

## CANFP NEWS

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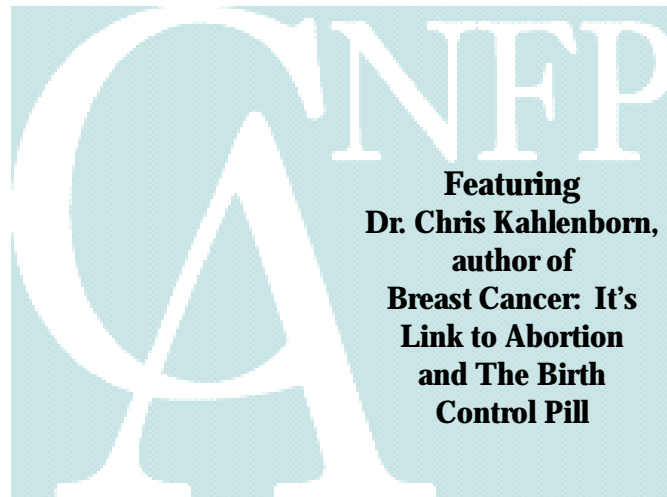
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## CANFP 8th Annual Conference

March 24, 2001  
San Francisco



Featuring  
Dr. Chris Kahlenborn,  
author of  
Breast Cancer: It's  
Link to Abortion  
and The Birth  
Control Pill

## CANFP NEWS

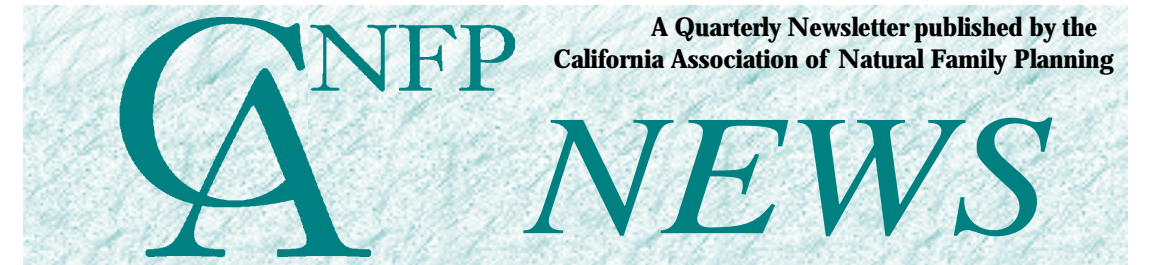
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FALL 2000

## Creating A Culture Of Life Within A Parish

by Fr. Marcos Gonzalez

**E**ducation and promotion of Natural Family Planning can take place in a wide variety of settings. The reality, however, is that the majority of people receive their religious formation at the parish level. In this article I would like to give an overview of how NFP can be promoted in a parish setting. In future editions of the CANFP NEWS I will elaborate on these ideas, providing specific suggestions for implementing these concepts.

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Before discussing practical ways in which we can make our parishioners aware of NFP and its moral use within marriage, however, it is important to look at some of the fundamental assumptions that we must have if we are to promote NFP.

First and foremost, it is vitally important that the pastoral team (priests and other ecclesial ministers) understand and are faithful to the Magisterium of the Church. Fidelity to Church teaching, especially as articulated in authoritative documents such as "Humanae Vitae" and "Familiaris Consortio" and The Catechism of the Catholic Church must form the foundation from which to build a successful promotion of NFP. If there is dissent in these areas then it will not be possible to truly

have the "mind of the Church" in promoting a culture of life, which includes openness to God's gift of children. On the contrary, theological dissent in this area of sexual morality will undermine the teaching of the Church and will lead to its rejection by the faithful.

In addition to the basic understanding of Church teaching and faithful adherence to it, there must be a willingness on the part of the pastoral team to integrate the life-giving philosophy of NFP throughout the parish ministries in an appropriate manner. Some specific examples of such opportunities to provide formation in NFP at the parish level, which I will expound upon in coming newsletters, include:

- Marriage Preparation
- Parish Based NFP Classes
  - Preaching
  - Counseling and Confessional Ministry
  - Existing Educational Programs

It is also important there be an overall atmosphere of openness to children in the parish. This can be made visible by having a Children's Liturgy of the Word, blessings for children on special occasions, addressing them appropriately during the homily at Children's Masses, encouraging families with children to bring up the gifts during Mass, having special Masses for the parish school and the Religious Education Program, etc.

Finally, NFP teachers and other professionals who wish to promote NFP should work with their parish priests. Most priests are hard working and genuinely glad when someone comes up and offers to help out in the parish. If you are an NFP teacher and wish to start classes in your parish, make an appointment with the Pastor or Associate and offer your services. Gently invite them to participate when they have time and thank them for their assistance. Encourage your priests to preach about mo-

*Promote NFP continued on pg 7*

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# CANFP NEWS

1217 Tyler St. • Salinas, CA 93906

## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Sheila St. John, President, CANFP

**O**ur CANFP office received an e-mail this month from a distraught young mother, who had just returned from her postpartum visit with her obstetrician. The experience she related is all too familiar to many of us.

**"I don't**

As is customary during the course of this appointment, her physician brought up the issue of family planning. She informed him she had used Natural Family Planning prior to her pregnancy, and would be using it again. He condescendingly informed her "the 'Rhythm Method' does not work, especially during breastfeeding because you are not having periods, and the fact that this is your third child in 5 years proves it doesn't work!"

**need**

**birth**

**control,**

Her attempts to refute his claims... "current NFP is NOT the rhythm method, scientific studies and my personal experience tell me it does work during breastfeeding, and this baby is the result of the *successful* application of NFP—to ACHIEVE a pregnancy"...seemed to fall on deaf ears.

**I use**

**Natural**

He proceeded to recommend every "conceivable" form of artificial contraception, urging her to allow him to implant, inject, prescribe, or "fit" her with a drug or device to prevent another pregnancy. Growing visibly and increasingly irritated at her unwillingness to "be reasonable" and adopt one of the methods he proposed, he finally threw up his arms in disgust and frustration, labeling her foolish, and assuring her he would see her again soon, no doubt pregnant as a result of her own ignorant reliance on NFP!

**Family**

**Planning!"**

Reduced to tears by this relentless assault, she could only respond "No, you won't see me again, because I will never return to this office, pregnant or not!"

The physician's lack of respect for this woman may have been extreme, but the experience of having a doctor dismiss one's reliance on NFP as foolhardy is all too common. Hardly a week goes by without my hearing the frustrated story of a woman whose choice of NFP is disparaged by her physician. Their methods may be more refined and offered with a smile ("You know what we call NFP users around here? Parents!), but the underlying message is usually that intelligent educated women would choose a more "sophisticated" method.

How ironic that a woman who is informed, educated, and empowered by her use of NFP is not respected for this knowledge! Hormones, implants, drugs and devices to prevent pregnancy may be the standard of care in medicine, but a confident user of NFP finds these methods extreme and burdensome. Why would she incur the expense of these methods (to her health, relationship, and pocketbook), when all she has to do is observe and cooperate with the design of her own body, in collaboration with her husband, to plan her family?

The physician in this story who so disparaged this young woman will receive from our office a packet of information on NFP, including published studies from his own professional journal on its effectiveness, along with a cover letter



Sheila St. John, President

from me. I am just not sure how to sign the letter....President of CANFP?...or MOM! Yes, the young woman he treated like this is my daughter, and those babies he is so desperately trying to prevent are my grandchildren! He did not sway her convictions...but how would this story end for someone less experienced, informed and confident in the facts?

The attitude of the medical profession towards NFP is a complicated one, influenced by textbooks, training, pharmaceutical companies, personal beliefs, and of course a contraceptive society. Physicians who have come to respect NFP for the healthy, effective method it is, however, often report being influenced by the testimony of satisfied, confident NFP couples they have cared for. Let us begin there! If each of our members provided a positive NFP witness to their physician, 200 doctors in California would have heard, from the "horses mouth", that NFP is, *at the very least*, an option worthy of their respect! And the seed thus planted may just bloom in their respectful regard of the next patient who responds to the inevitable question with "I don't need birth control, I use Natural Family Planning!"

*Physician Packets are now available from the CANFP Office.*

## REGIONAL NEWS

### Stockton

**"many positive comments"**

Carlin Gould, CANFP member and Regional Representative to the Stockton Region, displayed the CANFP exhibit at a Parish Resource Fair in October. She reported she received many positive comments on the exhibit! She felt the professional display assisted her in attracting attention to the local NFP program, and encouraged other CANFP members to be on the lookout for opportunities to bring the exhibit to their communities.

### Sacramento

The recently formed Advisory Committee of the Diocese of Sacramento is putting the final touches on a diocesan wide plan to implement NFP, which will soon be presented to the Bishop for his approval. Representing the spectrum of NFP teachers, users, and supporters on the Advisory Board are: Nancy Matteolli, Christine Cipperly, Gloria Soto, Dr. John Gisla, Regina White, Scott and Misty Crow, and Winnie Neill.

### San Francisco

Local CANFP members have begun to meet regularly to plan an exciting annual conference for all of us in San Francisco next year, March 24, 2001. Any members interested in participating in the preparations and serving in any capacity on the conference committee are invited to contact the CANFP office at 1-877-33-CANFP. Help is especially needed in the area of Hospitality, Childcare, Exhibits, Promotion and Planning.

## CONFERENCE UPDATE

**T**he regional planning committee is hard at work with local arrangements (such as child care, great food, and wonderful hospitality), to ensure a pleasant and rewarding visit for all. The conference will be a Saturday event, leaving Sunday open to enjoy the City, for those who want to make a weekend out of it.

**March 24th, 2001, San Francisco**

Save the date on your calendars, budget the expense, and plan on joining the rest of the California NFP community in San Francisco for a fulfilling weekend! In fact, you might approach someone in your community and suggest they join you at this big event! It is an opportunity that only comes once a year, and your clergy, physician, or friend who would benefit from attending may only be aware of it through a personal invitation by YOU!

Watch the website [www.canfp.org](http://www.canfp.org) and the next newsletter for details and registration information!

### Promoting NFP

*continued from page 1*

rality in marriage and tackle even the controversial topics. Many priests shy away from preaching about birth control because they do not want to offend. Yet the people have a right to the truth of the Faith and as priests it is our duty to proclaim that truth even when it is not popular. In spite of this remember that priests are human and criticism often stings. So encourage your priests and offer them positive feedback when they do give homilies that challenge.

*Future editions of CANFP NEWS will feature specific, practical suggestions by Father Gonzalez on integrating NFP into the areas he mentioned, in our newest feature: Clergy Corner!*

*An audiotape from the CANFP 2000 Conference by Father Gonzalez and Father Roberto Pirrone, titled "Creating a Culture of Life in the Parish: Begin with NFP", can be ordered in either English or Spanish for \$5 (+ tax/shipping) from our CANFP office.*

### Thank You!!!

**A big thank you to the following donors for their support of the mission of CANFP!**

**Founders (\$150-\$250)**

**G. Gloria Gillogley**

(San Francisco Region)

**Mary Ann Giacomuzzi**

(Los Angeles Region)

**Friend (\$250-\$500)**

**Mary Davenport, MD**

(Oakland Region)



And to **Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital** (Monterey Region), for the recent donation of \$1800, facilities and refreshments to provide three FACTS classes in the Monterey Region in 2001!

## CREANDO UNA CULTURA DE VIDA DENTRO DE UNA PARROQUIA:

### Empezando con PNF!

por Padre Marcos Gonzalez

**L**a educación y promulgación de la Planificación Natural Familiar se puede llevar a cabo en muchos lugares. Sin embargo, la realidad, es que la mayoría de personas reciben su formación religiosa al nivel parroquial. En este papel, me gustaría proveer una variedad de ideas en como se puede promulgar la PNF en el nivel local.

“Creando

Una

Cultura

De Vida

Dentro

De Una

Parroquia:

Empezando

con

PNF!”

Antes de discutir las maneras practicas en que podemos informar a nuestros feligreses de PNF y su uso moral dentro del matrimonio, es importante considerar algunas suposiciones que debemos tener, si vamos a promulgar PNF.

Ante todo, es de importancia vital que el equipo pastoral (sacerdotes y otros ministros eclesiales) entiendan y sean fieles al Magisterio de la Iglesia cuando ellos se tratan de este tema. Fidelidad a la enseñanza de la Iglesia, especialmente como articulado en los documentos autoritarios como “Humanae Vitae”, “Familiaris Consortio”, y El Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica tiene que formar la base para construir una promulgación exitosa de PNF. Si hay desacuerdo con estas enseñanzas, no será posible tener la verdadera “mente de Cristo” en promover una cultura de vida que incluye apertura al regalo de Dios – los niños. Al contrario, el desacuerdo teológico en la arrea de sexualidad, destruirá la enseñanza de la iglesia y conducirá a su rechazo por los fieles.

Además del entendimiento básico de la enseñanza de la Iglesia y

fidelidad al magisterio, es necesario que el equipo pastoral sea disponible a integrar la filosofía vivificante por todo los ministerios pastorales en una manera apropiada. Aquí hay algunas sugerencias y comentarios que posiblemente les dará ideas:

- Programas De Preparación Prematrimoniales
- Promoción De Clases De PNF
- Predicando
- La Consjería Y El Ministerio Confesional
- Oportunidades Educativas

Deben tener un ambiente total de apertura a los niños en la parroquia. Se puede ser más visible por medio de tener una Liturgia de la Palabra para Niños, bendiciones especiales para niños en ocasiones especislrd, fitihiéndoles apropiadamente durante la homilía en las Misas para Niños, fomentando a las familias con niños a traer las ofrendas durante la Misa, dando Misas especiales para la escuela parroquial y el Programa de Educación religiosa, etc.

Al fin, los maestros de PNF y otros profesionales que quieren promover PNF deben colaborar con los sacerdotes de su parroquia. La mayoría de los sacerdotes son muy trabajadores y son genuinamente alegres cuando algún viene y ofrece ayudar en la parroquia. Si usted es un maestro de PNF y desea empezar clases en su parroquia, haga una cita con el párroco o su asociado para ofrecer sus servicios. Suavemente invíteles a

participar cuando tengan tiempo y darles las gracias por su ayuda. Impulsen as sus sacerdotes a predicar sobre la moralidad en el matrimonio y abordar aun los tópicos controversiales. Muchos sacerdotes huyen de la predicación del control de nacimiento porque no quieren ofender. Sin embargo, la gente tiene el derecho a la verdad de la Fe, y como sacerdotes es nuestra obligación proclamar esta verdad aun cuando no es popular. A pesar de esto, recuérdese que los sacerdotes son humanos y la critica frecuentemente pica. Por eso fortalezca a sus sacerdotes y ofrézcales su opinón positiva cuando dan homilias que desafian.

*Las ediciones de CANFP NEWS que siguen incluirán sugerencias prácticas y específicas por Padre Gonzales sobre como integrar PNF en los programas mencionados arriba en una sección nueva: Rincón delos clérigos!*

### El Taller

*continued from page 5*

El fin de semana revela a las parejas que la familia es mandada por Dios para cuidar de ella, y para manifestarle y comunicarle amor. La familia, primero y en todo, sirve a la vida colaborando con Dios para transmitir vida. La familia es la primera célula vital de la sociedad y, siendo así, participa en la verdadera vida y misión de la Iglesia.

Our thanks to those who translated and edited our Spanish articles in this edition:

José Maes  
Father Marcos Gonzalez  
Delia Aldama

## ASK THE EXPERT

This question was submitted through our web site  
Response by: Ron & Andrea Gronsky

### Question:



Our CANFP expert...

I'm a relatively new user (8 months) of the Sympto-Thermal Method. I've been having continuous bleeding. I'm on cycle day 48 and I've had continuous bleeding since day 15. I contacted an ob/gyn about it and went into great detail w/ my temps, mucus, cervical position, etc. Basically she told me that I am most likely "ovulating erratically" and should "use another method of birth control as a backup" (not an

### Answer:

Although you seem to be keeping up with your charting, your special circumstances can be best addressed by a personal consultation with a CCL teaching couple. Please try to contact one in your locale soon. In the interim, here are some responses that may help.

Working with the limited data you gave us, your cervix sign, mucus pattern, and low temperatures are common for a mom whose fertility is returning. These signs are not "caused" by breastfeeding; rather, they are the normal course of restoration of your fertility following childbirth, of which breastfeeding is a natural part. The average time for the return to fertility during ecological breastfeeding is 14 months. Since you do not indicate if you've had prior menses or a

option). She also said that breastfeeding can cause some of the signs of impending ovulation (cervix opening and softening). She said it's not a cause for concern yet, but to wait 3 months and if my cycles are still mixed up, to go see a Dr.

I'm wondering how accurate her advice is...I'm really leery when someone tells me NFP "doesn't work" in a particular situation. I'd really appreciate your input, specifically... How effective is NFP in my situa-

thermal shift on previous charts, we do not know if you've previously ovulated. If you haven't, because your baby is 12 months old, you should be very careful to keep accurate charts. Either way,

Referrals for both teaching couples and physicians are available through CCL, or CANFP's toll free number at 1-877-33-CANFP. Please get in touch soon.

your mucus sign appears to be giving you a clear signal, and can be used to avoid conception. Five or more days of mucus in a row are generally ample warning of possible ovulation.

What is different about your signs

tion? Will I get enough "advance warning" from the mucus sign to be able to avoid pregnancy? Is it true that breastfeeding can cause the types of cervix changes listed below? Should I be concerned about the length of this bleeding? Is it just related to breastfeeding, or could it be something more serious? I'm 22, mother of a 12 month old (1st child/1st preg), 5'7", 195 lbs (trying to lose), no unusual gyn history.

Thanks for listening

is the bleeding. This is not associated with breastfeeding. We would encourage a check-up with an NFP-knowledgeable physician. Occasionally, irregular bleeding can be caused by nutritional factors. Questions that immediately come to our minds are the methods you might be using when trying to lose weight. Are you observing good nutrition? Are you using caffeine? Aspartame? Are you overexercising?

To help you any further, it will be important to review your prior charts, so you really should contact a CCL teacher in your area. Without seeing more of your cycle history, we can't be any more specific. However, you should know that it certainly is possible to effectively use NFP, even under conditions of "erratic ovulation."

Ron and Andrea Gronsky are a certified teaching couple for the Couple to Couple League, and members of CANFP. They have been teaching the Sympto-Thermal Method of Natural Family Planning in the San Francisco Bay Area for 16 years.

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## ***LIFE-GIVING LOVE WORKSHOP***

***T***he Life-Giving Love Workshop is a parish-based workshop that focuses on the true Catholic teaching of marriage. The workshop has been developed by the Oblates of St. Joseph to combat the many false teachings about marriage and relationship in our society, and to promote the authentic Christian family values that are reflected in the Holy Family at Nazareth. The workshop consists of eleven talks spread over two days and is open to all married or engaged couples.

***“Children  
are the  
greatest  
fruit of  
marriage”***

*For more info:  
call  
Mike & Donna  
VanHoogmoed  
(559) 661-1268  
or Ramón &  
Maribel  
Alvarado  
(559) 674-3062  
in Madera,  
or Javier &  
Juanita Rivera  
(661) 395-1057  
in Bakersfield.*

The presenting team is made up of a priest and two or more couples. The couples' presentations, written by the couples themselves, reflect each couple's experiences relevant to the topic of the talk, building toward the final presentation of the mission of the family in the world - quoting the Holy Father, "Family, be what you