



A Quarterly Newsletter published by the  
California Association of Natural Family Planning

# CANFP NEWS

Spring 2005

## AMEN

Sheila St. John



Our Holy Father has fulfilled his earthly mission.

Just what was that mission?

As the world mourned him, his praises as an athlete, scholar, poet, mystic, world traveler - indeed, man of the year and medal of freedom recipient - were repeated on every news station and proclaimed in every paper. People around the world, Catholic or not, recognize the special charisma of this man, and his enduring contributions.



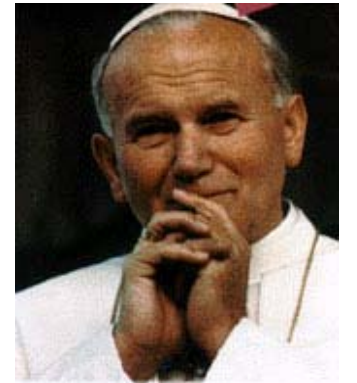
They call him the people's pope, and at the same time remark that Catholics worldwide could love him so, while rejecting his teaching. The media is perplexed by a man who so profoundly impacted the world, and yet could be so "out of touch", "naive", "old fashioned", on some issues. And of course the issues they are referring to are abortion, contraception, marriage - sex!

It is a remarkable man who could be so loved and adored, even by the very world that rejected his message. We saw him travel the globe preaching and modeling love and forgiveness. This mere man, who was the face of God so often to our world, was also experienced by many as the visible sign of the unconditional love our Heavenly Father has for us.

Unconditional means God's love for us is not dependent upon our worthiness to receive it. Humans are not capable of loving in such a way, and it is our yearning for such perfect love that propels us to seek God.

One legacy of John Paul II, who no doubt will be known as a GREAT Pope, was his remarkable ability to be our Holy

Father, personifying God's love for us, while calling us, as persons made in the image and likeness of God, to seek always to turn our faces to that love, and to strive always to become what we were created to be, people of God.



Why did our Holy Father speak and write so much about sex? Because our Holy Father, being our spiritual father, wanted to draw US into closer union with God. What do sex and holiness and unconditional love and image and likeness of God all have to do with each other? Our Holy Father tried to teach us that through sex we enter into a unique relationship with God to be co-creators with Him, cooperators in the creation of a new soul, also made in His image and likeness. The marital act is a glimpse of our union with God as we unite ourselves bodily with our spouse, in spirit with He who created us, to participate in the very act of creation. But like Adam and Eve, we are

*Amen cont on p. 4*

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## President's Perspective

Gregory Polito, MD, KM

### You are what you eat

**W**hen I was a kid growing up it was always a special treat to go to my paternal grandmother's home for a meal. This roly-poly Italian emigrant from Naples could make anything, but her native dishes were always particularly spectacular and, I assumed, were from special recipes handed down through generations. "Nana" was a superb chef who used the many hours of preparation time in the



the key  
to unlock  
the  
grandest  
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of the  
universe

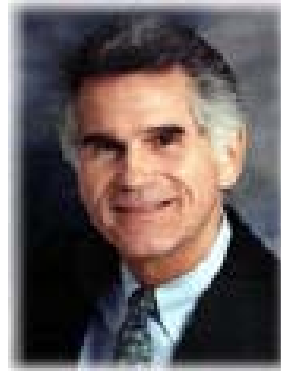
kitchen to really get to know what was going on in your young mind. She would slyly coax her innocent "victim" into thinking he/she was needed to, say, peel and slice the carrots, when it was really a ruse to talk. The dialogue was often replete with stories centered about family history. An inquiring young mind would learn the answer to such questions as why it took Dad five years to finish college instead of four.

It was over a one-on-one lunch on a beautiful summer day that I was truly stunned by this revelation: When Nana was first married and moved to southern California she "couldn't boil water"! After several disastrous meals she signed up for a cooking class by the famous

chef/author Victor Lindlahr who wrote the book *You Are What You Eat*. And it was using the principles of simply prepared meals of the freshest ingredients, especially vegetables and herbs, that she developed her healthy, delicious style.

So what about our sexual appetite? Does it deserve any more consideration than diet? We know some people will eat healthy stuff and others junk food, but that's their personal choice. Some singles do dinner, dancing, and sex or marrieds contracept. Any big deal?

The late Pope John Paul II explains in his *Theology of the Body* that our bodies make visible what is invisible, spiritual, and divine. God wants us to know Him through our bodies. And the characteristic unique to the anatomy and physiology of the human reproductive system that makes it more important than all the other systems is that it has a "nuptial meaning". Its structure and function reveal man and woman's potential to become a gift to one another, fully realized in the one flesh union of marital intercourse when the gifting of oneself to the other has the potential to generate a "third" (a child). God



uses the analogy of this marital embrace to give us insight into the divine communion of three persons we call The Trinity. He teaches us how to love as He loves through marital intercourse always open to new life. He teaches us how to transmute erotic love into agape love through proper nuptial intimacy. Its importance cannot be overstated, and it is pretty obvious why evil initiates its assault on the fabric of society by attacking sexual mores incessantly.

Like Mr. Lindlahr teaching healthy nutrition NFP teachers and users promote healthy chastity, a benefit that has far more reaching consequences for the individual and society than right eating. In fact one could say we provide the key to unlock the grandest mystery of the universe—how to both coexist in peace with all nations and anticipate and assure a warm and eternal embrace from our loving Father for all eternity! While at first blush this may seem an outrageous statement reflect on it a bit and I bet you will see the truth in it. God bless!

## Director's Desk cont.

Our CANFP Board is committed to containing the cost, to the extent we can do so without compromising quality. The solution, as our board has discussed over the years, is a combination of the three factors I presented: commitment to continuing education in our profession; initiative on the part of those wanting to attend in seeking sponsors; securing funding to underwrite costs.

Plans are under way now for the next conference. Those interested in seeing this event continue, are invited to join the planning committee. We are also seeking individuals with finance or fundraising experience to volunteer for a funding and development committee. Contact me if any of this resonates with you, and you wish to be part of the future of CANFP, and ultimately of NFP in California!

## Director's Desk

Sheila St. John, Executive Director CANFP



**W**hat a great conference! If a conference is to "confer" with experts and colleagues, we certainly did that, and more! What makes a great speaker? Sometimes it is their style of presenting, other times their credentials, and some of the best speak from personal experience, straight from their heart. We were blessed to hear from speakers who had it all, sharing wisdom gained from education as well as the front line trenches of personal and professional experience, with a passion and zeal for their topic. And it is always invigorating to spend time with others who share our interests, and meeting wide eyed newcomers to whom this is all brand new and exciting!

Increasing  
our  
support  
base  
is  
vital

While more people than ever (200 in all!) attended, I wish all who read this could have been there! Some who did attend commented that cost may have prevented others from coming, and I would like to explore that.

First of all, we offered a full scholarship to seminarians to attend the clergy day, and yet we only had one attend. In at least three regions there were unused scholarships for Saturday's registration fee, despite personal invitations.

The fee for a professional to attend the healthcare conference, before discount, was \$225. Ask physicians how this compares with other professional conferences, and, well, suffice it to say the physicians were not complaining.

For CANFP members, the annual conference on Saturday, with the early discount, was \$115. This was comparable to past years, included a generous packet of resources, as well as breakfast, sit down lunch, and hosted reception, at a superb facility. Frankly, it was a steal for an event of this caliber.

CANFP is an organization for those professionally or personally interested in NFP. Our membership includes physicians and nurses, clergy and religious, diocesan and church ministries, NFP teachers, and couples and families. With our diverse constituency, the challenge becomes how to offer a top-rate conference, valuable continuing education for professionals, an attractive and inviting introduction to the topic for area resources, and still keep it accessible to all our members.

NFP is a unique profession. Few are compensated for their services at a competitive salary, and many serve as volunteers. Nevertheless, it is important for NFP Professionals, paid or volunteer, to view continuing education as an investment and professional responsibility.

With that perspective as the foundation, I envision a three pronged approach which puts the annual conference within financial reach for all our members: 1) budget for the expense, 2) seek sponsors to finance individuals, and 3) secure donors to underwrite conference expenses.

1) **Budget!** Consider setting up a savings account for continuing education, and just as you would for other priorities, budget for the expense year round. Set aside \$10 a week, you will accumulate the funds needed to attend the next conference.

2) **Sponsors!** Submit a proposal for funds to attend conference. Potential sponsors might include your church, diocese, or ministries such as respect/family life. In return offer your services as a speaker to their group—a win win situation! Few are tapping into this resource, and yet in my observation a parish rarely refuses such a request. I was reminded of this recently, on a shuttle bus to the LA Congress. Not a single one of my shuttlemates paid their own expenses to attend the Congress. All had at least their registration, and many their entire trip, underwritten by a sponsor.

3) **Conference Donors!** We need help from our membership to identify sources of funding to underwrite the expenses of the conference, so that registration fees are not the only source of funding for this event. We are most grateful to the donors who supported the 2005 Conference. It was because of the support of donors and the hard work of our board that we have been able to offer 11 superb conferences. Increasing our support base is vital for the continued growth and success of this event, and of CANFP.

## Amen continued

Perhaps

tempted in this very act to that brings us so close to God, to want to BE God, rather than surrender TO God.

We either experience more fully God's unconditional love by surrendering to His design, or we alter his design to suit our purposes, distancing ourselves from His love. We either surrender ourselves completely to His love, cradled in His loving embrace, or we put Him at a more comfortable arm's length. We either seek to know and fulfill His design for us, or we reject Him by rejecting our own nature.

with

Our Holy Father knew that to reject God's design for our sexuality is to put our very souls in danger, to distance ourselves from being able to wholly experience God's love for us. And because our Holy Father loved us more than he needed to be loved BY us, he spoke the truth. This, paradoxically, is why he was so loved. Because here too, our beloved Pope personified God's love for us—a love that is not only unconditional in that it never falters, but that also desires only what is best for us. An ironic truth understood by any parent is that though children may be resistant (as in throw fits and rebel) to the guidance provided, their deepest yearnings are for the firm, steady and unfaltering hand of a father to guide them. Children will test it, challenge it, resist it, but mostly—depend on it.

maturing

eyes we

So it is with our Holy Father. We, his children in faith, resist the truths he preaches, choose paths other than those he directs us to. Perhaps, much as in our relationship with our own fathers, we will only come to fully appreciate the guidance he provided us now that he is no longer with us. He has left us a great roadmap in his prolific writings, so that as we mature in our appreciation of the truths he expounded, we can continue to grow in our relationship with God through the wise direction he provided during his time with us.

can study

the legacy

As teens, we probably all experienced our own fathers, at least at one time or another, as naive, out of touch, old fashioned, and totally unable to understand the challenges of our lives—the same words being used to evaluate the Holy Father's position on life issues. Perhaps with maturing eyes we can study the legacy he has left us, and will learn he understood the deepest yearnings of our hearts better than we ourselves. Perhaps among his great legacies will be the very issues the world least understood, and rejected without consideration during his time on earth.

he left us



*“Being an ‘Adult’ means having a faith which does not follow the waves of today’s fashions or the latest novelties. A faith which is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ is adult and mature. It is this friendship which opens us up to all that is good and gives us the knowledge to judge true from false, and deceit from truth. We must become mature in this adult faith; we must guide the flock of Christ to this faith. And it is this faith - only faith - which creates unity and takes form in love.”*

- Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger  
April 18, 2005

As this issue went to print, we rejoice in God's faithfulness as we welcome Pope Benedict XVI. Like his Patron Saint Joseph, husband of Mary, Cardinal Ratzinger loves Jesus Christ and the Bride of Christ—His Church. As St. Joseph cared for and protected Mary and Jesus, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger has faithfully cared for and protected the deposit of the faith for decades as Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Pope Benedict's love for the truth and the church will be a beacon for all seekers of truth. God is Good!

## Wisdom from Pope John Paul II

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION  
FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO  
The Role of the Christian Family  
in the Modern World  
November 22, 1981

It must be kept in mind that conjugal intimacy involves the wills of two persons, who are however called to harmonize their mentality and behavior: this requires much patience, understanding and time.

Consequently, sexuality, by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, is by no means something purely biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such.

The Church knows the path by which the family can reach the heart of the deepest truth about itself. The Church has learned this path at the school of Christ and the school of history interpreted in the light of the Spirit. She does not impose it but she feels an urgent need to propose it to everyone without fear and indeed with great confidence and hope, although she knows that the Good News includes the subject of the Cross. But it is through the Cross that the family can attain the fullness of its being and the perfection of its love.

MULIERIS DIGNITATEM  
On the Dignity and Vocation of Women  
August 15, 1988

In the spirit of Christ, in fact, women can discover the entire meaning of their femininity and thus be disposed to making a “sincere gift of self” to others, thereby finding themselves.

Therefore the Church gives thanks for each and every woman: for mothers, for sisters, for wives; for women consecrated to God in virginity; for women dedicated to the many human beings who await the gratuitous love of another person; for women who watch over the human persons in the family, which is the fundamental sign of the human community; for women who work professionally, and who at times are burdened by a great social responsibility; for “perfect” women and for “weak” women - for all women as they have come forth from the heart of God in all the beauty and richness of their femininity; as they have been embraced by his eternal love; as, together with men, they are pilgrims on this earth, which is the temporal “homeland” of all people and is transformed sometimes into a “valley of tears”; as they assume, together with men, a common responsibility for the destiny of humanity according to daily necessities and according to that definitive destiny which the human family has in God himself, in the bosom of the ineffable Trinity

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/index.htm)

VERITATIS SPLENDOR  
Splendor of Truth  
August 6, 1993

Human freedom and God's law are not in opposition; on the contrary, they appeal one to the other.

It must certainly be admitted that man always exists in a particular culture, but it must also be admitted that man is not exhaustively defined by that same culture.

Those who live “by the flesh” experience God's law as a burden, and indeed as a denial or at least a restriction of their own freedom. On the other hand, those who are impelled by love and “walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:16), and who desire to serve others, find in God's Law the fundamental and necessary way in which to practise love as something freely chosen and freely lived out. Indeed, they feel an interior urge—a genuine “necessity” and no longer a form of coercion—not to stop at the minimum demands of the Law, but to live them in their “fullness”. This is a still uncertain and fragile journey as long as we are on earth, but it is one made possible by grace, which enables us to possess the full freedom of the children of God and thus to live our moral life in a way worthy of our sublime vocation as “sons in the Son”.

EVANGELIUM VITAE  
Value and Inviolability  
of Human Life  
March 25, 1995

The Gospel of life is not for believers alone: it is for everyone. With regard to things, but even more with regard to life, man is not the absolute master and final judge, but rather—and this is where his incomparable greatness lies—he is the “minister of God's plan

But the Church firmly believes that human life, even if weak and suffering, is always a splendid gift of God's goodness. Against the pessimism and selfishness which cast a shadow over the world, the Church stands for life: in each human life she sees the splendor of that “Yes,” that “Amen,” who is Christ Himself.<sup>(84)</sup> To the “No” which assails and afflicts the world, she replies with this living “Yes,” thus defending the human person and the world from all who plot against and harm life.

By living “as if God did not exist”, man not only loses sight of the mystery of God, but also of the mystery of the world and the mystery of his own being.

# Medical Matters - Premenstrual Syndrome

Lynn Kerr, MD

hormone  
support  
at the  
time  
when  
the body  
needs it

**C**elebrate the Gift is exactly what we did in our recent Healthcare Professionals Conference. We had the joy of unveiling the tremendous potential of NaProTechnology for revolutionizing the current approach to women's health. We explored how the gift can optimize the health of the individual from the very early days surrounding conception, to the final days, by promoting long term health through disease prevention.

Although we touched on several areas of women's health, I wanted to present the findings in one area that can significantly impact a woman's life, but often is not adequately addressed in traditional, routine doctor's visits – Premenstrual Syndrome. Fifty to 75% of women will have some premenstrual symptoms, but 20 - 30% will have symptoms significant enough to disrupt their lifestyle, and 2 - 10% will have severe, debilitating symptoms.

One of the most commonly prescribed medications for PMS is fluoxetine (Prozac, or Sarafem). Effectiveness studies

have shown 6 % of women will have a marked improvement with fluoxetine, and 37% will have moderate improvement, which was better than placebo, but not exactly highly efficacious. Alprazolam (Xanax) has also been shown to be effective in some women, but this can be highly addictive.

Dr. Hilgers has had great success in treating PMS with the use of *targeted hormone support*. The key to the success is giving the hormone support at the time when the body needs it.



**Lynn Kerr, MD,** is an NFP Medical Consultant and CANFP Executive Board Member. Dr. Kerr is Medical Director of Sierra Adult Health Center and Assistant Clinical Professor at UCSF/ Fresno Internal Medicine Residency Program

There have been six randomized controlled trials looking at the use of progesterone in the treatment of PMS. Five of the studies gave the progesterone according to the calendar day, or day 16 of the cycle, and did not show benefit with progesterone. However, by not tailoring the therapy to the individual woman's cycle, the progesterone would be given either too early or too late in the majority of the patients. If given too early, the normal steps of ovulation would be changed, and could artificially lower the natural production of

progesterone. If given too late, the start of menses is artificially delayed. In both instances, a new hormonal problem is created in the attempt to treat the PMS. However, in the one study that did time the administration of progesterone to be given 3 days after ovulation, there was significant benefit in the symptoms of PMS. So, when all of the trials are grouped together (a meta – analysis) progesterone did not seem to be beneficial, but a careful review of the studies actually shows how important it is to teach women their signs of fertility, so treatment can be given at the appropriate time. In a study done at the Pope Paul VI Institute, 41 patients were treated with progesterone support for PMS, and 78% had marked or moderate improvement, which is substantially better than the treatment response with fluoxetine or alprazolam. The treatment of PMS had even higher success with injections of HCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotropin), given during the luteal phase which increases the production of estrogen and progesterone by the corpus luteum.

Treating PMS can have a significant beneficial effect on the woman, and her relationship with her spouse and children. Although it is recognized that more research needs to be done in the treatment of PMS, NaProTechnology has been a tremendous gift to the diagnosis and treatment of premenstrual syndrome.

# Ask the Expert

questions can be submitted through our web site, sent to the CANFP office, or e-mailed to [experts@canfp.org](mailto:experts@canfp.org)

# Question and Answer

In my late teens I had asymptomatic spotting between my normal periods. At age 22, I began taking the pill for birth control purposes and the spotting resolved. Approximately 6 months later I began experiencing mild dyspareunia, worsening to grade II, managed with a lubricant. I stopped the pill at age 27 and noticed improvement in my natural lubrication and less painful intercourse. I was pregnant within 6 weeks. My dyspareunia was only mild during pregnancy. Following pregnancy I had grade III dyspareunia with vaginismus and a diagnosis of vulvar vestibulitis with symptoms only with intercourse. I was unable to engage in penetration for a year but my symptoms are now 90% resolved as long as I use a lubricant during intercourse (I don't need a lubricant when I am ovulating). I nursed my son for 18 months and quit due to advice it was hampering my pregnancy odds. For the nine cycles since we have been attempting pregnancy, I have bleeding prior to my normal menses at day 28. Initially I spotted 7 days, currently I spot for 3-4 days before my normal menses.



**Dr. Mary Davenport** is an obstetrician-gynecologist with an NFP only medical practice in El Sobrante, California. Dr. Davenport is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, a Medical Consultant in Natural Family Planning, and serves on the boards of the California Association of Natural Family Planning and the American Association of Pro-Life OBGyn's.

I have an LH surge on the ovulator predictor test between days 12-13, with corresponding symptoms. I had a progesterone test taken at day 9 post ovulation, with a level 12, which my dr. said is normal. My prolactin level was normal. Even though it has been 7 months since I stopped nursing I still have milk in my breasts. Is that normal?

I was told I might have a luteal phase defect even with the "normal" progesterone level. On my 10th cycle, I began taking 100 mg of progesterone BID sublingually beginning 3 days after ovulation. The first month I ovulated late, at day 16 and my cycle was 6 days late with 2 days of spotting, pregnancy test negative. This last cycle I began 50mg of Clomid, QD, (day 3-7 of my cycle) followed by the progesterone. My period was 4 days late with one day of spotting and a negative preg. test on day 29.

Some of my periods have been heavier with clotting and my last two cycles have been this way. Does this mean I may have a luteal phase defect that has improved with the two months I used progesterone because my cycles were 4 to 6 days late? Or is the late period just a normal side effect of taking progesterone. I included my history of gynecological pain as I thought it may be related to a long history of hormonal imbalance. I sincerely thank you for any advice you could offer.

Although your spotting cleared up in the past and improved with hormonal therapy, you have not had the definitive test to see if there is a polyp or fibroid that might be contributing to spotting, namely a hysteroscopy. Ultrasound or endometrial biopsy might also be helpful. To diagnose a luteal phase defect, and what kind of luteal phase defect, you need to know the cycle length, the "peak" day, which may or may not coincide with the LH surge and the length of luteal, or post-peak phase, as well as obtaining progesterone levels. Medical Consultants in NFP do a thorough workup of progesterone and estrogen levels in the post-peak phase, obtaining three or even five post-peak values. At times progesterone may be quite high in the early post-peak phase, but fall off rapidly. This can cause infertility or miscarriages.

I am a bit concerned about your estrogen levels. Some of the low estrogen symptoms could have been due to nursing. Although you had vulvar vestibulitis, some of your dyspareunia could have been related to low estrogen, as could scanty periods, or even spotting. Are you thin or do you overexercise? Weight gain or less extreme exercise, if applicable in your situation, can improve your estrogen levels. You do not mention your cervical mucus, which is extremely important for fertility, and this can be a good marker of estrogen production. Your heavier periods are probably due to the Clomid, which is improving your estrogen.

Some milk can remain in the breasts for many months after stopping nursing. You were trying to get pregnant before your body had recovered from the first pregnancy and while still nursing, and you cannot really consider yourself to have impaired fertility if you are counting the nursing cycles, or even the first few cycles thereafter. I wonder if you are rushing into the Clomid without recovering sufficiently from your pregnancy or getting an adequate appraisal of your hormones. NFP charting, especially quantifying the mucus, could be extremely helpful, as could consultation with a physician who is a certified NFP consultant.

## Celebrate the Gift a Grand Celebration Indeed!

Gregory Polito, MD, KM



*“This was a very informative day with important information given”*

The California Association of NFP (CANFP) held its 11th annual conference on the campus of The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles on March 18th & 19th. What was most impressive over the course of the two day event were the uniformly outstanding speakers and how the talks, no matter how disparate the subject matter, all wove together into a wonderful fabric praising the culture of life.

For example, Thomas Hilgers, MD, from Omaha, Nebraska, regaled audiences with how he solves difficult diagnostic dilemmas in women by interpreting their own charting data (of the monthly cycle) and then confirming the diagnosis with a few selective tests. His research over the last 30 years has allowed him to successfully treat the whole range of women’s problems including infertility, prematurity of infants, and the distressing symptoms of premenstrual syndrome and postpartum depression, to name just a few. He has coined the term “NaProTechnology” or natural procreative technology to describe his interpretive use of charting data to diagnose and treat female disorders, one that cooperates with Nature rather than assaults it. He has just



Cardinal Mahony joins conference participants

published his many years of experience with this methodology in a medical textbook entitled *The Medical and Surgical Practice of NaProTechnology*.

Fr. Luke Dysinger, OSB, a former family practice physician and current Benedictine monk, enchanted the attendees with his scholarly presentations emphasizing how NFP gives us the understanding that we are the agents of our own fertility, not passive recipients of some mysterious process. Pope John Paul II greatly expanded this understanding and underscored the spiritual fruits of NFP with his writing about the theology of the body, explaining how husband and wife “gift” themselves to each other during marital intimacy. Fr. Luke challenged physicians to never underestimate their role in the spiritual formation of the patient, especially in medical matters such as this, and he challenged the clergy to be more forthright about the truth of God’s plan for human sexuality.

Speaking from their heart and the pain of personal experience,

*“This was an A+ Conference. Thank you for providing such great speakers.”*

two couples touched those present in a particularly poignant way. The first couple shared their experience of sterilization, and their subsequent desire to reverse the procedure. The second couple spoke tearfully of their experience with In Vitro Fertilization, contrasting that with their use of NaProTechnology through Dr. Hilgers at the Pope Paul VI Institute in Omaha. Many would benefit from the honest testimony of the journey so courageously shared by these couples.

In addition to the special track for clergy and healthcare providers, Saturday offered a Spanish track, where participants benefited from small group interaction with a husband and wife physician team from Mexico, Dr. Carlos Aldana and Dr. Ana Aguirre, along with Fr. Larry Toschi, OSJ, from the Fresno Diocese.

Camille De Blasi from “Healing the Culture” appealed to a universal desire for happiness—not the fleeting happiness of gratified urges, but the more

*“Thank you for the magnificent conference. The whole process was really life altering for our fledging NFP ministry. The instructors who were able to attend the conference had very positive experiences. And my being there with them allowed us to build relationships and focus on working as a team to engage and convert our diocese re NFP.” - California Diocesan Respect Life Director*

*“The comparisons of care by physician’s today and that of naprotechnology was dramatic”*



Fr. Frank Pavone, Bill Simon, and Dr. Gregory Polito

*“This was my first conference. I had a wonderful time and learned a lot. I enjoyed all the speakers”*

enduring happiness found only in fulfilling our purpose for which we were created. She contrasted two views of sexuality, and it was clear to the captivated audience that the pleasure of sexuality, while good, is a means to a deeper happiness which can be found only in pursuing God’s design for sex.

Mr. Bill Simon gave an uplifting and inspirational talk encouraging us to continue our many pro-life efforts because we are slowly winning the minds and hearts of fellow Americans. He praised the CANFP gathering that night, commenting “What I see in your group is something very special, indeed unique: And that is total command of pro-life issues, combined with a total commitment to advance our cause by emphasizing the fundamental philosophical underpinnings of a culture of life and of a reverence for life.” Mr. Simon is very optimistic that the day is drawing near when abortion on demand is all but eliminated in the United States.



Bill Simon

Fr. Frank Pavone punctuated this thought by highlighting some of the current activities of the Priests for Life. These two esteemed gentlemen shared their experiences at a banquet honoring one of California’s own advocates for life, Dr. T. Murphy Goodwin, the 2005

recipient of CANFP’s annual Calegari Award. Those gathered to honor Dr. Goodwin were moved by his humble recollections of his personal and professional involvement in Natural Family Planning and other pro-life work, and of the challenges of these viewpoints in his professional world of medicine and academia.



Fr. Blaise Berg, Cardinal Roger Mahony, and Fr. Leo Celano prepare to celebrate Palm Sunday Vigil Mass

At the concluding Palm Sunday liturgy Cardinal Roger Mahony gave a moving tribute to Terri Schiavo. He explained that she was seriously brain injured but not in a coma, not in a persistent vegetative state, not in imminent danger of death, and had someone eager to care for her (her parents). It is tragic that common sense did not prevail in a situation like this and she had to die a death of dehydration and starvation, another example of how the “wisdom” of man’s law is foolishness in comparison to God’s and another triumph for the Culture of Death. His Eminence Cardinal Mahony was greeted with applause when he proclaimed a desire to see the ministry of Natural Family Planning grow in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

I just cannot do justice to this terrific slate of speakers in this small space so I invite you to visit the CANFP website ([www.canfp.org](http://www.canfp.org)) to review the talks given to the 200 attendees— clergy, physicians and nurses, and NFP users, teachers and advocates— who gathered at the Cathedral for this two day statewide event. Tapes are available of each talk at this site, and also on the order form included in this newsletter. I also invite you to consider joining CANFP, if you are not already a member. As a member, you would receive this newsletter quarterly, keeping you informed on issues relevant to this vital ministry, and abreast of educational and inspirational opportunities for clergy, healthcare professionals and lay people throughout California.

*“I was overall impressed with the conference. It was very well organized and well executed. I attended out of curiosity of the ‘NFP movement’. I learned about the many challenges faced and the opportunities present in advancing NFP.”*

**Interested in hosting the March 25, 2006 CANFP Conference on the Feast of the Anunciation? Submit site proposal to be considered at CANFP Executive Board Meeting May 19<sup>th</sup>**

# Clergy Corner

Edward Benioff

## “Be not afraid”

This motto of the late, great Pope John Paul II says it all about this year’s annual NFP Conference. As a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, I was pleased to see the Cathedral host such an important event. The entire conference inspired me to witness with courage to one of the most beautiful and unfortunately misunderstood teachings of our Church.

When asked what his favorite passage in scripture was, Pope John Paul II responded without hesitation “What is truth?” This famous phrase from the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate speaks for our confused American culture. Instead of seeking the truth, which is Christ, our culture unfortunately seeks the false American ideals of materialism, hedonism, and pragmatism. Our culture is held captive to the lies of the secular agenda. For those seeking freedom from these errors, they need to look to Christ speaking through His Church. Jesus said “the truth will set you free.” In order for clergy to help liberate Catholic families from the destructive lies of paganism we need to witness boldly to the good news of Natural Family Planning.

This year’s annual conference featured so many wonderful

speakers. First off was the Benedictine Scholar, Fr. Luke Dysinger, who is also an MD. Fr. Luke educated the clergy about the history and harmful effects of artificial contraception. He encouraged the clergy to articulate the beauty of NFP to all our families while at the same time informing them of the dangers of artificial contraceptives. He emphasized that the clergy should not “be afraid” to witness to the truth of NFP but should instead have confidence, aware that the truth of NFP will benefit couples in their marriages.

Secondly, we heard from Dr. Tom Hilgers, who directs the Pope Paul VI Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction. He informed the clergy about the many health benefits a woman can gain from charting her fertility. A woman’s fertility cycle gives a doctor vital information about her reproductive health. Dr. Hilgers not only emphasized the positive

benefits of NFP for a woman and her marriage but also highlighted the destructive effects of artificial contraceptives. These effects include poor communication



Edward Benioff, Seminarian, Los Angeles Archdiocese

which leads to high divorce rates, contraceptives acting as abortifacients, and the numerous and dangerous side effects of contraceptives to a woman’s body. His medical expertise made it clear that artificial contraceptives are bad news all around for women and family life.



Fr. Marcos Gonzalez

Thirdly, Fr. Marcos Gonzalez, a diocesan priest for Los Angeles, remarked that in all his years as a priest he has never had to counsel a couple on marital problems that were using NFP. He stated that priests need to discuss NFP with couples starting in marriage preparation. Also, he told us that anytime someone comes to a priest about marital problems a priest can suggest NFP to add a deeper, more spiritual dimension to their marriage. He also emphasized that priests need to be well-informed so they can articulate the beauty of NFP to couples.

Fr. Frank Pavone, Director of Priests For Life, spoke on the fact that the Catholic Church is



The entire conference inspired me to witness with courage

# Clergy Corner

continued

“be not afraid” to witness to the truth of Jesus Christ

“sitting on the solution” to many of our family problems. He emphasized “sitting” because we have the solution in NFP but haven’t done a good enough job of promoting and defending this most important teaching. He pointed out that clergy need to “share” this liberating good news with our Catholic families and no longer keep it a secret.



Fr. Frank Pavone

I came away from the conference with the conviction that clergy should “be not afraid” about discussing NFP with Catholic families. To remain silent about the harmful effects of artificial contraceptives on marriages, women’s bodies, and fertilized eggs, is uncharitable. The most loving and compassionate response a Priest can have in our secular culture is to enlighten and liberate our Catholic couples from the destructive effects of artificial contraceptives. Priests need to be true shepherds and defend the flock from harmful forces. I pray that this year’s conference will inspire clergy to follow the example of Pope John Paul II and “be not afraid” to witness to the truth of Jesus Christ in our world.

Our Lady, seat of wisdom, Pray for us.

# Celebrating a life well lived

The California NFP Community has lost a beloved advocate. Maureen Scagliotti, RN, CFCP, passed away unexpectedly April 15th.



Maureen Scagliotti, RN, CFCP September 1, 1942-April 15, 2005

Maureen taught NFP as a Fertility Care Practitioner in the Bay area for many years. She was a tireless advocate for NFP, writing letters and articles, teaching and speaking, and was very instrumental in the founding of the California Association of Natural Family Planning. She served on the committee which formed the seed that became CANFP, on the founding Executive Board in 1993, and as Vice President of CANFP from 1993-1996. When she and her husband Remo relocated from Fremont to the foothills, in Sonora in 2002, she completed 10 years of continuous service on the CANFP Executive Board as one of its most active members. She continued as an active Professional member of CANFP, attending our most recent “Celebrate the Gift” conference last month in Los Angeles. Maureen is certainly amongst the “GIFTS” we celebrate at CANFP. Since moving to Sonora, she has continued to work as an RN, became active in the local Crisis Pregnancy Center, and provided NFP services in her Sonora parish, where she and Remo were becoming active members, sharing their energy, talents, and faith. Maureen and Remo have two daughters, Anne Marie and Christina, and she was more than happy to share pictures of her beautiful grandchildren.



Maureen Scagliotti at the 1999 CANFP Conference

We can picture Maureen right now, in a private sit down with JPPII, planning how they can best get the word out about NFP in this new assignment of theirs, and know we have a new heavenly advocate as we continue our assignments here, until we are called as she has been. As her dear friend and colleague Theresa said upon the shock of hearing of Maureen’s sudden passing, we know not the time or place.....

## Celebrando el Regalo

por Diacono Salvador Ramírez

**E**sta conferencia anual de CANFP, la numero 11, tuvo un significado muy especial de principio a fin. El tema de la conferencia tiene un doble significado para nosotros los de habla hispana: Celebrando el regalo, Celebrando el don. Para todos los que somos maestros y usuarios verdaderamente son un regalo y un don que compartimos generosamente con todos los que nos rodean.

Este es

mi

cuerpo,

que daré,

por

ustedes

La conferencia tuvo cuatro partes en dos días repletos de actividades: Conferencia para profesionales de la salud, Conferencia para el Clero, Banquete Celebrando el regalo—don, y la Conferencia Anual para maestros, profesionales, clero y para todos los que dan su apoyo a la Planificación Natural de la Familia.

Para muchos de nosotros todo empezó el viernes por la tarde con un recorrido por la Catedral de Nuestra Señora de Los Angeles donde aprendimos mucho; como la planearon, como la hicieron y para quien la hicieron. Dos cosas que nos llamaron la atención fueron como colocaron un altar que pesa más de 200 toneladas, (con una enorme grua y por arriba antes de cerrar el techo), y como quedaron pintadas las manos de quienes de bendijeron con la señal de la



cruz y con aceite bendito las paredes de la catedral en el día de su consagración.

La gran mayoría asistió al banquete. Este empezó con un reunirse afuera del gran salón donde pudimos saborear ricos aperitivos, vino, cerveza y otras bebidas para prepararnos para la comida. Allí comenzó un ritual de saludar abrazar a todos los que comparten con nosotros en esta gran familia que es 100% pro-vida. Primero a los amigos y amigas y luego a todos los demás. Siempre será motivo de alegría reunirnos en todas las conferencias de CANFP. Pues es aquí donde vemos rostros nuevos y rostros conocidos en este caminar. No hay nada más íntimo que reunirnos como hermanos y hermanas con todos aquellos que piensan y creen igual que nosotros.

El Gran banquete comenzó con la introducción de la onceava conferencia de CANFP por su presidente Gregory E. Polito y por la Señora Joan Vienna directora de la Oficina de Vida Familiar en representación de la Arquidiócesis de Los Angeles, patrocinadora de esta conferencia

El Rev. Padre Frank Pavone (Director de Sacerdotes por la

Vida) hizo la invocación. El Padre Fank nos recuerda que son las mismas cuatro palabras—Este es mi cuerpo que usó Jesús para salvar el mundo son las mismas palabras que usan las fuerzas pro-choice para promover el aborto. Jesús les dice a sus discípulos, “Este es mi cuerpo, que daré, por ustedes” se refería que el ofrecería su cuerpo en la cruz para destruir el poder del pecado y de la muerte. Por otro lado las mujeres que dicen “¡Este es mi cuerpo, no interfieran con él! Es mío, yo puedo hacer lo que quiera con él, aún a deshacerme de la vida dentro de él”. No es casualidad que las mismas palabras se usan para propósitos tan opuestos entre sí. En esto anida el conflicto espiritual.



Bill Simon habló ampliamente de lo que es celebrar el regalo—don de vivir la Planificación Natural de la Familia. Su apoyo al decirnos de que estamos ganando la guerra, nos incita a seguir librando batalla tras batalla en nombre de la vida. Bill Simon nos recuerda a través de las palabras del Evangelio que

## Celebrando el Regalo

una

nueva

energía,

una

nueva

gracia

y un

nuevo

espíritu

en inglés son otras cuatro palabras “do not be afraid” que en español serían “no teman” o “no tengan miedo”. El Señor de la vida camina a nuestro lado, esta a nuestro lado, caminando con nosotros. Y si el esta con nosotros entonces nada debe preocuparnos. Fue una arenga, una invitación a seguir en la lucha día a día sin preocuparnos, sin tener miedo.



El Padre Larry Toschi en su tema *El Amor Matrimonial de José y María* nos recuerda que al principio del Antiguo Testamento esta una pareja—Adán y Eva que desde al principio se dejaron llevar por la idea de llegar a ser como Dios. Que al principio del Nuevo Testamento esta otra pareja José y María sumergida totalmente en la presencia de Dios. José y María nos muestran a la pareja como imagen de Dios, complementarios entre sí en cuerpo y en espíritu. Ninguno domina sino que se complementan el uno al otro—Ese es el Plan de Dios del cual vienen los hijos, producto de ese amor generoso. Es así como José y María llegan a ser por excelencia el modelo del matrimonio. Que José y María nos enseñan la capacidad de amarse y respetarse en una forma total—abstinencia—expresión de amor—expresan el amor en todos sus niveles. Es aquí donde el matrimonio

aprende la santidad en la escuela de Nazaret.



El Doctor, Carlos Aldana Valenzuela, nos da una excelente información en su tema *Dinámica del uso del Modelo Creighton en México*. El Dr. Aldana nos muestra un estudio del Modelo Creighton hecho en varias ciudades de México y lo compara con los estudios hechos en los Estados Unidos. El Dr. Aldana nos muestra las bases de como realizar un estudio integral de un método natural de planificación de la familia. En este caso un estudio del Modelo Creighton en México y entre gente hispana en un periodo de 12 meses. Fue interesante y muy informativa su presentación.



La Doctora María Luisa Aguirre (esposa del Dr. Aldana) nos presentó el tema *La mujer Cristiana y la Planificación Natural de la Familia*. La Dra. Aguirre nos dice que la misión de la mujer cristiana es promover la cultura de la vida y es en sí promotora de un nuevo

feminismo. Pone como ejemplo a María que es ejemplo y directrix de la dignidad de la mujer tanto en su feminismo como en el ser plenamente mujer. Esto se realiza cuando la mujer aprecia la maternidad como un don, cuando vive en carne propia una relación más estrecha entre dos seres humanos. Madre—hijo, el hijo dentro de su madre, la madre no forma al hijo se le da un hijo. En este caso la mujer desde un principio le da un tesoro al hijo, a la hija, el amor. La misión de la mujer es enseñar al hombre la capacidad de amar plenamente.

El Doctor Aldana presentó el tema *La Naprotecnología*. En este tema se junto con la Preguntas y Respuestas. Fue algo muy especial ya que tuvimos a los esposos Aldana juntos. Aprendimos que como instructores de la planificación natural de la familia podemos ayudar a las usuarias a detectar un sin fin de problemas ginecológicos. Estos problemas pueden causar graves trastornos físicos, psicológicos y emocionales en las mujeres. La Ayuda que recibimos de los Doctores Aldana tanto en el campo de la Naprotecnología como en lo moral y espiritual fue incalculable.

Fue una conferencia muy especial donde conocimos nuevos amigos, nuevos apoyos y que nos da una nueva energía, una nueva gracia y un nuevo espíritu para seguir caminando en este caminar.

## T. Murphy Goodwin, MD 2005 Calegari Award Recipient



"I really am honored to have an award that has his name" remarked Dr. Murph Goodwin upon receiving the 2005 Fr. Marc Calegari Award at the



Joanne Goodwin, Mary Goodwin,  
Dr. Richard Vanis, Mary Vanis,  
Dr. Murphy Goodwin,  
Fr. Frank Pavone, Bill Simon.

Celebrate the Gift Banquet at Our Lady of Angels Cathedral on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Goodwin came to know Fr. Marc years ago when his search for an O B / G Y N residency which

would respect his convictions to not perform abortions or prescribe contraception brought him to Fr. Marc's Arizona neighborhood. Dr. Goodwin fondly recalled his admiration for Fr. Marc: "He was something like a fool for Christ. He was just a person who was smarter than everyone else and so devoted to this important cause. He was prescient, he could see beyond something that was important to something that was more important."

Fortunately for us, Dr. Goodwin and his family returned to his native southern California, where he is currently a Professor in the Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, USC, and Chief, Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine at LAC-USC Women's and Children's Hospital. Dr. Goodwin's professional accomplishments are too numerous to list in their entirety, but include publication of over

100 articles as author or coauthor, peer reviewer for 5 medical journals, and national and international speaking engagements, presenting twice before national meetings of the U.S. Bishops, and three times at CANFP conferences. He serves on the boards of CANFP, California Nurses for Ethical Standards, Pregnancy Help Center of San Gabriel Valley, the Catholic Medical Association, and the Life Issues Commission of the Los Angeles Archdiocese. With his wife Joanne he founded St. Monica's Academy, a private Catholic school with a classics based curriculum, and together they serve on the marriage preparation team at their Pasadena parish, St. Andrews.



Dr. Murphy Goodwin receives Calegari Award from Fr. Frank Pavone

Contrasting his professional world of academia with his pro-life convictions, Dr. Goodwin shared "When you are in the regular academic world in obstetrics and gynecology, you feel like you're crazy if you're pro-life and believe in Natural Family Planning. It was always a very reinforcing and nourishing experience to come back and talk to people and find out you aren't really crazy---or we're all crazy together!"



Dr. Goodwin praised colleague and featured speaker of the conference, Dr. Tom Hilgers, "I've always drawn a lot of inspiration from you and I really appreciate all the things you've done" specifically citing recent publication of his textbook.

Family present included Dr. Goodwin's sister, Mary Vanis, President of Right to Life League of Southern California, her husband Dr. Richard Vanis, wife Joanne, and daughter Mary, representing her 8 siblings. Dr. Goodwin quipped some were surprised he was selected for the state NFP award, as they "thought you were disqualified from the award after you got above 5 or 7 kids".

On a more serious note, Dr. Goodwin expressed his appreciation. "I am very honored to have the award and I am most grateful for all the encouragement and support. I know everybody feels the same way---the support that you get when you go back and recharge your batteries and be reinforced in your fundamental beliefs, and this is the kind of group that's always done it for me."

All present were touched by his humility and generosity, and grateful to have the opportunity to honor Dr. Goodwin for, as Dr. Polito said, "his unfailing support of every aspect of the Gospel of Life."

his  
unfailing  
support  
of every  
aspect  
of the  
Gospel  
of Life



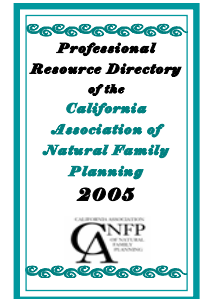
Youth Volunteer Lindsay Kerr and Dr. Lynn Kerr, representing CANFP, with Respect Life Director of San Bernardino Diocese, Marie Widman, and Carol Hogan of California Catholic Conference

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*Dr. Tom Hilgers, Dr. Murphy Goodwin, Bill Simon,  
Fr. Frank Pavone, and Dr. Gregory Polito*

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