

# the natural news

Quarterly newsletter of the Australian Council of Natural Family Planning

Tel / Fax: (02) 9452 5244

www.acnfp.com.au

Summer 2003

## Building Community

*Its almost a year since the Conference: that time of connection, face-to-face sharing of ideas and swapping notes with like-minded people. A time of affirmation that teaching and practising NFP is not for those who've run off with the fairies. Then the plummet to reality: the flight back home to where nothing has really changed. Its a little like returning to the wilderness. And now another year to wait until the next Conference.*

### Isolation

SO in time and space, members are isolated from each other. Further, the NFP community could be so much bigger were it not for the dissent amongst proponents of differing methods. Then, secular society capitalises on the burgeoning health-conscious market by offering "Natural Fertility" awareness, management, control, whatever. This dilutes the true NFP philosophy as the subtle focus is exclusively on fertility not on "family", which so perfectly merges fertility and sexuality. Consequently, teaching true NFP becomes increasingly marginalised. In the face of these isolating forces, what can be done?

### Building on current strengths

IN less than two years, the ACNFP community will have existed for thirty years. The **foundations** laid by the ACNFP pioneers are their point of future growth. To illustrate, NFP centres have in common ACNFP teaching manuals, policy & standard documents, and client materials. One often overlooked foundation is the ACNFP **logo**. Imagine the power of association that could be generated in the public mind if every NFP centre sported the ACNFP logo on their letterheads and business cards.

Today, there is more that helps inside

define the ACNFP community. The advent of the **website** marks a point of consolidation in ACNFP's history: every affiliated centre is publicly listed with their own page and virtual e-mail address (such as [sydney@acnfp.com.au](mailto:sydney@acnfp.com.au), [brisbane.mater@acnfp.com.au](mailto:brisbane.mater@acnfp.com.au), etc.) By consistently referring every client, midwife, doctor, priest ... to the website, a clear message of affiliation to an authoritative national body is given rather than to a fringe group who happened to read a book, do a couple of courses and now think they can teach NFP. An opportunity exists for each NFP centre to participate in a nationwide cohesive marketing strategy grounded in the foundations of ACNFP that ensures the wider community is aware that ACNFP teachers are stringently trained and require two-yearly reaccreditation.

### Looking forward to community on-line

BY each NFP centre committing to the website, the promise of community outside of Conferences can be realised. There exists the opportunity for a "virtual" ACNFP community on-line through the website. The Webmaster has given a few suggestions for your consideration in this same issue.

Over and out from an ACNFP member, and proud of it!

## A Word from the Webmaster

THE [www.acnfp.com.au](http://www.acnfp.com.au) website informs the public about the symptothermal method and promotes the services that ACNFP affiliated services offer. A distinction is made between the two main service categories, namely clinical services (NFP teachers) and community programs (FLE teachers). Visitors are offered three ways of contacting an ACNFP affiliated centre: (1) the Tollfree number, (2) a lookup facility to find the contact details of their local centre and (3) an e-mail form that is routed to the e-mail address of their preferred centre (if an e-mail address has not been set up, it goes to the main centre). The first two options are conventional ways of making contact, while the third offers Internet style communication. The prospective client is given the choice.

The website was registered with search engines in July 2003 and first promoted in the Winter 2003 *The Natural News* and also in a letter from the president that accompanied the recent membership receipt. The statistics show 140 visitors to the site in August 2003, which is encouraging.

The two service contact forms have been used for a handful of test submissions from members. The general contact form has allowed the public to contact us. As the website receives more publicity, this usage should increase.

Virtual e-mail addresses are also now available through the

...continued on p8

• A Word from the Webmaster	1 / 8
• Annual General Meeting Reports	2 - 4

• Introducing the Teacher Training Committee	4
• Natural Family Planning — the basis and benefits	5 - 6

• Report on Queensland State Inservice	6
• Reasons for the use of Natural Family Planning	7

# Annual General Meeting Reports

ACNFP's Annual General Meeting took place in Sydney on Friday 17 October 2003. Following are the reports presented at the meeting.

## President's Report

### Elections

THE election of the Executive Committee took place at the Annual General Meeting held in Sydney during the 19th Conference at the Rydges Hotel, North Sydney.

The following members were nominated and elected by the ACNFP membership to serve for the next two years.

Vice president: Noelle Melrose Re-elected to this position by the members.

Secretary: Susan Berg President for the past four years

Treasurer: Evelyn Brien Secretary for the past four years.

Chairperson

Teacher Training: Ann O' Donnell Re-elected to this position.

Chairperson

Promotions Committee: Marita Franklin Re-elected to this position.

The position of President was unfilled at the time of the elections and there was a motion moved from the floor that Tom O'Donnell be elected to the position of President. There being no further nominations put forward, I was duly elected to serve as your President for the next two years.

All members should give consideration to accepting nomination when asked to fill the positions on the executive in the future.

On the acceptance of the position I called the membership to give me their full support and I promised with their help to do my best on behalf of ACNFP in my term of office.

### Conference 2002

THE conference was a great success with 58 members attending. 35 from New South Wales, 4 from South Australia, 5 from Western Australia, 12 from Queensland and 2 from Tasmania.

One of my first duties as President was to send a letter of congratulations to the Conference Committee for the tremendous effort made in organizing the venue, the speakers and for the general success of the weekend. I also observed a great number of willing helpers assisting the committee and it is thanks to all their efforts we had a wonderful conference.

The highlight of the Conference Dinner was the presentation by Dr John Gallagher of the 'Dr Barbara Gross' memorial award. This was awarded to Dr John Casey on behalf of the ACNFP membership.

It was pleasing to see so many young teachers attending and participating in the various workshops voicing their opinions and sharing their ideas.

I have witnessed throughout the year the exchange of programs, presentations and teaching ideas from state to state. One other suggestion at the conference was to consider creating our own website in an effort to reach out to the general public with the information about our services.

### Web Site

SETTING up the website has not been an easy task and I would like to thank Paul and Felicity Roux for their efforts in producing the site on your behalf. For the website to be successful it will be necessary for each teacher to promote it, by spreading the news through word of mouth and also including the web address on all information sent from their centre. Paul has submitted his first Webmaster report.

To raise the awareness of the contents of the website the



Executive Committee have produced a CD-ROM with the site information available for viewing without the need to access the internet. An upgraded CD may be made available periodically to those who do not have access to the web. The 'Website CD' is available from Ann Nicey our Administration Officer. I encourage FLE and NFP teachers to make this website as interesting as possible, and Paul Roux will welcome any relevant items for publication. Please Note: All relevant information will be reviewed by a committee.

### Sharing Ideas

ANOTHER consideration is to produce a collection of program materials from teachers that could be compiled on one CD to be shared by all. An example of 'Materials Information' CD was made available to the Executive Committee to review prior to this meeting.

### Meetings

THE Executive Committee continued to meet in Sydney. In the 2002-2003 year meetings were held on 2 October (immediately after the conference), 3 March and 8 July, with two Teleconferences — February and May.

### Teacher Training

TEACHER Training courses have continued to be conducted in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia.

### Newsletter

THE new look newsletter which was introduced in 2001 continues to provide up to date information on many aspects of NFP and FLE, keeping teachers informed.

### Client Material

WORK on the Client Material is near completion. Thanks to Rebecca Hart and all involved for their dedication in preparing the materials.

### Training and Resource Manual

THE Training and Resource Manual has also been under consideration for review and arrangements have been made for it's upgrade. This is a sizeable project that will be undertaken over the next twelve to eighteen months.

### NFPP Board

SUSAN Berg's term of office with the NFP Program Board of Management expired after a four year term, and her position has been filled with ACNFP nominee Evelyn Brien. I congratulate Susan on her dedication whilst representing ACNFP on the Board, and also giving of her time with additional meetings on the NFPP Promotional sub committee. I look forward to working with Evelyn representing ACNFP during the next twelve months.

### My thanks to:

The members of the Executive Committee for their contribution and dedication over the past twelve months, and look forward to working with them in the coming year.

Ann Nicey the Administration Officer for her expertise, guidance and friendship. She has made my position as your President a real pleasure.

**Tom O'Donnell, President ACNFP**

# Annual General Meeting Reports

## Teacher Training Committee Report

DURING this year the members of the Teacher Training Committee have continued to accredit Natural Family Planning and Family Life Education teachers for the Sympto-Thermal Method of Natural Family Planning for the ACNFP Inc.



Committee meetings were held on the following dates — October 2002 after the Conference, March 2003 in Sydney, and July 2003 in Sydney.

### The Teacher Training Committee:

Elected Chairperson: Ann O'Donnell

Appointed Members: Evelyn Brien, Krina McGlaughlin, Noelle Melrose and Rebecca Hart

### Trainer Status and Region of Responsibility:

Ann O'Donnell	Basic & Ongoing Trainer	Western Australia
Evelyn Brien	Basic & Ongoing Trainer	New South Wales
Krina McGlaughlin	Basic & Ongoing Trainer	South Australia
Noelle Melrose	Ongoing Trainer	Queensland
Rebecca Hart	Ongoing Trainer	Victoria

### Basic Training and Ongoing Training completed this year:

NSW	Part 1 — February 2003 Part 2 — April 2003 Part 3 — June 2003 FLE — August 2003
South Australia	Inservice held on one day a week for 6 weeks — July 2003
Queensland	Held a State Inservice — August 2003
Perth	Part 1 — March 2003 Part 2 — July 2003 FLE — September 2003

The State Trainers are appointed by the ACNFP Executive for a term of two years.

### Supervision

Regular supervision / debriefing have been carried out by the trainers or their delegates in their regions to ensure skills and knowledge are maintained and updated.

### Projects

#### Client Materials

These materials are in the final draft form.

To Rebecca Hart, Drs. John Gallagher, John Casey, and Terry Bennett, to Sister Helen Barry, Francine Pirola, the ACNFP Executive and Teacher Training Committees, thank you all for your contribution and skills ensuring this project will be completed in the very near future.

#### The Training and Resource Manual

It has been decided to rewrite the manual in chapter stages. Therefore as each chapter is written it will be distributed to the Teacher Training Committee and Evaluation Committee for comment, then printed and distributed to every teacher to exchange the old chapter with the new. This is another huge project being undertaken so please be patient.

#### My thanks:

To the Teacher Training Committee for their dedication to the ideals of ACNFP, for their friendship, cooperation and for sharing their experiences and expertise with each other.

To Ann Nicey, our Administration Officer for the various tasks she so efficiently undertook for the committee. Her attendance at all our meetings, with the various documents we required, and for all the travel and accommodation arrangements she has made during this year.

To President Tom for his attendance and input at our meetings and for his support of the Teacher Training Committee.

**Ann O'Donnell, Chairperson  
Teacher Training Committee**

## Treasurer's Report

HAVING taking on the role of Treasurer at the ACNFP Conference in Sydney held in October 2002, I present the Treasurer's Report for 2002/2003.



The Number One account is Grant money and is used directly to train teachers and to improve client services, including promotion. Some of the ways this money is used is through funding teacher training and inservice programmes including conference expenses & costs associated with Teacher Training meetings, production of the ACNFP newsletter and to cover the cost of the 1800 phone number in the various parts of Australia. The profit and loss statement for the number one account indicates exactly where the funds were expended.

The Number Two account is used to fund executive busi-

ness since grant money cannot be used for this purpose. Ordinary membership subscriptions are slightly down indicating a slightly lower number of trained teachers across Australia. Affiliate membership however has increased, reflecting the expectation that trainee teachers are asked to become affiliate members (as a commitment to NFP) while they are training. Obviously once their training is complete and they become accredited then they become ordinary members. Client material and brochures are paid for out of this account

I would like to acknowledge Ann Nicey who is responsible as Administration Officer for ACNFP for the day to day accounting required to produce ongoing statements.

#### Evelyn Brien, Treasurer

*(Copies of Profit and Loss Statements for both Number One and Number Two accounts, distributed at the AGM, are available from Ann Nicey).*

# Annual General Meeting Reports

## Promotions Committee

The Promotions Committee has been working since the AGM of 2000 to undertake the work of increasing the reach of Natural Family Planning. The committee members come from the membership under the leadership of the Chair of Promotions.



Members of the Promotions Committee for the past year have been:

Miss Marita Franklin (Chair)	Sydney
Mr Tom O'Donnell (President, ACNFP)	Perth
Mrs Ann O'Donnell (Chair, Teacher Training Committee)	Perth
Mr Barry Setter	Rockhampton
Mrs Felicity Roux	Perth
Mrs Angie Knighton	Broken Bay
Mrs Saskia Ebejer	Canberra-
Goulburn	
Mrs Willa Whitewolf	Lismore

Saskia and Willa have since resigned from the Committee.

The Promotions Committee continues to produce the quarterly newsletter, *The Natural News*. Launched in July 2001 with a bumper edition of 12-pages, *The Natural News* is produced three times per year and sent to NFP Members, the ACBC as well as doctors, friends of ACNFP and media outlets as a promotional tool.

Meetings of the Promotions Committee have been held via teleconference on the following dates: — 28 August 2002, 12 December 2002 and 3 April 2003

On behalf of ACNFP, the Promotions Committee placed an advertisement in *Essence* promoting LAM. This will appear in the forthcoming issue. A copy of the advertisement appears on p7 of *The Natural News*.

The Promotions Committee again encourages all ACNFP members to consider innovative ways to promote NFP and to share them with others by submitting ideas and suggestions through the Chair of Promotions.

**Marita Franklin, Chair of Promotions**

## Love, Life, Sex...The Good News about sexuality

Evelyn Brien

The seminar "Love, Life, Sex...The Good News about Sexuality" was held in The Polding Centre on Friday 10 & Saturday 11 October 2003. Hosted by Centacare's Natural Family Planning Program and despite the Friday being the first night of the world cup football, sixty-five participants attended and were welcomed by Father John Usher, CEO of Centacare. The Catholic Youth Services National Evangelical Team were generous in acting as MCs for the seminar.

The program included Bishop Anthony Fisher who gave a keynote address on Theology of The Body. About 50 young people attended again on the Saturday to listen to a dynamic presentation, entitled



"Sex Why Wait", by Byron & Francine Pirola and to attend workshops. Topics for the workshops were "Breaking The Silence On Abortion" with Project Rachel, "Fertility Awareness" by Carla Geracitano from NFP, "Being Christian, Sexual & Single" with Shane Higoe & Yvette Nehme and "Preparation for Marriage" with Ian McGuinness.

The seminar concluded with an open forum chaired by Dr. Rev. Gerald Gleeson when a panel that included Fr Gleeson & Bishop Fisher addressed issues raised by the seminar. Mass, organised by participants and accompanied by musicians who had attended the seminar was celebrated in the chapel was a highlight.

Participants were enthusiastic in their praise for the success of the seminar and have asked for more seminars to be held in the same vein. Thanks should go to all who assisted in the planning & presentation of the seminar.



### Program

#### Friday 10 October

6.30-7.30pm	Registration
7.30pm	Welcome and house-keeping
8.00pm	Keynote address — Evelyn Brien <i>Introduction to NFP</i> Bishop Anthony Fisher <i>Theology of the Body</i>
9.00pm	Supper

#### Saturday 11 October

9.00am	Late registrations
9.30am	Welcome and update from the night before
10.00am	Keynote address — Byron and Francine Pirola <i>Sex. Why wait?</i>
11.00am	Morning tea
11.30am	Workshops — — <i>Hope and Healing</i> <i>breaking taboos</i> — <i>Fertility Awareness</i> — <i>Preparing for Marriage</i> — <i>Being Christian, Sexual and Single.</i>
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Workshops (repeated)
3.15pm	Love, Life, Sex Open Forum
4.30pm	Close and Evaluations
5.00pm	Mass in Chapel

# Erroneous Comments Cause Disquiet

John H. Casey, PH.D. F.R.A.C.P

On the weekend of 12th-13 July 2003 the *Sydney Morning Herald* carried a report from the Reuters news service which was headlined "Science Spotlights Flaw in Rhythm Method". It was claimed that scientists in Canada found that women "sometimes ovulate several times in a single month." These findings would "help explain why natural methods of birth control... often fail". Then the same message was given in the *Sydney Morning Herald* 24th July 2003 under an even bigger headline.. "Getting the Ovary So Very Wrong", this time quoting the Los Angeles Times concerning the same article.

I was naturally incredulous and when the source was identified as the July issue of "*Fertility and Sterility*" I downloaded the original article (July 2003 pages 116-122). This was entitled "A New Model for Ovarian Follicular Development During the Human Menstrual Cycle", written by Angela Baerwald, Gregg Adams and Roger Pierson, from the University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

The report described changes in ovarian follicle dynamics during the menstrual cycle by daily transvaginal ultrasonography. The authors identified 2 and sometimes 3 waves of follicular development in a cycle, but only 1 such wave per cycle resulted in ovulation, the others clearly anovular.

I had submitted a letter (attachment A) to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 24th July but it was not published. I then sent an e-mail to the first author of the quoted article, saying that the authors were being seriously misquoted in the world's press and asking for comment. I got a reply 11 days later (attachment B, see page 6) and my objection to the press reports was vindicated. The first paragraph of the author's reply is quite decisive.

This whole episode shows how scientific data can be misquoted and the cause of NFP denigrated. Clearly, we must have recourse to the original sources to check whether criticism is warranted. Unfortunately, a press retraction has not been forthcoming.

I trust teachers and their clients have not been unsettled by this false reporting.

## ATTACHMENT A

The Editor,  
Sydney Morning Herald,  
SYDNEY

24TH July 2003

Sir,

The brief report from Reuters (SMH. Weekend 12-13 July) about a recent article in "*Fertility and Sterility*" was factually incorrect and your headline "Science Spotlights Flaw in Rhythm Method" was quite unwarranted. Contrary to your report the original study clearly states that 13 of the study group of 63 women did not have multiple ovulations but a variety of "ovarian irregularities". The other 50 women with regular cycles were indeed found to have 2 or 3 "waves" of follicular development but only 1 such "wave" per cycle beginning in the early follicular phase culminated in ovulation. The other "waves" consisted of generally smaller follicles which the authors clearly stated were anovulatory (being inhibited by luteal phase progesterone).

The article provides no hormonal data nor any attempt to correlate follicular development with the physical signs of fertility or infertility.

The authors simply documented by ultrasonography some generally unrecognised structural changes in the ovaries during the course of a cycle. Contrary to your headline, the article in *Fertility and Sterility* in no way undermines the scientific basis of Natural Family Planning.

Yours faithfully, John H. CASEY

## A Precis of the Paper (*Fertility and Sterility*, 80, 116, 2003)

THE researchers studied the menstrual cycles of 50 Canadian women from one ovulation to the next, rather than from one menstruation to the next. By means of daily ultrasonography of the ovaries of these women, it was found that 68% of the women had two waves and 32% had three waves of follicular development judged on numbers and size of follicles above 5mm in diameter in the interval between one ovulation and the next. This finding therefore challenges the belief that only one cohort of follicles develops in the human menstrual cycle, namely, the particular follicular development stimulated by rising blood levels of the follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) from the pituitary gland just prior to menstruation. One of the cohort becomes the dominant follicle that will proceed to ovulation, the timing of which is linked with a surge of luteinising hormone (LH) from the pituitary gland.

The study found that the first wave of follicular growth in women in the two wave group appeared early in the post-ovulatory luteal phase of the cycle and the second wave in the post-menstrual pre-ovulatory phase. Women in the three wave group had two waves in the luteal phase, the second wave occurring late in that phase, and the third wave in the post-menstrual preovulatory phase. Generally, the follicles developing in the luteal phase of both groups of women were found to be smaller than those in the preovulatory phase.

A significant finding was that follicular development in the luteal phase of the cycle did not culminate in ovulation. Ovulation occurred at the end of the final wave of development in the post-menstrual pre-ovulatory phase. The authors postulate that the reason for anovular follicular development in the luteal phase is due to the inhibitory effect of progesterone (the dominating hormone throughout this phase) on luteinising hormone secretion (LH) from the pituitary gland. Ovulation requires a surge of LH. Thus this study supports the established scientific fact that ovulation only occurs at one time in the cycle, at the end of the pre-ovulatory (follicular) phase.

## Comment

THE study of Baerwald et alia in no way undermines the scientific basis of modern natural family planning methods, relying as they do on the recognition by women of the bodily signs and symptoms associated with ovulation and its aftermath.

Dr. John H. Casey and Dr. John P. Gallagher,  
Research and Evaluation Committee, ACNFP

...continued on p6

# Report on Queensland State Inservice

**O**n the weekend of 22nd – 24th August, 16 NFP / FLE Teachers from five Dioceses in Queensland gathered at the Mater Hospital in Brisbane to spend some time “Nourishing Our Mind, Body and Spirit” — the title chosen to try to capture the main aim of the Inservice. Teachers traveled from Mt. Isa, Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton and Toowoomba and felt warmly welcomed by the Staff at the Mater NFP Clinic, Helen Barry, Terry Bennett, Celine Douglass and Debra Malt. They had been very busy preparing all the practical aspects of hosting an Inservice and they did a superb job organising catering, comfortable accommodation within walking distance of the Hospital, a warm welcome at Mass Saturday

evening followed by a dinner at South Bank as a special treat.

Our program included some excellent guest speakers including Moral Theologian Fr Kevin McGovern on “The Pastoral Application of the Church’s Teaching on Sexuality and Family Planning”; Genetic Counsellor from Mater Pauline McGrath on “Genetics and Reproduction”; and Christian couple Jim and Faye Lyons from Toowoomba on “The Price Tag of Sex”. We were fortunate to have the expertise of Dr Terry Bennett for two sessions “I think it’s my Hormones Doc” exploring some newer methods of Hormonal Contraception and Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome and “Menopause and Fertility — Hot News” exploring great information regarding the management of the peri-menopause. Helen Barry’s

expertise on LAM and other postpartum situations was appreciated by all.

We had valuable chart discussion sessions and a wonderful FLE resource sharing session capably led by Trish Logan. The opportunity to swap resources, steal new ideas, enkindle our passion and enthusiasm to make a difference in our area was appreciated and hopefully each person was nourished by the wonderful spirit of generosity and love so evident in our gathering. Our shared stories and prayer time was sacred and whilst we didn’t get it all 100% right with the program I believe we can take some learning from each experience, so sincere thanks to ACNFP for the funding which allowed us to gather and be renewed in mind, body and spirit.

Noelle Melrose, Rockhampton

...continued from p5

## ATTACHMENT B

6th August, 2003

Good morning Dr. Casey.

Thank you very much for your comments on our recent publication, as well as some of the information released by the press.

Both Dr. Pierson and I completely agree with you that the information released in the Reuters report was inaccurate. As you have read, we documented 2 and 3 waves of ovarian follicular development during the menstrual cycle, of which only the final wave was ovulatory.

I have been away on maternity leave the past 4 weeks, but Dr. Pierson has assured me that he has spoken with the press at length, including Reuters, to verify our findings. It was unfortunate that this information was released to the public, because it was very misleading.

(Angela R. Baerwald)



Cap



Cap



Cap

# Reasons for the use of Natural Family Planning

*This article gives a picture of why people choose natural family planning (NFP). It is based on reasons given by clients attending NFP Centres throughout Australia.*

Many people choose NFP because they hold the conviction that man and woman were created as companions for each other and part of the function of intimate loving between man and woman is to create and care for new life. The ultimate expression of a couple's love and life together is sexual intercourse. This act involves their total person (mind, heart, body and soul) in a free and complete giving of one to the other. It is potentially creative not only in the sense that for a committed couple it enhances, deepens and enriches their relationship, but in that it can also create new life. Many people choose NFP because of the conviction that to deprive sexual intercourse of either end is not consonant with nature.

A responsible couple aware of the life-giving potential of sexual intercourse will set about coping with their fertility when the time comes to space or limit family size. The decision about family planning rightly rests with each individual couple. The committed loving couple will mutually choose a method of fertility control that is acceptable to them both.

NFP offers couples an effective means of fertility control that frees them from a dependence on artificial methods which they may find unacceptable. It teaches couples an understanding of the functions of their reproductive systems. In the case of the woman, it teaches her to recognize the physical signs and symptoms which identify the fertile and infertile phases of her menstrual cycle. The couple can use their knowledge of their combined fertility to achieve or avoid pregnancy by undertaking intercourse or abstaining during the fertile phase of the woman's cycle.

NFP means that a couple's fertility is not hidden under the cover of the pill or other device. It is an open, accepted and understood part of each partner's total being and of their life together as a couple. An understanding of the biological processes of fertility generally creates an admiration of the couple's creative potential, an appreciation and respect for manhood and womanhood, and a gratitude towards the Creator who has made man and woman to so beautifully complement each other in a loving commitment which is open to personal fulfillment and the creation of new life.

Because natural family planners live

constantly with the implications of their fertility rather than eliminating it temporarily or permanently, their fertility and their whole sexual relationship is an open and recurring question between them. In learning to cope with periodic abstinence, they need to share their personal feelings, hopes and frustrations with each other. This mutual sharing can lead to a deeper understanding of each other as individual persons. It leads to the acceptance of the other as a total and unique person whose fertility is not seen as a threat or an encumbrance to the strengthening and enrichment of their relationship but as a positive asset of sexuality, a couple's mutual gift and shared responsibility. Their fertility is seen as a power that they possess and can be controlled according to their mutual decision at any given time.

NFP appeals to many people today who are rejecting the artificiality of this highly technical age and who seek a lifestyle which is in harmony with nature. They reject the use of drugs for non-medical purposes and prefer a method of birth control that respects the laws of nature. They see the value of a method that is free of the potentially damaging elements which they perceive to be present in some artificial means of birth prevention.

Many couples believe they can manage their own fertility without resort to technology. They reason that fertility is a nor-

mal health state and it is quite within their power to find a solution to what is a personal "non-medical" human condition. Many couples see natural birth control as aesthetically acceptable in that it eliminates the need to use mechanical devices (diaphragm, spermicides, condom, etc.) which disrupt the naturalness and spontaneity of sexual intercourse.

As outlined in this article, couples are attracted to natural family planning for a variety of reasons. Quite often the decision for natural family planning is based purely on the need they feel at the time to space or limit their family size. With most, there is little realisation of the benefits they will ultimately gain from their decision. In time, the committed and mutually caring couples see natural family planning not simply as a means of limiting family size but a rewarding way to live the married life. A true marriage is a union of heart, mind and body in total mutual acceptance, a personal love-commitment which may be communicated in non-genital ways. Periodic abstinence requires creative self-discipline which challenges couples to use the other ways they have of demonstrating tenderness, concern and regard. Natural family planning invites couples to find in these encounters the way to personal enrichment and rewarding marriage.

**Dr Terry Bennett, Dr John Gallagher**

The ACNFP Executive placed the following ad in *Essence* magazine



**The Natural Alternative**

Natural Family Planning teaches the Lactational Amenorrhoea Method (LAM) to fully breast feeding mothers. If the Criteria for LAM is met during the first 6 months then it is more than 98% effective.

Phone 1800 114 010  
for further information

## ACNFP SERVICE



www.acnfp.com.au  
email: acnfp@ozemail.com.au  
(02) 9452 5244

### National Toll-Free

1800 114 010

### ADELAIDE

Ph. (08) 8210 8200

Fax (08) 8224 0930

### BRISBANE

Ph. (07) 3252 4371

Fax (07) 3854 1246

### CAIRNS

Ph. (07) 4052 5295

Fax (07) 4052 5481

### HOBART

Ph. (03) 6278 1660

Fax (03) 6278 1005

### MELBOURNE

Ph. (03) 9879 6966

Fax (03) 9879 4766

### PERTH

Ph. (08) 9221 3866

Fax (08) 9221 3497

### ROCKHAMPTON

Ph. (07) 4927 1700

Fax (07) 4927 9209

### SYDNEY

Ph. (02) 9390 5156

Fax (02) 9261 3019

## ACNFP Executive:

### President:

Mr Tom O'Donnell

### Vice President:

Mrs Noelle Melrose

### Secretary:

Mrs Susan Berg

### Treasurer:

Mrs Evelyn Brien

### Chairperson, Teacher Training Committee

Mrs Ann O'Donnell

### Chairperson, Promotions Committee

Miss Marita Franklin

### Editorial Committee:

Dr John Gallagher

Mrs Susan Berg

Mrs Ann O'Donnell

Mr Tom O'Donnell

### Administration Officer

Mrs Ann Nicey

Editorial and Design by  
Catholic Communications, Archdiocese of Sydney

ACNFP acknowledges the financial support given by the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care to the Australian Catholic Bishops, through the Natural Family Planning Services Board of Management, Canberra, for the production of this newsletter.

...continued from p1, A Word from the Webmaster

www.acnfp.com.au domain name, eg. [president@acnfp.com.au](mailto:president@acnfp.com.au), [executive@acnfp.com.au](mailto:executive@acnfp.com.au) and [secretary@acnfp.com.au](mailto:secretary@acnfp.com.au). They are easy to remember! This gives the organisation a uniform Internet presence and it promotes a sense of community. When e-mail is sent to these addresses it merely forwards to a physical e-mail address that is set up. This could be any valid e-mail address. Another benefit is that the virtual address can be maintained as just the physical address needs to be substituted. No need to advise everyone that you have changed your e-mail address! If your centre does not yet have a virtual e-mail address, then please contact me.

This website has created an Internet presence for each ACNFP affiliated centre in that contact details are now available in a web page. This information is stored in a database and accessed via a look-up facility. Thank you to those centres that have advised me of updates — we must keep these details current!


*The Natural News* and the Web Store pages have been set up, but

require further content. The vision for *The Natural News* section is that it can be used to offer a reference to past articles. The Web Store can be used to market the stock that is maintained by the administration officer.

In addition to the public Internet presence [www.acnfp.com.au](http://www.acnfp.com.au) can also foster a virtual community amongst ACNFP members. Access to the members' site would be secured with an "authenticated logon", that would show only the options that the member is able to access. Possible ideas include (1) a bulletin board forum for teachers to engage in discussions on clinical issues (anonymity could be maintained), (2) a page for training materials to be submitted and downloaded, (3) a facility for affiliated centres to update their own webpages and (4) a facility to publish *Natural News* articles.

Thank you for the opportunity to assist ACNFP in this way. Please e-mail me to discuss ways in which you would like to take [www.acnfp.com.au](http://www.acnfp.com.au) forward.

Paul Roux, [webmaster@acnfp.com.au](mailto:webmaster@acnfp.com.au)



# FREE CD

If you do not have access to the internet, you can still view the ACNFP website. Get your free CD from Ann Nicey at the ACNFP office.

And then contact Tom O'Donnell or Paul Roux with suggestions, ideas and comments.

## ACNFP Newsletter Subscription

I wish to subscribe to the ACNFP Newsletter Please tick  
 within Australia \$20   
 Overseas \$25

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....PC .....

Please find enclosed my cheque for \$ .....

Please return to:  
ACNFP  
PO Box 529  
FORESTVILLE NSW 2087