is that we've had people who tried NFP on their own after reading books about it. I'm not saying that people are not smart enough but they do need guidance in the learning stages.")

Many members of the medical community have not promoted natural family planning, Mrs. Martin said, because its implications are "awesome."



The annual meeting last Friday of the Natural Family Planning Board of Directors included the selection of three new members of the board. From left, Mr. and Mrs. Richard O'Hara (he's president of the board) greet new member Patricia Paprocki, RN, as does Therese M. Petracca, center, NFP director, with Timothy and Rosalie Parsons, other new members.

(Mrs. Petracca also was critical of physicians — "They are often obstacles in that they think women are not capable of learning how their bodies work. Two years they were sending only people trying to achieve pregnancy but I lately they are starting to refer us to people trying to avoid or postpone pregnancy.")

Fr. Albert  
Shamon



Word for Sunday

## Searching For the Inner Self

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 5:17-37. (R1) Sir. 15:15-20. (R2) 1 Cor. 2:6-10.

The heart of religion is the heart. The gospel this Sunday is about the heart — not murder, but the inner anger, not adultery, but the lustful look. "Wicked designs come from the deep recesses of the heart." (Mk. 7:21)

Jesus always taught that we must dig deep and get down into our inner selves in order to clean up. We have heard of street angels and house devils — men and women, good, charming and gracious on the surface to strangers, but hellcats at home.

A century ago, a famous musician was invited to a party. He was to be the guest of honor at a great house. The hostess was widely known for her graciousness. But the poor musician, who cared little for being punctual, happened to arrive an hour early at the mansion. The hostess found him sitting in the dim-lit hall. Thinking him to be one of the servants hired for the day, she called to him to sweep the room.

"Step lively, wretch," she cried, "though I hardly think that fool musician will know whether or not the place is dirty."

And so he set to work. An hour later, she came again. This time the musician introduced himself and said, "The room is clean. I've had a pleasant time visiting with your servants. Now I must go... goodbye."

Gregory Wilson wrote a book popular a few years ago, "The Stained Glass Jungle." At one point in the book, a man stopped to make a telephone call to his mistress. He went into a phone booth and found a quarter in the return coin slot. This threatened him, because he was so honest

about money. So he called the operator and told her he had found a quarter and asked, "What do I do with it?"

She answered, "I don't know."

He persisted and she said, "Do whatever you want to with it."

"But," he said, "it's not my quarter."

Finally, the operator said, "Listen, Buddy! It's your quarter! Put it in your pocket or put it back in the coin slot — but hang up!" Remember, he was calling his mistress.

Absurd? Don't we all have blind spots? I have met with clergymen of other faiths who see no wrong in abortion, yet sponsor drives for the hungry children of Cambodia.

What ought we to do?

One of the purposes of the sacrament of reconciliation is to get at our inner selves. If we frequently examine our consciences in the light of our Lord's teachings, we will greatly lessen the danger of becoming a spiritual schizophrenic.

Another help to get to our inner selves is meditation (not an "in" word today). All right, then, how about 15 minutes of reflective reading each day? Everyone should have a prayer corner, some place at home where one can retire for a few minutes and be alone with the Lord and with one's own thoughts. The whole land is made desolate because no man thinks in his own heart.

In New Hampshire at Franconia Notch, one can see the Great Stone Face. On close view one can also see the distinct crevices running down the mountainside. They mark the places where the rushing waters have flowed down over the centuries. In the same way our thoughts leave their mark on us and determine our character. Tell me what your habitual thoughts are and I will tell you what you are!

## Housing Loan, Grant OK'd by United Way

The United Way of Greater Rochester has approved a \$50,000 loan from the Martin Luther King Fund to Cephas, Inc., for a housing rehabilitation project in the 19th Ward.

The United Way's Executive Committee also approved a \$25,000 grant from the King Fund for a tenant management program being planned by the Rochester Housing Authority.

United Way officials emphasized that both organizations must meet certain conditions before

receiving the King Fund money.

Known for its efforts to rebuild the lives of former Attica Correctional Facility inmates, Cephas plans to use the loan to rehabilitate five apartment units at 258-272 Arnett Blvd. Cephas purchased the property at a city auction.

The Housing Authority is expected to use its grant over three years to help initiate the tenant management program at a 230-unit townhouse complex scheduled in the Joseph Avenue area on a site currently occupied by Hanover Houses.

## Eldercraft Conferences To Begin

A series of Eldercraft Conferences, covering a 13-county area, will soon be under way. The conferences will take place "to foster a sense of dignity and achievement in the older person by promoting programs where one may obtain gainful skills, such as in craft or other manual activities," according to Wallace D. Wood, Eldercraft spokesman.

Eldercraft, a not-for-profit

corporation, "is designed to assist older people, those facing retirement and retirees in learning manual skills and finding outlets and markets for manual activities and crafted items," an Eldercraft release said.

Wood said applications for membership in the conference should be addressed to the Rochester Regional Eldercraft Conference, PO Box 1103, Rochester, N.Y. 14603.

## Law Course For Laity At Aquinas

An evening law course for laymen will be held on eight consecutive Mondays beginning March 16 at Aquinas Institute.

The course will cover practical legal questions which arise frequently: the legal system, real property, wills, trusts and probate, divorce and separation, bankruptcies and constitutional and criminal law.

According to Father Joseph J. Moffatt, CSB, principal at Aquinas, the program is offered as part of the Con-

tinuing Education Program of the school.

Robert H. Kannan, a Rochester attorney and Aquinas' alumnus, will moderate the course. Guest lecturers will include judges, lawyers and law enforcement officers.

The course is open free to senior citizens; a \$15 fee will be charged other participants.

Further information is obtained by calling the school (716) 254-2020; or Mrs. Robert Bell (716) 889-3634.

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