

The Dialogue



Quarterly Newsletter of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Community of the Austin Diocese

November 2003

SPOTLIGHT ON LEADERSHIP

by Jon Olson

Our Austin /Central Texas area of Worldwide Marriage Encounter is part of a larger community called Section 10, which includes Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. The section discerned a new leadership team this fall (one couple and one priest), and we are excited to report that this guiding role has been bestowed upon Jose and Marilyn Garcia of Austin and Father Len Stegman of San Antonio.

Passing on the Dream

Father Len and the Garcias pledge to continue the good work of the outgoing section leaders, John and Ann Arnold of Victoria, Texas, and Monsignor Leroy Braden of Houston. They want to keep WWME vibrant and alive throughout Section 10.

In 2002 there were 884 couples and 5 priests encountered in our Section, but we have the potential to reach many more. A main focus item is to have more priests enjoy the experience of attending a WWME Weekend. Father Len, who has presented as many as 30 weekends throughout the country in a single year, knows that there is always a need for more priests to take an active part in this wonderful ministry. The team also wants to bring WWME Weekends and active circles to our outreach areas. Currently, Section 10 is organized into the following areas: Austin, Houston North, Houston South, Victoria, Rio Grande Valley, Dallas, El Paso, San Antonio, Lubbock, and Oklahoma City/Tulsa. Our outreach areas include West Texas, Amarillo, Beaumont, and Corpus Christi in Texas, as

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Fr. Len Stegman and Marilyn & Jose Garcia (left) from the Austin Team were discerned in September to be the ecclesial team for Section 10. They are shown here, in October, passing on the Austin ME leadership cross to Dora & Raul Gonzalez (right), the newly discerned leadership couple for the Austin Diocese Team.

"Our dream is for any couple or priest who wants to attend a Weekend to be able to do so within close proximity of their home and in their desired language."

-Jose and Marilyn Garcia

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well as Las Cruces and Hobbs in New Mexico. In recognition of the cultural diversity of our region of the country, the Garcias and Father Len hope to improve the coordination of WWME activities with our brothers and sisters who present Weekends in Spanish. "Our dream is for any couple or priest who wants to attend a Weekend to be able to do so within close proximity of their home and in their desired language," say Marilyn and Jose. "And after the Weekend, we want them to have a support community to help them continue on their journey of love and faith."

Service to Family, Country and WWME

Jose and Marilyn have 3 married children (Christie, Paul and David), and were on the road to Mississippi to welcome the birth of their 7th grandchild when interviewed on the phone for this article. They attended their first ME Weekend in North Carolina in April 1996, and their reaction was, "It changed our lives." They quickly moved into the role of presenting couple, giving their first Weekend in 1997. Moving to Austin in November 1999, they became Austin area leaders in May 2002. Their selection as section leadership is bittersweet, as they cannot complete their 2 year term as area leaders. However, they will continue as active members of both the Austin area presenting team and the West Austin Circle.

When asked about their accomplishments as area leaders, they replied, "In December 2002 we piloted the ME Experience at our parish, St. Thomas More, for only the second time in the US, with our then national leaders, Bob and Huli Tabone and Father Mark Willenbring." The ME Experience is a parish-based encounter spread over 4 different timeslots during a week to accommodate those who cannot spend an entire weekend away from home (see Feb. 2003 newsletter). They also co-chaired a program of enrichment for all team couples in the Section. Where do they find the time and energy for their ME commitments? "We are sustained by the love and support of the Austin ME community, and are inspired by the miracles the Holy Spirit brings to couples as they work on their relationship over the ME Weekend."

Father Len Stegman was born in Kansas in 1917, one of the 18 children of Alex and Frances Stegman. He was ordained a priest in June 1943 in Marathon, Wisconsin. His early priesthood included parish work and teaching in a Catholic high school, but in 1948 he entered the Army chaplaincy, serving in both Korea and Vietnam. Chaplain (Colonel) Stegman retired from his military career in 1977 after serving as command chaplain in Vietnam, where he supervised 450 chaplains of all faiths who served 450,000 service men and women. Residing in the Washington, D.C.

UPCOMING MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER EVENTS

November 14-16: ME Weekend Cedar-brake Retreat Center Belton, TX

December 7: Austin ME Community Christmas Party at Nathan and Mary Ausley's, Caldwell, TX, all

welcome, please contact nmausley@tconline.net or 979-535-4867 for details.

February 6-8: ME Weekend Cedar-brake Retreat Center Belton, TX

February 8: World Marriage Day

March 26-28: ME Weekend Cedar-brake Retreat Center Belton, TX



November 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2003

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January 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31



...And the two of them become one body.

-Genesis 2:24

area from 1977-1988, he became very involved in WWME, presenting weekends in the United States, Europe and Iceland. In 1988, he moved to San Antonio, where he assists with parishes and continues his WWME ministry.

For those of us in Austin, Father Len is one of two priests from San Antonio who are regulars for our weekends presented at the diocesan Cedarbrake Retreat Center. When asked about his busy schedule during retirement, Father Len, 86, says, "I'm just going through middle age and will be happy to serve the Lord as long as the Lord says YES!"


New Austin Leadership

As a result of the Garcias' new responsibilities, the Austin ME presenting team discerned new leadership - Raul and Dora Gonzalez of Austin. Raul and Dora were introduced to the ME way of life on their weekend in 1973 and have been growing and sharing in love ever since. Their goals for Austin mirror the goals of Father Len and the Garcias for Section 10. They want to increase the number of weekends presented in the diocese ("We have only encountered 1 to 2% of the couples in Central Texas."), bring an ME Weekend to the Bryan/College Station area, help facilitate Spanish-speaking weekends in the Austin area, and nurture our relationship with Bishop Aymond and the diocese. ❤️



Leadership couples from Section 10 participated in the leadership selection process. Section 10 is composed of Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. The painting in the background is Our Lady of San Juan, as the selection process was in the San Juan Basilica in the Rio Grande Valley.

Consider being a prayer couple during a Marriage Encounter Weekend for one of the attending couples. If you are interested, please contact Mark and Nell Reinberg (979-693-4808 or markr@iolbv.com).



www.ematrimony.org
Supporting, Encouraging, Challenging the WWME Community



Jose & Marilyn Garcia and Fr. Len Stegman (center) assume the Section 10 leadership role from Ann & John Arnold (right) during the selection process at the San Juan Basilica grounds in the Rio Grande Valley. Bob & Joy Hernandez, (left) the National leadership couple from Upton, MA, helped facilitate the selection process.

Marriage Encounter Dialogue Calendar
Are you looking for a convenient source of great questions for your daily dialogue? Check out the Marriage Encounter Calendar. Every Sunday there is a scripture-based question, and there are opportunities to expand your dialogue to include your entire family. The price for calendars is \$10.00 and they can be purchased from Charlie and Mary Copeland. Information at 512-388-4616 or copelands@pressroom.com.

St. John Neumann Catholic Church
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St. John Neumann Catholic Church
Editors: Hilary and Jon Olson
Phone: 512-328-3220 x109
Fax: 512-328-3226
Email: holson@sjnaustin.org

As always, we need your help to invite couples to experience a Worldwide Marriage Encounter. We are confident that the brilliance of your love for each other as husband and wife, and the gift of daily dialogue to keep that relationship strong, will be the light that attracts other couples to want what you have and to attend a Marriage Encounter in whatever format their schedule allows. If you need additional information please contact Raul and Dora Gonzalez at (512) 280-1002, or visit our local WWME website, www.austinme.org.

Austin Diocese Marriage Encounter Circle Information:

Austin Central: Matt Kerwick and Lynne Kammer

3911 Walnut Clay Dr., Austin 78731 ph: 512-453-4967
email: lynne@visionaryresearch.com
Meets various times.

Austin South: Raul and Dora Gonzalez

10511 River Plantation Dr., Austin, TX 78747 ph: 512-280-1002
email: rpiegonzo1@aol.com
Meets various times.

Austin Westlake Hills: Barry and Kathleen Meyer

11800 Lake Stone Drive, Austin, TX 78738 ph: 512-402-0740
email: barry@meyerbox.com, kathleen@meyerbox.com
Second Saturday every month, 7:00pm.

Caldwell: Nathan and Mary Ausley

5760 CR 324, Caldwell, TX 77836 ph: 979-535-4867
email: nmausley@tconline.net
Meets various times.

College Station: Randy and Irene Light

2100 Bent Oak, College Station, TX 77845 ph: 979-693-1931
email: light@brain-doc.com
Meets bi-monthly.

LaGrange: Louis and Mary Frerich

1002 Nink Road, Smithville, TX 78957 ph: 512-369-5127
email contact: Dave & Dorinda Hickey, ddhickey@prodigy.net
Meets various times.

Pflugerville: Michael and Laura Cowan

17909 Dansworth Drive, Pflugerville, TX 78660 ph: 512-251-6797
email: lauraanncowan@hotmail.com
Meets 3rd Saturday of every month.

Round Rock: Marcos and Marie Palacios

1109 North Riviera Circle, Cedar Park, TX 78613 ph: 512-918-1931
email: marcospalacios@yahoo.com, mariepalacios@yahoo.com
Second Friday every month, 7:30pm.

San Marcos: Michael and Renee Furtado

PO box 1733, San Marcos, TX 78667 ph: 512-396-3620
email: mfurtado@grandecom.net
Meets various times.

Temple/Killeen: Jim and Miriam Ortiz

710 Livingston Ct., Temple, TX 76502 ph: 254-780-3116
email: Anjell7107@aol.com
Meets various times.

Waco: Jim and Anna Fitzpatrick

3812 Austin Avenue, Waco, TX 76710-7344 ph: 254-753-2745
email: jafitzp@msn.com
Meets various times.

West: Eddie and Charlotte Klaus

2575 Brickyard Rd., West, TX 76591 ph: 254-826-5604
email: eddieklaus@aol.com
Meets various times.