



Your CHURCH, Your VOICE

Couples' CONVERSATIONS



InfoJOURNAL
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In 2014, the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface launched a new mentorship-based marriage preparation program, *For Better and Forever*.

Tim and Louise Scatliff, of Ste-Hyacinthe Parish in La Salle, who have been married for 42 years, are a sponsor couple with the new marriage preparation program, *For Better and Forever*. They are currently accompanying two couples who are preparing for marriage, and will continue to meet with them over a brief period of time after their wedding, as well.

"We help engaged couples talk about different subjects that could become issues between them," explains Louise. "We let them read a chapter of the program, answer the questions individually and share their answers between them, and then we get together and chat. The aim is that they foster good communication skills and learn to understand each other better."

Indeed, *For Better and Forever* is a marriage preparation program that is based simply on discussions between two couples of the same parish. The engaged couple meets the sponsor couple five times before the wedding, and once or twice afterwards.

Tim Scatliff explains that they aim to talk 30% of the time and give the engaged couple the space to talk 70% of the time. "Our role is to listen to them and share our experience if it can be of any help to them. We don't judge! At any rate, what is said between us stays between us; we won't even share anything with the priest, unless the couple agrees to it."

For Better and Forever puts the two couples on the same level. No one has all the answers, and everyone benefits from the program, including the sponsor couple!

"We, as sponsors, also read the chapters and answer the questions. That allows us to discuss, and thus strengthens our bond," says Louise.

"It is a satisfying experience for us and an excellent way to enrich our own marriage," adds her husband.

Married in December 2014, Krystal and Ben Mitchell followed the program with Tim and Louise. "They had a lot of stories and ideas to share with us," admits Krystal. "We talked about so many things that no one else would suggest you should discuss when you are about to get married! It was really good for us."

For the time being, Tim and Louise Scatliff are the only sponsor couple in their parish, but they hope that another couple will soon be trained as mentors. So far, approximately thirty couples have been trained in the diocese. There is a continued need for more married couples who would be interested in taking part in the adventure! †



Service to Marriage,
**FAMILY
AND LIFE**



This Archdiocesan *Service to Marriage, Family and Life* offers resources and activities for parishes as well as for all faithful of the Diocese.

MARRIAGE: There are marriage preparation courses, activities for the enrichment of marriages and resources for couples going through difficult times.

FAMILIES: We offer information about natural family planning and solutions related to infertility. We support activities organized for families.

LIFE: We promote respect for the dignity of human life, from conception until natural death.

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- Contact Us: Sophie Freynet-Agossa, Coordinator
204-594-0274 / sfreyntagossa@archsaintboniface.ca

Did you know that the diocese has a Resource Center where you can borrow, free of charge, books, CDs and DVDs on Marriage, Family and Life issues? Come and discover this hidden gem at 622 Taché Avenue, in Winnipeg! †

A Parochial Marriage, FAMILY AND LIFE TEAM

Saint Timothy Parish, in Saint Vital, has launched the first ever Marriage, Family and Life Team in the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface.

Even though the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface had established a diocesan Marriage, Family and Life Service, no such group had existed at the parochial level, until the creation of this special team last October for the pilot project at Saint Timothy's Parish in Saint Vital.

"Our objective is to create special events to inspire participation at the parochial level", reveals Nadine Fetherston, president of the Marriage, Family and Life Team at Saint Timothy's. "We really want to make it easier for families to bring their children to church and make it more welcoming for all" adds Grace Grindean, Parish Coordinator and a member of the team. "Here, we do not just go to church, we are the Church!"

Up to now, the team has planned events around the themes coinciding with the calendar year. In January, during which there is the feast of Epiphany and right after the feast of the Holy Family, all parishioners were invited to bless their houses with blessed chalk, according to a Christian Eastern European tradition. In February, Saint Valentine's month, marriage was the central focus.

In May, the month which includes Mother's Day and the National Week for the Family and Respect for Life, "... we collected clothing and articles for babies, which will be donated to *Baby Layette Love*", announced Nadine. "This activity was a huge success: we collected 1400 articles! Finally, in June we plan an event for the enrichment of marriage, *Table for Two*, with a supper and romantic discussions on the menu!"

"We are receiving a good response to these planned



Grace Grindean and Nadine Fetherston.

events", the team president says happily. "We started with five organising team members and now, we're already up to ten!"

Ideas for follow-up activities are not lacking. "We want to reach everyone," concludes Grace Grindean. "Going beyond just planning activities, we hope to become a support group, a resource available for people who are having difficulties in their marriage, their family or their life".✝



Alesa and Donald Sutherland.

Coming soon! A new resource for couples EXPERIENCING CHALLENGES IN THEIR MARRIAGE

Donald & Alesa Sutherland went to Saskatchewan to participate in the Retrouvaille program with the goal of bringing it to Manitoba for the first time

Founded in Quebec almost 40 years ago, Retrouvaille is a program offered internationally, based on the Catholic concept of marriage as a sacred commitment. The program aims to help any couple going through difficulties, or even a separation, to reconnect and begin to communicate again, regardless of faith or beliefs, age, experience, or the nature of their problems.

"The idea is that couples get together for a weekend to attend presentations given by other couples, who, like the participants, have experienced difficulties, but have overcome them thanks to Retrouvaille," said Alesa Sutherland. "The couples who give their testimonials are not psychologists or counsellors, they are simply peers!" Donald

Sutherland explained. A priest is also present.

"It's a very gentle approach," Alesa promises. "It's not about finding who is guilty, but about learning how to communicate again! It should be noted that couples are not obligated to share their story with the others throughout the weekend. The program is there to give them some basic tools - it's up to each couple to do with them what they will."

"The simple fact of being around a table with other couples who share the same belief in the importance of marriage is a great help," she maintains. At the end of the weekend, couples are encouraged to participate in follow-up sessions in order to help them re-establish communication with each other as much as possible. In this way, they can rediscover their intimacy.

"There are many resources in Manitoba to prepare for or enrich marriage. But there are few options to help those facing

difficulties, especially for Catholics," concludes Sophie Freynet-Agossa, Coordinator of the Service of Marriage, Family and Life at the Archdiocese of St. Boniface. "That's why we'd like to start Retrouvaille here."

A first weekend session of the Retrouvaille program will be planned in 2016. Until then, information sessions about the program will be offered in different parts of the province. Couples who have rekindled their marriages, thanks to Retrouvaille, will share their experiences with those who would be interested to learn more about the program.✝

"Dear Father: I know the Gospel calls me to a conversion BUT IT SOUNDS SO SCARY!"

The biggest obstacle to authentic conversion is that we often approach our faith as a sort of philosophy of life: "Play nice! Be fair! Follow the golden rule! Then God will be happy and, in the end, you will be rewarded." But look at the lives of the saints. For each and every one of them, the pivotal moment in their faith-lives was a personal encounter with Jesus, the Risen One. It is the sudden, irrefutable and usually astonishing realization that there is another ... The Other ... who is really and truly there!

Now, as sudden and dramatic as this can seem, conversion does not really and truly happen quite so suddenly. While it looks like a sudden thunderclap, there is usually a long period of seeking ... a somewhat desperate and growing sense that, with all of my efforts, talents, skills, cleverness, I still find myself confronted with the stark truth that I cannot save myself. Each of us ultimately finds ourselves in a fundamental life situation where, despite our very best efforts, we are missing something essential that is required to save ourselves. Perhaps after years of suffering and denial, we come face-to-face with the desperate truth, "I have dug myself into a hole out of which I cannot climb. O God! Save me!" Kyrie Eleison!

Does that sound familiar? Of course it does! Throughout his ministry, Jesus encountered many people who fell into sudden and real relationships with him by crying out, "Son of David! Have pity! I want to see." Or "he told me everything I have ever done (and still he loves me)." This moment looks and sounds like the proverbial thunderclap of conversion. But it is always the dramatic conclusion of a lengthier process of coming to the admission that, "I can no longer do this on my own?". It is then that God can make himself known.

How do I know that you and I are actually made for this astonishing moment where we are suddenly in a profound relationship with the Risen Person of Jesus? Because you and I know what it is to fall in love (head-over-heals) with another person. Young or old, wise or foolish, wealthy or poor, our capacity for being in love is universal. You and I know how, suddenly, the love for another and of another transforms everything ... how you see the world and life ... how

you see yourself. Have you ever felt better about who you are than when you have been validated by the love of another? We are made for this. So now, imagine that this validation comes from one who reveals himself to you as The Other ... the Eternal One. How could you remain unchanged at the core of your very being? Could you be happier? Could you be freer?

So I say to you that if you have had, at one time in your life, a sudden and perhaps startling realization that there is the abiding presence of the Other ... perhaps just outside the periphery of the ordinary things of your life ... perhaps just beyond the horizon of your perceptions ... perhaps at a turning point in your life (a serious illness, the death of someone dear, a personal crisis) ... take the time to recall and reflect prayerfully on that moment. Consider that it was not merely a wishful thought that is better tucked away and kept secret. Consider instead that you were given a gift ... the flash of an offer of presence from the One who calls you by name. Consider even risking to share this experience with another person of faith. You might be very surprised how many of us have experienced the very same thing...

Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way. (Mark 10:51-52) ✝



Father Phil Daly

Evangelization: IT STARTS AT HOME!



Lillian Ćulumović

The “Summit of the New Evangelization”, developed in the United States, was held for the first time on Canadian soil, in Ottawa on April 24th and 25th, 2015, and broadcasted simultaneously in about twenty dioceses across North America! Approximately 170 members from all parishes in the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface gathered for this event.

“The main objective is the renewal of our parishes so we are ready to connect with those who are not in the building of the church”, stated Lillian Ćulumović, Coordinator of Evangelization and Adult Faith Formation in the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface. During World Youth Days in Rio in 2013, Pope Francis challenged world youth: “Make a mess in the dioceses! I want the Church to go out into the streets!” This summit offered the resources and the guidelines for doing just that!

The founder of the Summit, Michael Dopp, explained that “In the past, Christians took the Gospel to those who did not know Jesus. What’s new about evangelization is that, nowadays, a significant number of the baptized no longer practice their faith and 80% of the baptized no longer attend church regularly on weekends! The New Evangelization is also aimed at these people. How can this be accomplished? Supported by the apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis in *The Joy of the Gospel*, published in 2014, Dr. Scott Hahn, a specialist in Scripture, Theology and the Catholic Faith, and a speaker at the Summit, responded this way: “...with joy! All it takes is to be happy to be Catholic and to share the joy of the Gospel, the way we share the address of a good restaurant. But, it has to be done by dialogue, not by sermons.”

According to Dr. Hahn, the relationship of all Christians with God is

similar to that of a marriage, with its different stages and its ups and downs. It is a commitment. We get to know each other, we fall in love, and then we have to work at staying in love. From this, we see the need for evangelization to reconnect with God.

One of the most popular Canadian Catholic speakers, Ken Yasinski, explained that evangelization is at the very heart of a Catholic identity and leads to sanctity.

“Sanctity is for anyone who desires it, here and now”, he emphasized. “It’s simple, act with love towards your neighbour. Be flowing rivers for sharing His message, not reservoirs. The great saints shared Jesus rather than keeping Him for themselves. And since love is contagious, others will want what we have, sanctity will multiply!”

These words struck a chord with Jacqueline Beaudette, a parishioner at Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens and someone who has always been interested in making Jesus known to others: “It isn’t necessary to have a degree in theology to evangelize. We can bear witness with simple, sincere, every-day gestures, done with love in the service of others. This Summit has inspired me to evangelize even more”.

Réal Sabourin, a parishioner in the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface, came away from the Summit inspired and motivated. “The word ‘evangelization’ was intimidating, and seemingly associated with ‘sermonizing’. Now, I know it is simply living my Christianity, my beliefs, with those near me, even the baptized, my neighbours, my grandson!” Réal Sabourin is already focusing on how to put into practice the new evangelization and the re-evangelization of the baptized. ✝



New Evangelization Summit. Dr. Scott Hahn and Ken Yasinski.

A Dynamic Action Model, FOR AGES 3 TO 103!



Melvin De Paz and Father Jorge Mario Londoño.

The only Spanish parish in Manitoba, the “Nuestra Señora de la Asunción” Parish offers more than thirty opportunities of various types for the faithful of all ages.

The Spanish parish “Nuestra Señora de la Asunción”, in Winnipeg, encompasses no less than 33 different groups, including the Knights of Columbus, Catechetics, the “Nueva Jerusalem” Charismatic Prayer Group, the Liturgical Committee, “Equipos de Nuestra Señora” (Our Lady teams) for couples, F.A.C.E Youth Ministry, an *Arise* group, and the Neocatechumenal Way amongst others.

Pastoral Co-ordinator Melvin De Paz, who is one of those responsible for Youth Evangelization, explains: “This all started with the charismatic prayer group. We now have five catechetical groups for children three years and older, as well as for adults, a liturgical committee, six different choirs, and many other groups! In addition, we have the one of only 5 Spanish Knights of Columbus Councils in Canada. Here, everyone, from the age of three, to the elderly, has the opportunity to participate in parish life”, he emphasizes. “Our parish priest, Father Jorge Mario Londoño, is extremely open to new ideas; he is not afraid to take risks!”

But how do these groups function in harmony? “The key is communication”, states Melvin. The group leaders meet every two months to share their activities and challenges. That is how they are active and dynamic, having so much to offer!”

A relatively new parish, Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, with its 220 families, remains very active, while nonetheless welcoming many recent immigrants.

“In 1986, a group of people requested a Sunday Mass in Spanish in the Diocese of Winnipeg’s Saint Ignatius Parish, but soon realized something more was needed, and in 1992 the Charismatic Prayer Group “Nueva Jerusalem” was born”, explains Laura Garcia, coordinator of the Charismatic Group.

“The need and growth continued and we joined the Diocese of Saint Boniface in October, 2006, where a Spanish mission was being opened, and then in October, 2010, we became an actual parish”, she continued. “As a parish, we could then have a full-time Spanish-speaking pastor”, states Laura Garcia, who is originally from El Salvador.

The Charismatic Prayer Group meets every Friday at 7 pm in the church, and every year organizes a “New Life in the Spirit” Seminar. Over time more than 800 people have participated in the seminar and many of them now are leaders or active members in other groups of the church. This seminar is the basic Christian Initiation and a game changer for anyone seeking a “New Start” a “New Life” or simply to have a personal experience and relationship with God.

One of the reasons for this success is that it is an immigrant’s personal parish (not geographical). As the only Spanish-language parish in Winnipeg, it welcomes the faithful of 21 countries from all over the city, who find here, a sense of community and family. “Our parish is a family for many immigrants”, states Father Jorge Mario, who is originally from Colombia.

Nowadays, however, along with the important sense of community and the use of the Spanish language, first and foremost, the parish in answer to Archbishop LeGat calling to be witness in a secularized society, wishes to open itself up to the Manitoban milieu dominated by the English language.

“This year, a group of young people have asked to work in English and have an English Mass, so we bought English Bibles and have started reading them. It was like falling in love with Jesus all over again!” confided Melvin De Paz, who is originally from Guatemala

Since May 2015, the parish offers two bilingual English-Spanish Masses twice a month

“It was important to take this approach because, even though the immigrant parents speak primarily Spanish, their children who grew up in Canada communicate more easily in English, and the parish was losing touch with their young people,” confides Melvin De Paz.

“Because of the use of English, and that they will be able to invite their “English” only speaking friends we will be able to keep them,” he concludes. What’s more, many people who were unreachable because they didn’t understand Spanish, will now come to appreciate all our activities. It’s a change which inspires hope for our parish!” ✝



Nuestra Señora de la Asunción Parish Charismatic Prayer Group.



Dear
FRIENDS,

This fall, in October, the Synod of Bishops on Marriage and the Family, will be held in Rome. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops will be represented by four bishops, amongst them, Cardinal Collins of Toronto and Cardinal Lacroix of Québec. This Ordinary Synod, which follows the Extraordinary Synod held last fall, on the same subject, will focus once more on Marriage and the Christian Family, in all its diversity in today's world, exploring the family as a source of evangelisation and, even more so, as the principal agent of evangelisation. That's good!

Rome, however, is far away! It is up to us to participate in our archdiocese. It is here that we can develop very important pastoral initiatives in marriage preparation, offering young, as well as more mature engaged couples, a vision of marital life, which will nourish and guide them throughout their love-filled life together.

In my opinion, however, just as important, if not more so, are pastoral efforts aimed at the on-going enrichment of marital life and support for family life throughout its many ups and downs. These initiatives would be carried out through imaginative planning and implementation at many levels: diocesan, parochial, sharing groups and conversations between couples who are linked by friendship. In this way, the reality of marriage, never perfect but always sincere, of couples' efforts to remain faithful to love, will be the richest source of hope in the world. Growing together towards God's call to love, to love always and to share this experience with other couples, will remain marital life's most powerful witness. It is up to the entire Church to respond to this possibility.†

+ Albert LeGatt
Archbishop of Saint Boniface



Prayers FOR SUMMER

In a Nature Setting...

Blessed are You, Eternal God, King of the Universe, for the wonders surrounding us, marvels that reflect your glory, your wisdom and your power



In Front of a Campfire...

Blessed are You, Eternal God, King of the Universe, for the light and the heat of this fire. Make us live as children of Light who bear the fire of Your Love into the world.

Free RESOURCES

The Resource Library offers a wide variety of CDs, DVDs, religious books and pastoral resources. It is located at 622 Taché Ave. and is open Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 12 PM and 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM. www.archsaintboniface.ca/resources/en or 204-594-0271.

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Upcoming EVENTS...

*Mark these dates
on your calendar!*

Diocesan Celebration of Wedding Anniversaries:
Sunday, November 8, 3:00 PM, Saint Boniface Cathedral
Couples celebrating a major wedding anniversary - 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and so on, in 2015 - are invited to this Celebration at the Cathedral. Come to renew your vows and receive a special blessing from Bishop LeGatt. You will also receive a certificate as well as a picture with our Bishop!

Why did we renew our vows after 45 years? Nature has a cycle - everything is renewed every year! Cannot this be true of our human relationships? What better way to nurture our commitment than to put it in God's hands, along with our marriage and our family!

- Jean-Maurice and Rachelle Lemoine,
participants in 2014

Mass for Widows and Widowers
Sunday, September 13, 3:00 PM, Saint Boniface Cathedral.
Widows and widowers are invited to attend a special Mass for them, presided by Bishop LeGatt. He will give them a special blessing. All members of their families and friends are welcome.

After the death of my husband, I found very few resources in French to help me through this difficult time in my life. After this Mass for us, widows and widowers, I felt that the Church was indeed sensitive to my loss. It truly helped me.

- Rolande Melnic,
participant in 2014



NATHANIEL 2015-2018
A New Chapter
Lay Faith Formation

www.archsaintboniface.ca
Lillian Culumović, Coordinator English Sector
204-594-0276, lculumovic@archsaintboniface.ca
Are you looking for something new in your relationship with Jesus?
Seeking to become an intentional disciple of Jesus?
Willing to become the change the Church needs?



The Good News

Thanks to all of you who have submitted their 'Feedback' regarding the *InfoJournal*. Please continue to send your comments and suggestions so that, together, our efforts may help this publication evolve!.



**Western Conference of
Catholic Religious Educators:**
November 6 & 7, 2015

This biennial conference will be hosted by the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface. For more information, visit www.wccre.org or contact your Diocesan Service of Catechetics: Koreen at 204-594-0273.



**SCAN THIS CODE TO VIEW
THE EVENTS CALENDAR.

Your FEEDBACK

Do you have questions, comments or suggestions for us? Go ahead, send us an email: infojournal@archsaintboniface.ca or by mail : *InfoJournal, Your Church, Your Voice*, 22 Taché Avenue, Winnipeg MB R2H 2B4.

Let us PRAY!

Do you have a prayer intention dear to your heart? Entrust it into our hands. We'll send it to the Résidence Despins in St. Boniface where the community will pray for you every week. Your prayer intentions will remain anonymous. Send us your intentions by email:

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