

Engaged Encounter Lists Schedule

The Rochester Engaged Encounter project is eight years old this year. It is a marriage preparation program whose goal is to help engaged couples build a strong relationship before marriage and to come to the realization of marriage as a vocation and a sacrament.

The motto, "A wedding is a day, a marriage is a lifetime," expresses the idea that the weekend focuses on the couple's relationship and commitment and not the wedding plans or arrangements. The weekend does not feature group discussion, but allows for private reflection and dialogue between each couple. Many couples are choosing the weekend as an alternative to Pre-Cana because of this private dialogue that is personally relevant, rather than spend discussion time in a group on a topic they may already have explored.

The atmosphere of a weekend away from the bustle of plans, where other couples are also working to grow closer, can bring about a deeper communication even in a couple who have known each other a long time. The premise of the Engaged Encounter weekend is that a working and successful marriage is the result of continuous hard work and the "decision to love" that is involved in being truly open with each

other. One couple wrote, "The most significant thing that happened to us this weekend was that people other than ourselves believe in the decision-to-love attitude."

Although Engaged Encounter is a Catholic weekend all couples are welcome. The weekend begins at 8 p.m. Friday and ends 4 p.m. on Sunday. Rooms and meals are

Brides Design Own Wedding Cakes

Wedding cakes and brides have come a long way since early Roman times when the groom broke a simple barley cake over his new wife's head to signify her submissive role in the marriage. Today, the cakes are much more elaborate and they are shared with wedding guests as a celebration of the couple's love.

A trend toward personalized wedding ceremonies has influenced modern-day wedding cakes. In addition to writing their own vows and invitations, many couples now design their own wedding cakes. Whether baked by the bride herself or by a friend or family member, a homemade cake offers a special touch to this most important day.

A wedding cake you bake and decorate yourself provides many opportunities for personal expression. You may choose a traditional white cake, or a family favorite —

chocolate, marble, even a carrot cake.

There is even more room for expression when it comes to decorating your cake. You can make roses, sweet peas, violets, daisies, lilies — any flower to match your bridal bouquet.

Special wedding book publications and cake decorating classes offer instructions on how to bake and decorate wedding cakes. Cookware companies offer a variety of pans in which to create a wedding cake that is just the right size for the number of guests. The following information can help determine the number and size of layers to bake:

Round pans — 2 inches deep (double layer)

- 6" serves 12
- 8" serves 18
- 10" serves 36
- 12" serves 45
- 14" serves 60
- 16" serves 90

provided for \$90. Those who cannot afford the full cost will be sponsored.

The 1983 weekends are: Feb. 4-6, 18-20; March 4-6, 25-27; April 8-10, 22-24; May 13-15, 20-22; June 3-5, 24-26; July 8-10; Aug. 5-7; Sept. 9-11; Oct. 14-16; Nov. 4-6. For reservations and further information contact Mike and Kathy Proulx, 115 Oriole St., Rochester, N.Y. 14613, (716) 647-3302.

Would You Do It Again?

By Dan Morris
NC News Service

My wife and I have had some of our most enjoyable conversations during long drives, especially if the four children are quiet, asleep or — better yet — with their grandparents.

It was during one such trip recently that I asked Eileen, "Now that you can look back over more than a decade of marriage and children, what would you have done differently?"

She paused and then looked up thoughtfully from the road map on her lap. "For one thing," she said, "I don't think I would have allowed the reception to be held at a funeral home and I would have said something to your mother about handing out black arm bands at the door."

"You know the mortuary hall was the only place in town big enough," I reminded her, "and those weren't arm bands, they were souvenir garters."

"Come on," I continued, "that's all you'd change about our marriage?"

"Come to think of it," she said, "I might have married someone who can read road maps and doesn't get lost in towns of 300 people for three hours trying to find the only Catholic Church. Do you realize you just missed the interconnect to the right freeway?"

"Why didn't you tell me?" I groaned.

"I assumed that's why you've had the turn signal on for the past 30 miles," she said. "Back to your question. I think I would have spent less energy on the wedding ceremony and more on listening to married people

talk about marriage."

"And?" I asked casually, turning off the turn signal.

"And I wonder if I would have gotten married at all," she said seriously.

I was taken aback. "What do you mean by that?"

"Ask yourself the same question," she said, consulting the map. "What has marriage done for you?"

"Well," I huffed, "rather obviously there are the children and all the joy and pain and excitement and frustration and fun they've brought us. Right?"

"Okay," she sighed, "but what about all the places we might have seen and the things we might have done if we hadn't had them so fast?"

"You wouldn't have had the kids so soon?" I asked, adjusting the rearview mirror.

"I didn't say that," she replied.

Somewhat I was beginning to wonder why I brought the whole thing up in the first place.

"To be honest, I think I would have had them just as soon," I told her rather defiantly.

"I wonder if we've set aside enough time for just the two of us," she reflected. She was looking out the window.

"Do you think we've had enough time set aside to enrich our own relationship?"

I braked, turned and swung us back into the other direction. "It's hard to say," I said. "What is enough time? What's enrichment? Doesn't duty to our responsibilities have to come into play when we're talking about time allocation? Can't daily life in

itself be enriching?"

She rolled up the map and tapped the dash with it. "You sound like a guilt-ridden workaholic," she said wryly.

"Do you think I've spent enough time with you and the kids over the years?" I asked.

"Which year?"

"Talking about issues," I said, trying to regain control of the conversation, "you still haven't said anything about what advice you would have followed about not getting married at all. That kinda hurts my feelings, ya know."

"I never said that," she corrected. "I was just wondering out loud. But remember people would say things like: 'Just you wait until the honeymoon is over.' Or, 'Watch out if he's a morning person.'"

"Not very encouraging advice," I agreed.

"Give me some advice then," she said. "Do you think I should have taken a part-time job sooner? Do you think I should have gone back and finished my degree? Should I have insisted that Heather Marie stick to her piano lessons? Do I play enough with the children?"

"It's hard to tell, isn't it?" I said. "I don't think I know what changes I would have made either."

"Maybe you could have asked your mother not to ask everyone to follow us in a motorcade with their lights on from the Church to the reception," she said dryly.

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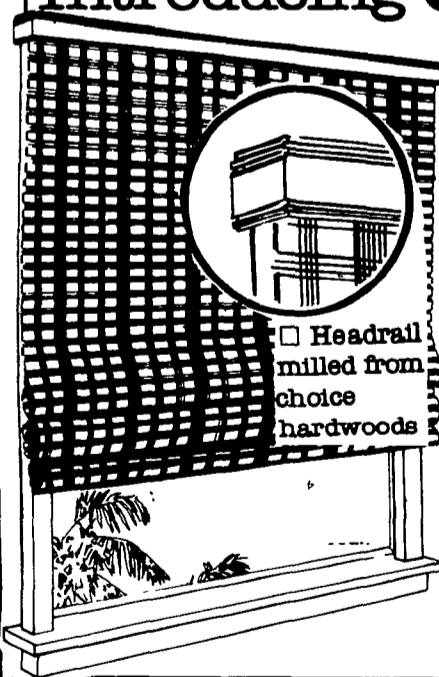
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