

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

What is a Marriage Encounter?

Marriage Encounter is a 44 hour experience for married couples that has changed the lives of millions throughout the world. It was founded in Spain in 1961 by Father Gabriel Calvo and is currently conducted in 94 countries. The Spanish word for "Encounter" implies a "discovery". In this case it is aimed at a of oneself as an individual with relationships to con's spouse, children, God and others, that need constantly to be re-evaluated. This will ensure the kind of experience and growth of unity, love and joy that gives meaning to married life. This is the ultimate goal of Marriage Encounter; and its expansion throughout the world is a clear indication that it has indeed produced these results in the lives of many couples.

It is a fact that no marriage is unaffected by negative influences that hamper growth and joy, such as debilitating weak points, lack of love, faults, failures, frustrations, alienation, stress, lack of forgiveness, disillusionment, lack of understanding, etc. But there are also inevitably in married and family life positive qualities that most couples do not sufficiently avert to because they are so near and common, and because the negative traits have a tendency to stand out and make the positive less noticeable. These positive qualities include love, unity, hope, joy, communication, strong points, good values, forgiveness, trust, reconciliation, and for many a belief in God and a continual growth in relationship to Him, etc. A re-discovery of these respective points, within a quiet and non-threatening environment, helps to facilitate overcoming the former and deepening the latter.

For Whom is Marriage Encounter Intended?

Marriage Encounter is for all married couples who wish to deepen even further what they themselves with good reason already consider to be a good and solid marriage.

It is for those couples who acknowledge the need to improve the quality of their communication because they feel that something is lacking.

It is for those couples who may feel that they no longer have any quality communication whatsoever, and may even be on the verge of separation, but nevertheless are willing to make an attempt to retrieve what they have lost; or at the very least to separate in a spirit of reconciliation.

All validly married couples are welcome without regard to age, Religion, condition of their marriage, etc. Participants are not required to have any formal Religion, and absolutely no attempt is made to pressure them to believe, or in any way accept, anything that is said. They should be aware, however, that for many couples an answer to their needs lies precisely in a re- evaluation of the spiritual values that their particular Religion offers them. And therefore part of the Marriage Encounter message does concern itself with a consideration of those values, in order to afford a possible answer for those participants who are indeed in need of and seeking spiritual help. This is to help them, and not to compel others to believe.

Methodology:

The experience is generally held over a weekend from Friday 8:00pm until Sunday 4:00pm. The Program basically runs as follows: After an orientation talk given by a priest, and a motivation talk based upon personal experiences presented by one of three team couples who have previously gone through the experience, the participants are given a

series of questions to reflect upon. Afterwards each couple retires to their respective rooms to dialogue on the discoveries they have made about themselves after having reflected on the questions. There is no sharing about these reflections with anyone other than one's spouse.

What Marriage Encounter is not:

It is not a retreat, group therapy, a study seminar, a prayer meeting, or anything like what one may have experienced in the past. It is a unique non-threatening experience that cannot possibly, as some unwarrantable fear, endanger that couple relationship because, not only is there no opportunity to make accusations against one another, there is also no reason to do so, since the couple dialogue consists solely in each one sharing his or her discovery of self, to which there is no possibility of taking exception.

Is it effective?

Its spread to 94 countries is itself ample proof of its effectiveness. Innumerable couples thought the world have been surprised to discover that the relatively good quality of their marital relationship, with which they had been understandably pleased, was really no more than the starting point of enormous possibilities for growth in love and unity, limited only by the Infinity of God Himself.

Millions of couples have re-discovered the fresh joy of love that they had felt in the early months of their marriage, came to realize the reason or reasons why they might have lost it, and were able to retrieve it on a permanent basis.

As a result of the Marriage Encounter experience, not a few sons and daughters throughout the world can testify how it was instrumental in bringing out the best in their parents - something they had

fervently wanted to believe in, but somehow found difficult to detect in their daily family lives - and became pleased to acknowledge and proud to announce to others their now well-grounded conviction that they have the best parents in the world. This effect, in itself, makes experiencing a Marriage Encounter more than worthwhile.

Only those couples who respond to the challenge of experiencing Marriage Encounter can really understand and attest to its effectiveness and worth. Why not allow yourselves to be among them! Give it a try! Guaranteed, you won't regret it!!!



For further information concerning Marriage Encounter and when and where one might attend, please contact:

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