

***DIOCESAN NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING MINISTRY
NATIONAL PROFILE***

2007 REPORT

**NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM
Secretariat for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
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OVERVIEW

In January 2007, 190 dioceses were invited to participate in the annual *Diocesan Natural Family Planning Ministry National Profile (Profile)* survey. This was the fourth year that participants completed the *Profile* online. This cumulative data base serves two functions. It provides an individual portrait of a diocese's NFP ministry and it assists the NFP Program of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' office to analyze NFP program short and long term trends throughout the United States. Eighty-two dioceses submitted data. As in previous years, the following data "snapshot" indicates that NFP programs remain largely unchanged from 2007. But viewed over the last two decades, NFP efforts are getting stronger and more organized.

- When viewed nationally, diocesan NFP programs vary from comprehensive to nonexistent. Some dioceses have strong educational programs that integrate NFP into all educational efforts on human sexuality, marriage, and family life. Through hard work and dedication, more dioceses have made strides in improving the quality of their NFP programs in order to meet the *Standards for Diocesan NFP Ministry*. But, as one diocese improves its NFP program, another diocese experiences a reduction in program size due to teacher loss, budget cuts, and/or diocesan restructuring.
- The majority of dioceses include NFP in their marriage preparation guidelines (87%). However, most newly married couples fail to take full advantage of natural family planning in their conjugal life. This assumption is strongly suggested when the total number of marriages in the Church (199,805¹) are compared with the total number of individuals (14,599)² reported in the survey that took a class/instruction in NFP. Obviously, much more must be done to inspire couples to fully understand and embrace the Church's teaching on human sexuality within marriage.
- Five dioceses and increasing numbers of individual priests/parishes require engaged couples to take a full NFP course of instruction before marriage. It is still too early to tell if this is a national trend. Based on *Profile* respondent comments, more dioceses have considered requiring an introduction or even a full NFP course of instruction as part of their marriage preparation policies. There is a wide diversity of comments on the pros and cons of requiring a full course of NFP instruction for engaged couples.

¹*U.S. Catholic Directory (2007).*

²See, 2007 *Profile*, Q.22.

- The majority of diocesan marriage preparation programs make some effort to provide basic 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. More than 67,751³ individuals received basic information/instruction on NFP.
- Nationally, diocesan funding for NFP programs is meager at best. Forty percent of dioceses surveyed budgeted less than \$5,000 for NFP programs in 2007. Fifty-one percent of all NFP diocesan programs operate on less than \$10,000 per year. Eleven percent of all diocesan programs spend more than \$30,000. There is a slight, but encouraging increase in financial support for diocesan NFP efforts.

³See, 2007 *Profile*, Q.21.

- In most dioceses, NFP programs share funding, materials, and staff support of an umbrella department, e.g., Marriage and Family Life Office. Most dioceses rely on part time paid staffs. Volunteers are the unsung heroes of diocesan NFP programs. A few dioceses have full time paid NFP coordinators. The majority of diocesan NFP programs depend on volunteers to sustain their programs (86%). Of these, a little less than a third (35%) of the dioceses offer modest stipends to teachers to cover personal costs, e.g., transportation, baby sitters, materials, etc.

- In most dioceses NFP efforts go largely unnoticed. Less than half (44%) of diocesan NFP programs are asked to submit an annual report of their activities. Often, NFP funding is so limited that it is not identified as a specific line item in diocesan budgets. To correct this problem, an annual NFP report should become typical programmatic practice in the dioceses.

In conclusion, the fundamental pastoral question that must be faced each year when examining each diocesan NFP program, is: *Can couples who wish to be faithful to Church teaching on conjugal love and 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*)

- 77% Part of the office of Marriage and Family Life
 - 1% A service of one of our Catholic hospital(s)
 - 3% Part of Catholic Charities
 - 4% Its own department
 - 15% Other
- N=80*

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

- 47% Diocesan NFP Coordinator
 - 36% Family Life Director
 - 5% Respect Life Director
 - 12% No person designated
- N=81*

How long have you been the NFP coordinator?

The person responsible for coordinating NFP ministry has held the position for an average of 7 years. The range is from less than 1 year to over 22 years. The majority have held their position for years or less.

N=39

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

- 54% One part of full-time responsibilities
 - 6% Full-time, paid
 - 0% Full-time, volunteer
 - 33% Part-time, paid
 - 6% Part-time, volunteer
- N=81*

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

- 85% Yes
 - 15% No
- N=79*

- 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*)

30 Teacher 54 User 40 Promoter

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

(*Frequency*)

18 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
 24 Couple to Couple League (CCL)
 15 Creighton Model FertilityCare™ Center
 8 Northwest Family Services
 4 Family of the Americas Foundation
 16 Smaller teaching programs or diocesan/regional programs

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

Range:	Teachers:	Dioceses
	2-10	25
	11-20	18
	21-30	9
	31+	8

Cumulative Total of teachers: 1,195

N=60

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

51% Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We do not give them a stipend.
 35% Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We give them a stipend to cover expenses.
 5% We pay our NFP instructors (*part and/or full time*).
 9% Salaries/stipends for instructors are provided by other sources (*e.g., Catholic Hospital, Knights of Columbus, etc.*).

N=80

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

(*Frequency*)

- 58 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
- 45 Couple to Couple League (CCL)
- 13 Creighton Model Fertility *Care*TM Center
- 0 Diocesan Teacher Training program
- 9 Family of the Americas Foundation
- 20 Northwest Family Services

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

37% Yes 63% No *N=78*

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

44% Yes 56% No *N=80*

II PROGRAM BUDGET

12) What was the total operating budget for NFP ministry last year? (*Estimate should include salaries, stipends, postage, materials, etc.*)

3% \$0
14% \$1-999
23% \$1,000 - 4,999
14% \$5 - 9,999
30% \$10 - 29,999
11% \$30 - 49,999
5% \$50> *N=73*

13) Of the total operating budget for NFP ministry, how much was directly funded by the diocese last year?

7% \$0
16% \$1-999
27% \$1,000 - 4,999
12% \$5 - 9,999
25% \$10 - 29,999
9% \$30 - 49,999
4% \$50> *N=75*

14) How much additional money was generated by all NFP activities? (e.g., introductory sessions, class fees, seminars, materials, etc.).

41%	0	
14%	1-999	
32%	1,000-4,999	
3%	5,000-9,999	
10%	10,000>	N=76

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

25% Yes	63% No	12% No Response	N=79
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Comment: The average fee for an introductory session is less than \$30.00. The amount charged varied from a low of \$5.00 to a high of \$50+ depending on materials and length of the introductory session(s). Most dioceses charge between \$11 and \$30.

16) Is there a charge a fee for a full course in NFP? (*Check one*)

95% Yes	5% No	N=78
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17) If the answer to question (16) is “Yes,” how is a separate fee determined for a full course in NFP? (*Check one*)

23%	(Arch) diocese NFP staff determine fees
49%	Individual NFP provider determines fees
16%	Combination of (arch) diocesan staff and individual NFP provider determine fees
11%	Other

N=73

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

1%	\$0	
3%	\$1-25	
11%	\$26-45	
18%	\$46-65	
31%	\$66-85	
9%	\$86-99	
27%	\$100>	N=71

Comment: Most courses cost over \$50 to cover the cost of materials. The charge varied from \$25 to over \$100+, depending on materials, length of course, and the number of follow-up services required.

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

26% Yes 74% No

N=73

Comment: The average charge for a follow-up session was \$25. Ninety-five percent of clients were charged less than \$45.

N=20

III PROGRAM SERVICE

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

(*Frequency*)

61 Cervical Mucus Method

72 Sympto-Thermal Method

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 67,751 individuals received some information/instruction on NFP.

N=72

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

More than 14,599 individuals attended a class/instruction on NFP.

N=76

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

98% Yes 2% No

N=80

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

87% Yes 13% No

N=77

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

9% 0 minutes - 15 minutes

18% 16 minutes - 30 minutes

20% 31 minutes - 45 minutes

26% 46 minutes - 1 hour

27% 1 hour - 2 hours+

N=77

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

37% Yes 63% No

N=78

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

16% 30 minutes

23% 45 minutes

45% 1 hour - 2 hours

16% Other; “one day NFP seminar,” etc.

N=31

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

(*Frequency*)

27 The appropriate Church teachings

21 Reproductive anatomy & physiology

29 Basic NFP science (e.g., *all the signs of fertility discussed*)

18 Basic NFP methodology (e.g., an overview of all the specific NFP systems offered in your diocese)

30 Benefits of NFP

24 Contraindications of various contraceptives

28 NFP witness talk

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

6% Yes 94% No

N=78

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

20% Yes 80% No

N=76

**Gratitude is extended to the following dioceses
for participating in the 2007 *Profile* survey**

Allentown, Altoona-Johnstown, Atlanta, Austin, Baker, Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Bismarck, Boston, Bridgeport, Buffalo, Burlington, Camden, Charleston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Colorado Springs, Columbus, Corpus Christi, Denver, Detroit, Erie, Evansville, Fall River, Fargo, Fort Wayne-South Bend, Galveston-Houston, Great-Fall-Billings, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Hartford, Houma-Thibodaux, Indianapolis, Jefferson City, Joliet, Kalamazoo, Kansas City, La Crosse, Lafayette in Indiana, Lake Charles, Lansing, Lincoln, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Madison, Marquette, Memphis, Metuchen, Milwaukee, New Ulm, New York, Ogdensburg, Omaha, Orlando, Palm Beach, Pensacola-Tallahassee, Peoria, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Providence, Raleigh, Rapid City, Richmond, Rochester, Rockford, St. Augustine, St. Cloud, St. Louis, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, San Diego, Scranton, Springfield in Illinois, Tulsa, Venice, Washington, Wichita, Worcester, Youngstown.

The dioceses of Albany, Superior and Yakima submitted their data after the report was completed.

Program Resources

The following documents are useful in strengthening diocesan NFP programs.

Diocesan Plan for Natural Family Planning Program Development. Washington, DC: Diocesan Development Program for NFP, 1981. (Available online at <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/nfp/NFPDiocesanPlan—1981.pdf> and from the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities; Orders, 1-866-582-0943.)

Standards for Diocesan NFP Ministry. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 2000. (Available at <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/nfp/standard.shtml>)

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