

Marriage, what is it really all about?

The following format can be used with revisions, for personal and local information, to submit an article to your local Catholic Newspaper.

Offered by Jack & Angel LaBate

What happened to that spark in our marriage? Seems like we never have time to talk or spend time together anymore. Why did I do what I just did to him or her? There has to be more to our marriage. Sound familiar? From time to time we all have had these thoughts, asked these questions or made these statements.

The answers to these questions and many more can be answered by experiencing a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. A Marriage Encounter Weekend is for good marriages, but even good marriages need to be rejuvenated from time to time. No marriage is perfect, we all have room to grow and to improve. The Weekend addresses many of these questions and gives practical day-to-day solutions to bring you closer. It also provides insights into what God is calling us to in our marriage. The Weekend has helped thousands of couples all over the world since its inception in 1968. This heartwarming experience builds on the love you have for each other. It provides an opportunity for you to focus on your relationship and for you to explore new ways to love and care for each other.

The basic objective on the Weekend is to improve the communication between husband and wife and to provide more insight into what prevents married couples from communicating more effectively. The Weekend also gives the couple a greater understanding as to what their sacrament is, how it affects others.

Questions that may be on your mind:

Why are feelings so important in our communication? Feelings are the foundation of intimate communication. We know that feelings drive behavior and that most couples today are dealing with each other at a behavioral level. Did you ever notice how you react when your spouse walks in the door with a wrinkled brow and a sad or angry look? You might think, "What did I do now?" Or, "What is bothering him or her?" The surface behavior is immediately seen and judged and that is the beginning of what could be a very tense day or evening. The point is we see the behavior and we react to it, never understanding what caused the behavior. The Weekend helps you to understand why these behaviors exist and what drives the behavior.

Who am I and why do I do what I do? On the Weekend we learn about our personality styles and their associated behaviors and how these behaviors can enhance or hinder a relationship. It is important to first understand our own

behavior. This understanding gives us the knowledge we need to make effective choices, which can lead to a closer, more loving relationship.

Why are we in this downward spiral? At times we are disappointed with the way things are going in our marriage and we wonder why. On the Weekend we come to understand that we are subtly trained for marriage by what we saw in the marriages of our parents and grandparents and this created our expectations for our marriage. When these expectations are not realized we become disappointed and we begin to experience a downward spiral, which often leads to loneliness and distance in our relationship. On the Weekend we have an opportunity to explore these expectations and how we can deal with them.

Why is it so difficult to listen to him or her? We do not realize it, but because of who we are and because of certain listening barriers and incidents in our past it is often difficult to listen to our spouse in certain areas of our relationship. On the Weekend we explore those barriers and come to understand how to listen with our hearts.

Why are there are certain areas in our relationship that are off limits, areas we just don't discuss? We do avoid certain areas in our relationship and this causes distance between us. We just don't know how to approach these areas with out causing a problem. The Weekend provides a structured way to express yourself in these areas with trust and confidence, emphasizing the fact that your relationship is more important than any issue you face. This allows you to address those areas and still remain close.

What does God want for us in our marriage? God's desire is for us to be happy and in love. He wants us to be unified. He wants us to know that there is a greater purpose to our marriage. We are a Sacrament, a visible sign of God's love in the world. As a sacrament we have certain gifts that are made available to us. On the Weekend you will come to know these gifts and how to use them to bring more happiness and joy into your marriage.

Once we experience a Weekend, will it last? On the Weekend you are given five (5) effective tools to keep your relationship a priority. By using these tools you can keep the experience of your Weekend ever present in your relationship and can make your Sacrament of Marriage the precious gift God intended it to be.

Please sign up today for the wonderful and enlightening experience of a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend!

Contact information:

Upcoming Weekends: