

WWME Great Community July 2007

Another Great Community Story...

By Steve & Cindy Burnett

Steve & Cindy Burnett were encountered in Erie, PA, but in 2002 they moved to southeastern Michigan to a little farming community called Deerfield, Cindy's hometown. They had been looking for a sharing group to join, and a few years ago they found a great community in Tecumseh, Michigan - St Elizabeth's Parish that welcomed them with open arms. What a group! According to Steve & Cindy, this community truly has the FAMIS qualities. The Tecumseh Abundance Sharing Group was started 6 years ago by Dennis & Denise Shelle, a former presenting team couple in the Lansing Diocese. The group now has 11 couples who meet on a monthly basis. The group is fun, and Steve & Cindy felt comfortable from the minute they walked in the door. Every month, a different couple takes responsibility for the meeting arrangements, including the sharing.



Dennis & Denise Shelle, the share group leaders explained that their community supports the Weekend by providing a dialoguing share group (DSG) for encountered couples. Their members serve as prayer couples who welcome new members into the group. They also host information nights at the Parish Center and in homes. They do pulpit talks, put ads in the church bulletins and they invite one on one. They also keep trifold in the information racks at the Parish Center.



Besides the monthly meeting, the Tecumseh DSG has a yearly dinner dance around the time of World Marriage Day. During Lent, they travel to another parish in the area for a Friday night Fish Fry, and in the summer they have an annual camp out. The group has developed intimacy through their regular presentations, dialogues and sharing. They also look out for each other, both through prayer support and physical support. Recently Denise's father passed away suddenly. The group was there to help and support her. The couples also help each other through their prayer chain.



Cindy & Steve have been in the area 3 years and have presented pulpit talks, and personally invited several couples to the Weekend. They haven't had much success because the area is a rural farming area and the nearest Weekend is 2 hours away, but they keep trying. For the farmers, availability is best in January/February. Cindy & Steve are working on getting a Weekend in the SE corner of the state so that these couples will go. They would like to see more emphasis on the post Weekend (bridging) activities in their area so they are working to make that happen. Tecumseh is a great community because in spite of their isolation, they are faithful to the mission and vision of WWME!