



Engaged Encounter Notes

Diocese of St. Augustine



February 2009

Volume 16, Issue 1

A Love Letter From Our Leaders

Dear Lovers,

It's hard to believe that our 2 years as LC is almost over. It has been a roller coaster term and we have really enjoyed all of it. We could not have done it without the support and encouragement of each and every one of you. Two years ago you unanimously agreed that we could lead the community and although we had our doubts, you pledged your support and together we have had some amazing accomplishments and hurdles. We have continued to work on recruiting, we have come together and made the difficult decision to transition from Marywood to the Hampton, and we have a great groundwork set for the upcoming convention.

As we write our last love letter as LC's, we have been thinking about everything and we hope that everyone will spend the next week before Discernment

in prayerful preparation. We all know the power of prayer and need it to continue our ministry. Even if you are not open for leadership, there are an infinite number of ways you can be involved. There are joy jobs that people have done for years and are ready to turn over to someone new and there are many joy jobs that need someone to step up and follow through. The saying that "Many hands make light work" is very true. Without everyone pitching in and doing their part, we can't survive.

As we have been traveling around and meeting other CEE couples around the nation, we are reminded how blessed we are with our wonderful community. There are communities who never get together, there are ones who only have 2 or 3 couples who are active, and there are others that have fights with their local Diocese.

Don't get us wrong, there are plenty of communities that have 30 active couples too. The point is, we have wonderful, supporting couples—YOU—and together we minister to the engaged and to each other.

We look forward to seeing everyone on Sunday, March 1st at Discernment. This is your chance to show your support to the new LC's and for the community to plan future goals and discuss how we can strengthen our community. Please come and help us grow as a community together.

If you misplaced your information about discernment, please let us know and we will e-mail it to you. If you are planning on bringing your child (ren) to our house during discernment, please let us know so we can give the sitter a headcount and make additional arrangements if needed.

In closing, thanks again for an amazing two years. We wouldn't trade the experience and knowledge and support we have received for anything. Through the good times and bad, you have been there for us and we are truly grateful for all of your trust and support. We look forward to passing that on to our new leaders next weekend.

Love to all,
Jamie ♥ Dawn

Prayer Requests

- ♡ For the Pendleton's.
- ♡ For the Widener's.
- ♡ For the Preston's.
- ♡ For a special intention for Anne Storch.
- ♡ For all of our priests.
- ♡ For all vocations.
- ♡ For families in the foster and adoption processes.
- ♡ For the Engaged.
- ♡ For all our couples in the Community.
- ♡ For all the other Communities in our Unit and district.
- ♡ For upcoming discernments.

Contact Info

Thanks to those who have given me your updated info. If you notice anything that still needs to be corrected or need a new copy of the roster, please let me know.

Thanks,

Jamie Oehmann

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January Gathering Highlights

We were blessed to have been hosted by Cecil and Marilyn Gibson. After settling into their extremely comfortable home we shared prayers of thanksgiving before we began to enjoy our meal of pizza and all the fixings!

Over substantial objections, Jamie and Dawn insisted on having a short business meeting. The following topics were discussed in rapid fire order – which enabled us to grow in love through a great enrichment and enjoy more fellowship. Here goes:

- **Discernment** – Scheduled for Sunday March 1, 2009. We will begin by attending the 10:00 a.m. Mass at St Joseph's. Following Mass, we will go to the Cody Center to continue our prayerful discernment of new leadership. Lunch will be provided and we will continue the process until we have new leaders. This is a very special process and everyone is encouraged to attend, even if you are not open to leadership. Each of us is a vital piece of our community and everyone's input is equally important. If you have never been to discernment – commit right now to make this your first! Trust me, the joy of embracing new leadership the moment they are discerned into the position is worth experiencing.
- **January Weekend Feedback** – The January Weekend was the first to be held at the Hampton Inn. It went exceptionally well. There were 12 couples and we were able to totally cover our costs (before visions). Everything went without a hitch and the hotel was very accommodating. The spiritual atmosphere was encouraged by EE Logo sheets draped over the TV's and reminders to focus on the message of communication. The couples were very responsive to these gentle reminders. The catered food was excellent (even the hotel staff commented on the professional and spiritual presentation of the meals). The monetary gifts from the Vision talk were well above recent collections. Jamie passed out revised schedules and instructions for conducting the weekends at the hotel. Special thanks to St. Anastasia and St. Joseph's for donations of Mass vessels and linens.

- **2009 Weekends** – We are doing very well. Fr. Ed stepped up and signed up for February and Fr. Bernie agreed to do August which set the Priests for the year. Senior teams are set for all year. Junior Teams have one opportunity to fill – November 13-15. And Behind the Scenes couples have only one opportunity to fill – November 13-15.
- **Convention** – We set the registration fee at \$150 and agreed to have a special meeting solely for convention items on Sunday Feb. 8, 2009 at the Oehmann's.
- **National Board** – Great news – the National Board will be in our area on July 24-26, 2009 for a meeting. Naturally, we will be involved in many ways. More to come.
- **Marywood** – Even though our arrangement with the Hampton is working out well, we continue to hold negotiations with Marywood. We left Marywood because the cost increases were simply unbearable. Prior to our departure we were paying about \$350 per couple for the weekend and were charging \$280. Our present contract with the Hampton is substantially below that, and we have a couple of options – leave the fee alone and rebuild our treasury or reduce our fee and hopefully attract more couples. We pray that Marywood is able to meet the rates and accommodations provided by the Hampton so that at the end of our contract we can consider returning.
- Following the short business discussion we were blessed with an enrichment in which we called to mind the actions of Christ and His commitment to Loving Service! We were asked to reflect on 3 questions relating on our attitude regarding serving as Christ would, how we have served our spouse and what we can do to serve our spouse with a more Christ like attitude.

The meeting ended with much more conversation and love sharing. Thanks Marilyn and Cecil for opening your home to us!

Love Taps

If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would truly astound ourselves.—Thomas Edison

He who does not live in some degree for others, hardly lives for himself.—Michel deMontaigne

Just don't give up trying to do what you really want to do. When there is love and inspiration, I don't think you can go far wrong.—Ella Fitzgerald

Convention Update

Update on the negotiations - Bill and Jamie had them softened up - it simply took a "good cop" to listen to their offers.

Daily Room Rates - changed from \$125 plus tax (\$142) to \$99 with no tax (we have to handle registration, provide hotel with room roster including name of attendee, arrival date, departure date, and room preference - king or two doubles and pay for all rooms with our convention bill.

We have also arranged for people to receive the same rate 3 days before and 3 days after the convention date. This will allow people to arrive as early as June 14th and stay until June 24th so they can enjoy NE Florida.

Steve Patton has agreed to run charge cards for us in the event attendees cannot provide us a check.) There is a \$10 fee for them to do this.

Parking - Changed from \$5.00 per day to complimentary for self parking. The couples will pay \$12 if valet is used.

Meals - remains unchanged.

Convention rooms - The convention rooms fees changed from a flat \$1250 for the convention to FREE- if we pay for 130 rooms. Otherwise the fee is \$2500. So push attendance!!!!!!

Child care rooms changed from 1 conference room and 1 suite for Nursing mothers to 2 conference rooms. The general convention will be in the "Ballroom" (We will divide the room using the partitions for our breakout sessions). We also have two meeting rooms - the Propeller and Rope rooms. A bridge suite is available for hospitality. The child care rooms do not have any furniture that needs moving - they are huge bare rooms that will be furnished by the hotel as we desire. As a point of reference each child care room is about as big as the POD at Marywood. The child care rooms are adjacent to each other, but not connected) and are within 50 feet of our meeting ballroom.

The suite that was originally designated as a small child care room and nursing mother's room is being provided to us at no charge to use as a hospitality suite.

Bishop Snyder called and said as of now he is available for the Friday night EE Convention Mass on the 19th. Bishop Galeone is not available for any of the Masses.

The website is up and we have already received inquiries about registration and people have said that their registrations are on the way.

If you haven't seen the website, visit: www.joehmann.clearwire.net/convention2009.

We have received a total of \$2500 in donations so far and district is sending \$1000 seed money too. More fund raising is being worked on as well.

Speakers and the schedule are set. They are both on the website.

If you are not already actively involved, please contact Chris & Bill Kelly to see where you can pitch in. We need everyone to be involved to make this happen.

Excerpts of Love

At first, we were extremely reluctant to the idea of this weekend. We thought there were better things to do with our weekend. Now, we've realized that this was the best this for us individually, as a couple and spiritually. We can't wait to go back home to tell all of our friends and family about the amazing moving weekend we had with Engaged Encounter. We will recommend it to everyone, Catholic or not.

Jacque ♥ Alex—February 2009

At the beginning of this weekend, we were hesitant to come and were not sure of what exactly to expect. There have been 2 main focal points we have come to recognize throughout this journey: #1 is that we are blessed in our relationship... #2 is we have realized God is in our lives, yet has not been our focal point and see now that without His guidance in this journey, our lives will not truly be fulfilled.

Valerie ♥ Jared—February 2009

I have to admit, going into this program as a non-Catholic made me very nervous at first. I was not looking forward to the event or losing my weekend for that matter. Now that I've experienced this wonderful event, I would not give up this experience for anything in the world. I was very moved by a lot of your lectures and am less afraid and more open to God's love. I feel His strength in that room every time I enter and know that He is here to make us all better people...I want to marry her now more than ever and grow with her not only physically and mentally but SPIRITUALLY. For that, I say thank you!

Dan ♥ Suzanne—January 2009

Unit Meeting

At the end of March or beginning of April, our Unit leaders will be meeting in Jacksonville. The date will be set shortly. We will have the privilege of hosting them. They will meeting beginning Saturday afternoon and then just us for dinner and an Enrichment. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet the other LC's from our Unit and our Unit Coordinators. This is the first time in a while we have been asked to host this meeting so we hope everyone will plan to attend. We will need volunteers to host a couple in your home. We'll have more info for you once the date is set...watch your e-mail inbox.

Weekend Schedule 2009

| Weekend | Priest | Senior | Junior | BTS | Registration | NFP | Prayer Letter Coordinator | Monthly Gathering |
|----------------|--|-------------|----------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|--|
| January 9-11 | Fr. Ed Murphy | Kelly | Oehmann | Hutchinson | Klusman | Schretzmann | Oehmann | 1/30/2009 (@ Gibson's) |
| February 6-8 | Fr. Ed Murphy | Charbonneau | Anderson | Granados | Stratton | Schretzmann | Oehmann | 3/1/2009 (Sun) Discernment |
| March 13-15 | Fr. Bernie Ahern | Joyce | Anderson | Wilkey | Hutchinson | Schretzmann | | 3/20/2009 - tentative |
| April 24-26 | Fr. Seamus O'Flynn | Pendleton | Herzog | Graves | Preston | Schretzmann | | 5/1/2009 |
| May 29-31 | Fr. Donal Sullivan | Joyce | Klusman | Granados | | Schretzmann | | 6/5/2009 |
| June 19-21 | District III Convention - "LOVE BRIDGES US TOGETHER" | | | | | | | |
| July | Summer Party - TBD | | | | | | | |
| August 7-9 | Fr. Bernie Ahern | Gibson | Klusman | Hutchinson | | Schretzmann | | 8/15/2009 - 5:30 Sat Mass & Gathering |
| October 16-18 | Fr. Tim Lozier | Pendleton | Oehmann | Graves | Hutchinson | Schretzmann | | 10/23/2009 |
| November 13-15 | Fr. Tom Walsh | Kelly | | | Klusman | Schretzmann | | 11/21/2009 - (Sat) |
| December | Christmas Party - TBD | | | | | | | |