

# WWME Great Community February 2007

By Mike & Pam Gross

The San Diego Encounter Community from Section 11 is our "Great Community" for February. Mike & Pam Gross and Fr. Steven Grancini were the leadership team in charge of this loving and supportive group of Couples and Priest for the past two years. Albert & Imelda Duena and Fr. Mike Sinor have recently been selected as the coordinating team.

San Diego has 7 local communities stretching from the Mexican border up through Oceanside and from the beach to the desert. Each community has a leadership couple that meets each month at Executive Board with the Executive team and area pillars. Each community has their own identity and is tailored to the needs of their community. Some of the communities meet at the same location each month, while others change location for each meeting. One of the communities has the teenagers baby-sit at one house while the couples meet at another house. All meetings have prayer, focus, dialogue, open sharing and food.

San Diego communities love fun. They enjoy getting together and sharing their lives. As a whole community they have 2-3 activities that allow all of the San Diego Encounter to join together. They have an annual World Marriage Day/ Sweetheart Dance. Last year it included a silent auction that helped to keep the cost down so that more couples could attend. They also have family gatherings, like a picnic and chili cook off. This year they had a bonfire on the beach and enjoyed free fireworks from Sea World. There is also a family campout. During the day, the families get together for volleyball and bumper boats. They all go to church together on Saturday night and then gather for a potluck dinner and sing along.

Many of the local communities plan their own outings as well. Some of these include riding the trolley downtown and invading a restaurant for dinner, Kris kringling, pool parties, sunset dialogue by the ocean and mystery dinners.

But the communities are not all about fun, they are actively living the lifestyle of Worldwide Marriage Encounter. Each community hosts one or two Weekends a year. They register the couples on Friday night, carry luggage to the rooms and make sure all the prayer couples are accounted for on Sunday for the greet off. The communities have taken the responsibility for manning the pulpit talks that are set up by the inviting pillar. Many scheduled pulpit talks in their own parishes, talked to mom's groups and men's groups, stuffed flyers in bulletins, handed out brochures at Engaged Encounter, and handed out kisses to Mom's on Mothers Day. They are excited about Worldwide Marriage Encounter and want to spread the word.

San Diego was host to the National Priest Experience twice. Couples from each community came together to help. They setup, cleaned up and served during the 3-day experience. Many couples also had dinner with visiting priests on the last night, either inviting them into their home or out to a local restaurant.

Community couples reach out in many areas. They are active members of their parish and other volunteer groups. They serve as lecturers, Eucharistic ministers, and teach CCD in their parishes. They are active in scouts, Indian guides, and soccer and school activities. The San Diego couples and priests truly are changing the world!

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**Couples Dancing at a San Diego Community Event**