

DIOCESAN NFP PROGRAM - PROFILE 2003 REPORT

*Diocesan Development Program for
Natural Family Planning,
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OVERVIEW

In January of 2003, **190 Profile** questionnaires were mailed to dioceses. **One hundred and five** or **55 percent** of the dioceses completed and returned questionnaires. As in previous years, the data indicates that certain aspects of NFP programs remain relatively unchanged with slight improvement in a few areas.

- A. There has been a recognition in dioceses of the need to have a person designated as the NFP coordinator. Often this responsibility is only one of many responsibilities performed by the person, e.g., Director of Marriage and Family Life. Those responsible for coordinating NFP ministry (78%) have had some training in NFP methodology.
- B. Forty-four percent of dioceses surveyed budgeted less than a \$5,000 for NFP programs in 2003. Fifty-five percent of all NFP diocesan programs operate on less than \$10,000 per year, while twenty-three percent have annual budgets of \$10,000 to \$29,000. Nineteen percent of dioceses spend from \$30,000 to more than \$70,000 for their NFP programs. Well-funded diocesan NFP programs often rely on various forms of federal and state grants to supplement diocesan funding. In some dioceses NFP instruction is covered by insurance plans. In most dioceses NFP programs share funding, materials, and staff support of an umbrella department, e.g., Marriage and Family Life Office. Typically, NFP is not identified as a specific line item in diocesan budgets. Less than half (44%) of Diocesan NFP programs are asked to submit an annual report
- C. The majority of diocesan marriage preparation programs make some effort to provide rudimentary NFP information to various groups, with special attention directed toward couples preparing for marriage, e.g., booklets, fact-sheets, witness couple talks and NFP course instruction. Through NFP introductory sessions more than **106,082** individuals received basic information on NFP. The time given to NFP is not lengthy; in **78 percent** of Pre-Cana programs, it is less than **one hour**. Yet, there has been slight improvement in the amount of time given NFP in marriage preparation programs overall. A more thorough and substantive inclusion of NFP in educational programs about human sexuality and conjugal love remains a challenging goal, not only for marriage preparation but on every level of instruction. In some Pre-Cana programs NFP information is simply given to couples without discussion. Increasingly priests are requiring couples preparing for marriage to take a full course of NFP instruction. Nationally, only one diocese requires a full course of instruction in NFP in its marriage preparation guidelines, although other dioceses have indicated that this is a long term goal.
- D. Across the nation, more than **13,249** individuals received a full course of instruction in NFP. This number is large but only represents a small portion of the total number of couples preparing for marriage.
- E. The Sympto-Thermal Method (STM) and Ovulation Method (OM) are the most preferred methods of NFP. Dioceses use a variety of national, regional and local NFP provider groups to train teachers.

- F. Forty-five percent of diocesan NFP teachers are volunteers. Thirty-five percent of the dioceses provide stipends to volunteer teachers to cover personal costs, e.g., transportation, baby sitter, materials, etc.
- G. Among the dioceses that completed the survey, there are more than **1,482** NFP teachers across the nation. They represent a largely untapped resource for the teaching of human sexuality within a faith context.
- H. It would seem that many Diocesan NFP Coordinators (70 in total) are unfamiliar with the content of NFP introductory sessions offered in their dioceses. This assumption is based on the number of respondents who did not answer Question 27.

When viewed nationally, diocesan NFP programs vary from almost nonexistent to comprehensive. Some dioceses have very strong educational programs that integrate NFP into all educational efforts on human sexuality, marriage, and family life. Through hard work and dedication, other dioceses have made tremendous strides in improving the quality of their NFP programs in order to be certified as meeting the *Standards for Diocesan NFP Ministry*. But across the nation, as one diocese improves its NFP program, another experiences a reduction in program size through teacher loss, budget cuts, and/or diocesan restructuring. The fact that NFP is often viewed as a marginal pastoral concern becomes painfully clear when one contrasts the number of Catholic marriages performed in the U.S. with the number of total couples who have attended a full course of instruction in NFP.

Finally, the pastoral question that must be faced when examining each diocesan NFP effort is: *Can couples who wish to be faithful to Church teaching on responsible parenthood readily get the NFP support they need?* The answer to this question will determine how best to plan and support local diocesan NFP ministry.

I. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

1. The (arch)diocesan NFP Program is: (*Check one*)
 - 66% Part of the office of Marriage and Family Life
 - 05% A service of one of our Catholic hospital(s)
 - 04% Part of Catholic Charities
 - 10% Its own department
 - 14% Other
 - 01% No Response

2. Who is responsible for coordinating NFP Ministry (*e.g., Family Life Director, NFP Coordinator, Respect Life Director, etc.*)?
 - 27% Diocesan NFP Coordinator
 - 54% Family Life Director

- 02% Director of Catholic Charities
- 07% Respect Life Director
- 06% Other: Director of Christian Service, Department of Education, etc.

2b) How long have you been the NFP coordinator?

The person responsible for coordinating NFP ministry has held the position for an average of seven years. The range is from less than a year to over twenty years.

2c) No person designated: 4%

3. For this position, NFP work is: (*Check one*)

- 39% One aspect of other responsibilities
- 07% Full-time, paid
- 0% Full-time, volunteer
- 33% Part-time, paid
- 17% Part-time, volunteer
- 04% No Response

4. Is the NFP coordinator trained in NFP methodology? (*Check one*)

78% Yes 16% No 06% No Response

5. If the answer to question (4) is “Yes,” for which of the following roles was the NFP coordinator trained? (*Check all that apply*)

(*Frequency*)

60 Teacher 64 User 47 Promoter 27 No Response

Those who have been teaching have taught for an average of eight years.

6. If you answered question (5), please indicate which school(s) of NFP trained the coordinator: (*Check all that apply*)

(*Frequency*)

- 28 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
- 30 Couple to Couple League (CCL)
- 21 Creighton Model Fertility *Care*TM Center
- 18 Diocesan NFP Teacher Training Program
- 08 Northwest Family Services
- 08 Family of the Americas Foundation
- 12 Other
- 23 No Response

7. How many NFP teachers are part of the (arch)diocesan program? (Count teaching couples as two)

Total: 1,482

8. Which statement best describes the NFP program policy regarding remuneration of its teachers? (*Check one*)

45% Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We give them a stipend to cover expenses.

35% Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We do not give them a stipend.

08% We pay our NFP instructors (*part and/or full time*).

07% Salaries/stipends for instructors are provided by other sources (e.g., *Catholic Hospital, Knights of Columbus, etc.*).

05% No Response

9. Which organization trains the (arch)diocesan teachers? (*Check all that apply*)

(*Frequency*)

47 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)

63 Couple to Couple League (CCL)

45 Creighton Model Fertility *Care*TM Center

25 Diocesan Teacher Training program

08 Family of the Americas Foundation

11 Northwest Family Services

02 No Response

10. Does the (arch)diocese have an NFP Advisory Committee?

31% Yes 67% No 02% No Response

11. Do you prepare an annual diocesan report on NFP ministry?

44% Yes 52% No 04% No Response

II. PROGRAM BUDGET

12. How much money was spent on (arch)diocesan NFP programming last year? ()

02% \$0

11% \$1-999

31% \$1,000 - 4,999

11% \$5 - 9,999

23% \$10 - 29,999

08% \$30 - 49,999
 05% \$50 - 69,999
 06% \$70,000+
 03% No Response

13. How much (arch)diocesan money was spent directly for NFP programing last year?

07% \$0
 12% \$1-999
 35% \$1,000 - 4,999
 14% \$5 - 9,999
 14% \$10 - 29,999
 05% \$30 - 49,999
 04% \$50 - 69,999
 03% \$70,000+
 05% No Response

14. How much money generated by all NFP activities contributed to the NFP budget last year?

20% 0
 20% 1-999
 27% 1,000-4,999
 11% 5,000-9,999
 12% >10,000
 10% No Response

15. Is there a separate fee for an introductory session? (*Check one*)

29% Yes 61% No 10% No Response

The average fee is \$25.00. The amount varied from a low of \$5.00 to a high of \$50.00 depending on materials and length of an introductory session(s).

16. Do you charge a fee for a full course in NFP? (*Check one*)

85% Yes 11% No 04% No Response

17. If the answer to question (16) is “Yes”, how is a separate fee determined for a full course in NFP? (*Check one*)

21% (Arch)diocese NFP determine fees
 40% Individual NFP provider determines fees
 24% Combination of (arch)diocesan staff and individual NFP provider determine fees
 02% Other
 12% No Response

18. How much is charged to clients/couples for a course in NFP? (*If amounts vary, give average*)

The average charged for a course in NFP is \$75.00. The charge varied from a low of \$0 and to a high of \$540.00, depending on materials, length of course, and the number of follow-up services required.

19. Is a fee charged for follow-up? (*Check one*)

18% Yes 71% No 11% No Response

The average charged for a follow-up is \$25.00. The amount varied from \$0 to \$40.00

III. PROGRAM SERVICE

20. Which NFP method(s) is currently taught in the (arch)diocesan program? (*Check all that apply*)

(*Frequency*)

71 OM

80 STM

06 No Response

21. How many individuals (couples count as two) in the (arch)diocese received an introductory/promotional talk on NFP during the last twelve months?

More than 106,082 individuals received some information/instruction on NFP.

22. How many individuals (couples count as two) in the (arch)diocese attended NFP class/instruction during the last twelve months?

More than 13,249 individuals attended a class/instruction on NFP.

23. Does the (arch)diocese have guidelines for marriage preparation?

89% Yes 07% No 04% No Response

24. If the answer to question (23) was "Yes," is NFP included in the guidelines for marriage preparation?

77% Yes 15% No 08% No Response

25. On average how much time is allowed for NFP education in marriage preparation programs? (*Give your best estimate*)

20% 5 minutes - 15 minutes
 36% 20 minutes - 30 minutes
 22% 35 minutes - 45 minutes
 21% 1 hour - 2 hours+
 01% No Response

26. Does the (arch)diocese require an **introductory** session to NFP for the engaged? (*Check one*)

30% Yes 68% No 02% No Response

27. If the answer to question (26) is “Yes”, what is the content of the required NFP introductory session? (*Check all that apply*)

(*Frequency*)

32 The appropriate Church teachings
 31 Reproductive anatomy & physiology
 31 Basic NFP science (e.g., all the signs of fertility discussed)
 30 Basic NFP methodology (e.g., an overview of all the specific NFP systems offered in your diocese)
 35 Benefits of NFP
 28 Contradictions of various contraceptives
 29 NFP witness talk
 70 No Response

Note: A significant number of respondents (70) left the question unanswered.

28. If the answer to the question (26) is “Yes”, how much time is allotted to your required NFP introductory session?

10% 30 minutes
 07% 45 minutes
 18% 1 hour - 2 hours
 01% Other: One day NFP seminar

Note: A significant number of respondents (64) left the question unanswered.

29. Does the (arch)diocese require an NFP *course* for engaged couples? (*Check one*)

01% Yes 96% No 03% No Response

30. Is the (arch)diocese moving toward mandating a full course of NFP instruction for engaged couples? (check one)

10% Yes 85% No 05% No Response

**Gratitude is extended to the following dioceses
who provided data for the 2003 *Profile* survey**

Albany, Allentown, Altoona-Johnstown; Anchorage, Arlington, Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Biloxi, Bismarck, Boise, Boston, Burlington, Camden, Casper, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Corpus Christi, Covington, Crookston, Denver, Detroit, Dubuque, Duluth, Erie, Evansville, Fargo, Fort Wayne-South Bend, Fort Worth, Green Bay, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Hartford, Joliet, Kalamazoo, Kansas City, KS, Kansas City-St. Joseph, La Crosse, Lafayette, IN, Lake Charles, Las Cruces, Lexington, Lincoln, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Madison, Marquette, Memphis, Metuchen, Miami, Milwaukee, New Orleans, New Ulm, New York, Norwich, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Orange, Orlando, Owensboro, Palm Beach, Paterson, Pensacola-Tallahassee, Peoria, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Portland, OR, Providence, Raleigh, Rapid City, Richmond, Rochester, Rockford, Rockville Centre, St. Augustine, St. Cloud, St. Louis, St. Paul and Minneapolis, St. Petersburg, Salina, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Jose, Santa Fe, Santa Rosa, Savannah, Scranton, Spokane, Springfield, IL, Springfield, MA, Stockton, Superior, Syracuse, Toledo, Tucson, Tulsa, Washington, DC, Wichita, Yakima.

Program Resources

The following documents are useful in strengthening diocesan NFP programs.

Diocesan Plan for Natural Family Planning Program Development. Washington, D.C.: Diocesan Development Program for NFP, 1981. (Available from the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities; 1-202-541-3070.)

Standards for Diocesan NFP Ministry. Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops= Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 2000. (Available from USCCB Publishing; 1-800-235-8722; #5-357.)

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