

Engaged Encounter

As the basis of a strong and happy marriage, it is vital for young people to have adequate self-knowledge as well as mutual confidence and honest communication with their partner.

The **FIRES Engaged Encounter** program offers young couples a unique opportunity to review, rethink, deepen and re-evaluate their relationship. Its main aim is to help participants avoid marriage problems arising from ignorance of oneself and one's partner. The program also helps engaged couples realize the conditions required for a life of love, joy, and growth together according to the Plan of God, the Creator of marriage and family.

Topics include: encounter with self, knowing and understanding one another, values, difficulties in marriage, openness, the meaning and real purpose of marriage, faith, relationship with God.

Engaged Encounter participants are invited to listen to talks by young married team couples, who honestly share how they have faced different situations in their relationship and married life. Presentations are followed by periods of quiet reflection and couple sharing about handout questions. The two-day program also includes Holy Mass and prayers led by a Catholic priest.

The program is not only for couples who have already decided to marry, but also for couples who want to determine with more assurance whether they would indeed want to marry one another, as well as for couples who are already married but for a period of less than 3 years. Started and conducted within the Catholic Church, the program is open to non-Catholic or non-Christian couples as well.

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Actual Testimonies of Some Participants

„The team couples' talks were excellent. Their lived experiences made a great impression on both of us. Their honesty was fantastic. I made it a point to thank them for it.”

„The Engaged Encounter meant a real lot to me. It touched me deeply. Perhaps that's why I find it difficult to speak about it. It was an intensive re-evaluation, a review of our relationship. It was an encounter with myself, with my girlfriend and with our God.”

„It was being together in a new and more honest way. It deepened our knowledge of one another and increased our mutual respect. Also, it was being together with God in an extremely gentle and yet very deep way. An experience of being blessed by the Lord.”

„In the days after the Engaged Encounter we realized more and more strongly that we do not fit together, so we let one another go in love and broke off our engagement. Thanks be to the Lord for this realization!”

„We have made a couple of commitments which we try to keep. We have had some success and some failures but we try again where we have failed. For example, we pray together as a couple now not only occasionally, but making a conscious effort. We also make an effort at greater discipline in our time schedule.”

„We have been encouraged and strengthened in belonging together. The Encounter has deepened our relationship. We felt assured afterwards.”