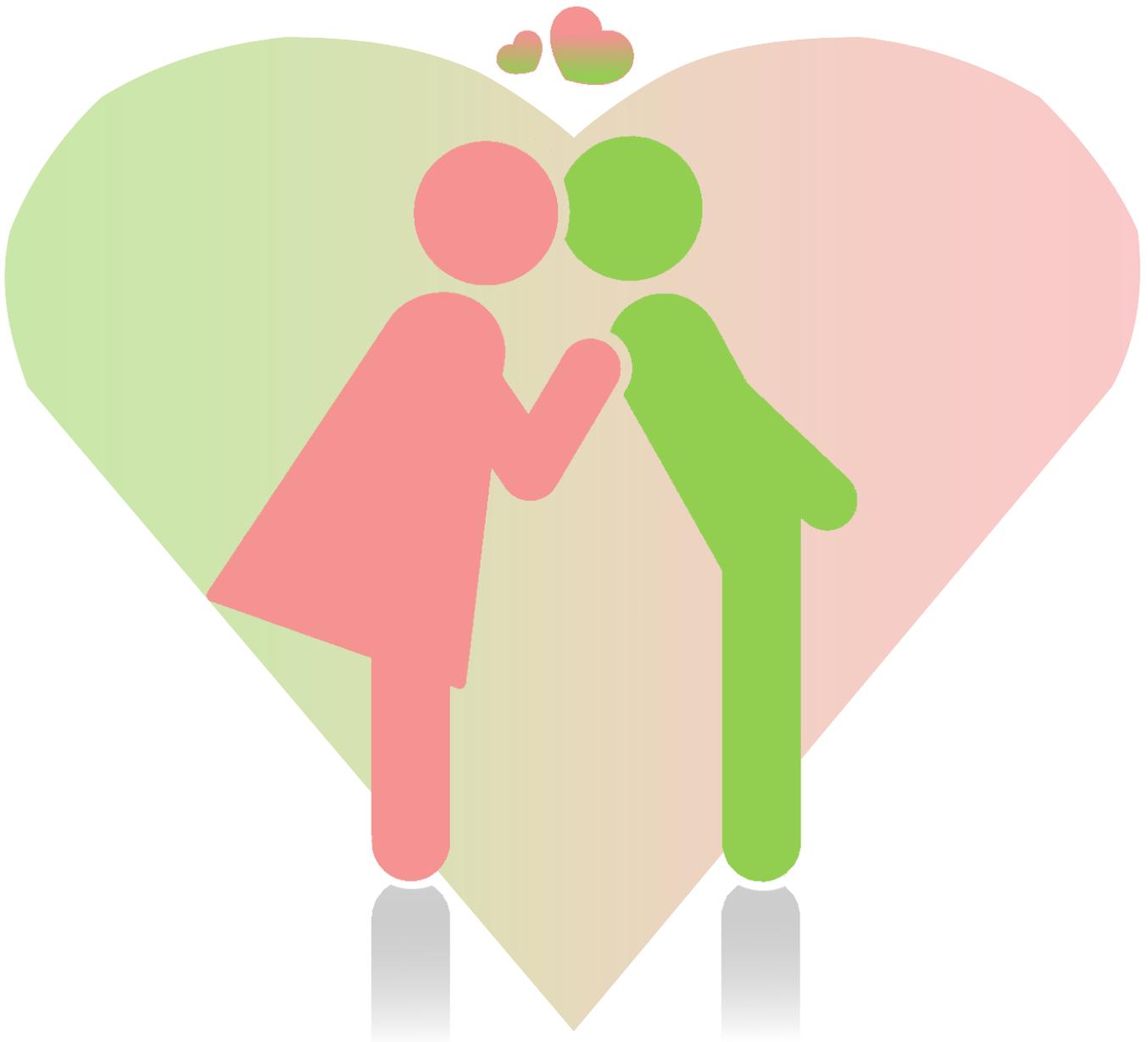




Spring 2016

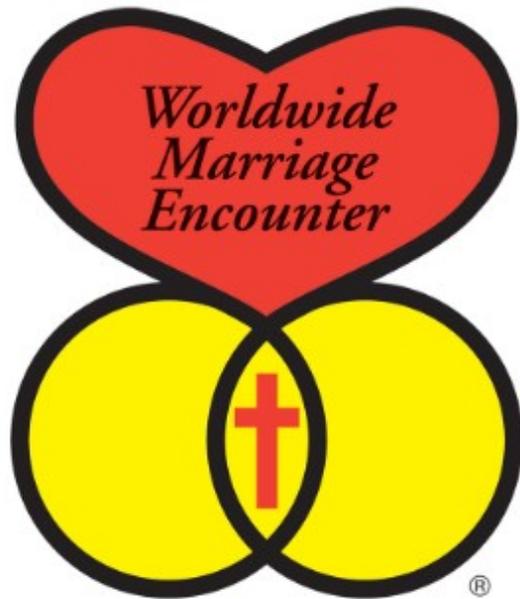
Long Island Community

Spring is for New Beginnings





WWME
Weekend
5-1-16



Please send your mail to Bob & Jeane Payne at jeane.payne52@gmail.com. Letters and articles designated for publication should be in WORD file format and limited to 200 words or less. Thanks!

Deadlines are as follows:



Spring issue (Mar-Apr-May) — Feb. 15

Summer issue (June-July-Aug) — May 15

Fall issue (Sep-Oct-Nov) — August 15

Winter issue (Dec-Jan-Feb) — Nov. 15

As the song goes, "We've only just begun." We truly believe in our hearts that with prayer, hard work, and trust, Jesus' words, "Love one another as I have loved you" will spread, and the miracle of His weekend will continue.

**THIS IS YOUR
NEWSLETTER,
KEEP IT ALIVE—
WRITE!**

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INFORMATION SECTION

We ask that you keep in your prayers all these lovers who have said "YES" to helping Marriage Encounter continue to grow and enrich marriages throughout Long Island.

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Dear Long Island Lovers,

Recently an old friend sent us a photo of John Lennon that appeared on Facebook and the caption was that his mother had always told him to be happy. He was asked in school what he wanted to be when he grew up he replied, I want to be happy. The teacher said he did not understand the question. He told her she didn't understand.

How many of us want happiness in our marriage? We spend a good part of our lives trying to find this. Society and media have a lot to say about finding happiness as a husband, wife and as a couple. Society tells us constantly in images on TV and in magazines that if we have things like the right designer clothing, sports car or the latest technology device we will be happy and the envy of others. Often these things that we hear and images we see from society and the media are "I" choices rather than "we" choices and they are choices that can distract us and separate us as a couple.

These things are not what will bring us to true happiness. What is going to bring us true happiness in our marriage is when we make "we choices" as a couple. We have experienced this true happiness in our marriage many times. How joyful it was to experience the birth of our children; to see that a person is alive because we love. We have found happiness through our discoveries about each other in our daily dialogue. We find this happiness around our dinner table with our family and in quiet times together like when taking a walk along the shore just marveling at how beautiful a sunset is. This is what God desires for our marriage, the unity that leads to true happiness. That unity comes from living intimately and responsibly. That unity is the true happiness that comes from the intimacy God calls us to in our relationship.

God's desire for us is unity, because when we are one, we are the best couple we can be. Unity makes us more than we are as individuals. We don't lose our separate identities and become dependent on each other, rather, we are interdependent by choice. It is not the same as uniformity or expecting one of us to be like the other. We won't agree on everything. Our differences add to our uniqueness as a couple and enrich our oneness. When we love each other as the unique person God created each of us to be, we become even more fully the persons we were created to be. We reach our full potential. By bringing out the best in each other, we become a better couple. Unity does not require us to be joined at the hip. The unity we have calls both of us to take 100% responsibility for becoming the best couple we can be. The beautiful thing about our unity is that it's bigger than both of us and it allows us to embrace a much greater measure of joy.



Peace, Love & Joy,
Kevin & Regina



Wow! We cannot believe it is May already. Long Island already had two wonderful weekend experience this year. We truly are blessed to have such devoted team and community couples to help spread the Love Bug around.

Before we experienced our original ME weekend, we were not a praying couple at all. Val prayed by herself as needed. And we only went to church on special occasions, like Easter, Christmas, maybe a wedding or Christening.

Well, that all changed after our weekend. We are much more devoted Catholics, with some improvements needed, but we go to mass every Sunday as a couple. And, we believe, that as a couple, we are in a relationship with God, so daily couple prayer is an essential ingredient in our relationship.

“Like three streams that merge into one single river, God is journeying with us.
God is the creative, restoring current that runs through our relationship.”
http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/family/prayers_for_couples.html#ixzz472VoXkeR

We are given so many opportunities to practice Daily Couple Prayer. And yet we seem to shy away from it. What better gift can we give our Loving God than to pray as couple? It may feel a little awkward at first, but with persistence this develops into daily practice. We want to give you some ideas of how we developed our daily couple prayer routine.

We start our day with morning prayer: “GOOD MORNING LORD AND THANK YOU GOD FOR ANOTHER DAY OF LIFE. PLEASE HELP US TO FACE WHATEVER PAIN AND PROBLEMS IT MAY BRING AND TO ENJOY WHATEVER PLEASURES MAY COME OUR WAY. IN YOUR KINDNESS KEEP US CLOSE TO YOU TODAY AND PRESERVE US AND ALL YOUR PEOPLE FROM EVERY EVIL. IN THE NAME OF CHRIST YOUR SON RECEIVE OUR MORNING PRAYER.” This prayer is followed by one Our Father, One Hail Mary and One Glory Be. We then pray for our special intentions and offer prayers of Thanksgiving. This is such an easy prayer to get us started with our day as a couple. Keeping us close to God as our daily routines pulls us apart.

Another opportunity we are given to pray as a couple is before we do our dialogue. As we prepare to read each other’s love letters we are given the opportunity to ask God, as a couple, for his assistance. Our prayer may state something like this: “GOD, THANK YOU FOR THE GIFT OF DIALOGUE. PLEASE HELP US TO BE OPEN TO RECEIVE OUR SPOUSE’S FEELINGS WITH AN OPEN AND CARING HEART. HELP US TO BE, UNDERSTANDING AND LOVING.” And before you turn the lights out, there is another chance to give God another gift of prayer: “THANK YOU GOD FOR THE GIFT OF MARRIAGE, THANK YOU FOR MY SPOUSE. THANK YOU FOR THIS LOVELY OPPORTUNITY TO REMAIN IN YOUR LOVE AS WE REST IN EACH OTHER’S ARMS. WE PRAY THAT OUR SLEEP WOULD BE REFRESHING AND REJUVENATING SO THAT WE MAY RISE UP EARLY IN THE MORNING READY TO SHARE OUR LIVES AND OUR LOVE WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH YOU.”

We are given many opportunities to pray as a couple, so what is keeping us from doing so? Maybe, the fear of being vulnerable in front of our spouse? Let us tell you friends; Fears, whatever they may be, are our worst enemy. Fear is what is keeping us from getting closer to God who put us together in the first place.

We are so passionate about sharing our relationship with God. We hope that you can overcome your fear and you can start your own couple prayer routine.



Much Love to all,
Bert and Val Mota



Hello again from East Northport NY. This spring finds our love blooming full of new ideas and fresh starts. Our role as weekend pillar is keeping us busy and exploring new directions. We have so much support around us, many wonderful couples showing us the ropes and being our rocks. We are very blessed with having so many involved in making the ME weekends special. A big thank you to Charlie and Gerry Peknic for their continued efforts as prayer couple coordinator. It was great to meet one on one with them this month or should we say two on two? The prayer couple role on the weekends is invaluable. We continue to thank John and Toni Torio for their proactivity in registering couples, Pete and Kathy Kelsch for their hospitality in hosting the weekend, and David and Carmen Venezian for supplying us with everything we need. We plan on meeting with all our coordinator couples in the near future. We thank you for all your dedication to make the weekend the best possible. We couldn't do it without you.

As weekend pillar one of our responsibilities is to generate enthusiasm and awareness for the WWME movement and the upcoming weekends. We need all of your continued efforts to let your love light shine through. In an endeavor to build awareness we gave our first of hopefully many pulpit talks at Saint William the Abbott, we think it went well? Kevin and Regina Hickson and Bert and Val Mota also gave pulpit talks that weekend. We would like to create a network of couples willing to give pulpit talks and support those talking with their presence, handing out flyers and answering questions after Mass. If you've done this in the past or are interested in developing a talk please contact us. The larger the network, the easier it will be to share the dream with a parish near you.



Thanks for all of your love and support.

God bless you all,

Chuck & Maria Reiss



April, 2016

Dear Lovers,

We hope that everyone experienced a blessed Easter, filled with faith, family and friends. As we write this we are still in the grip of winter. Let's hope spring comes really quickly. We have lots to share with all of you. The movie night at St. Peter & Paul's was wonderful. If you have not had the opportunity to see The War Room you should check it out; it's a great faith-based story.

We are in the planning stages for an anniversary weekend for 2017. We know that with the cost of things these days this could be a block to gifting your relationships by attending this special weekend. Bob & I have been thinking about making another weekend for a while. There always seems to be something that needs to be fixed or replaced eating away at any extra cash we may have. So we formulated a plan. We have started to put \$34.00 a month away into an envelope marked our gift to our relationship. We figured it's easier to save 34 dollars a month towards the weekend rather trying to get all the money up at booking time. We look at how we spend our money and decide that this makes saving for the weekend easier for us as well being more committed to attending. In one year we will have enough money to pay for our weekend. We are asking you to pray about making an anniversary weekend. We are challenging you to start your own envelope and join us next year. Our marriage encounter weekend was the best gift we gave to our relationship. Here we are 38 years later still involved we have continued to dialogue working to keep our marriage encounter dreams a reality.

We have plenty of great events planned. So make sure to look for all the information in this issue. Mark your calendars!!!!

As we start our spring cleanup we prune and rake and mulch so that we will have a beautiful yard and garden. Let's bring spring into our relationships by working on our dialogue. We make sure that there are plenty of dialogue questions in the Spirit. Sometimes it can be overwhelming. We are currently working on some questions that will challenge us. We want to share them with you.

DFILD what are my feelings about how we spend out free time? HDIFSTWY.

DFILD When was the last time I was overcome with the power of our love? HDIFSTWY.

DFILD What are my feelings when you ask me to pray with you? HDIFSTWY.

DFILD how did you fulfill the longings in my heart when I first met you? HDIFSTWY.

DFILD what one thing have I wanted to share with you but haven't? HDIFSTWY

We hope you join us by using these questions. We hope to see all of you at some of our upcoming events.



Love,
Bob & Jeane

Love

Dear Lovers,

Marilyn and I will be married 60 years.

We made our first weekend in January 1972...Super Bowl Sunday...Dallas beat someone, I cannot remember who. It was a good weekend but we really did not get the concept of sharing feelings and explaining them.

We went to Image, but Ray went reluctantly, he was not into dialogue or sharing anything that resembled a feeling, because Ray did not know how to share feelings and he grew up with the mindset that Men did not show emotions.

Ray would go to meetings, again reluctantly, because I wanted to be there. We met a gentleman and his wife and this couple had something that Ray said, we should have, they were real and they made us feel so much at home.

It was from those meetings we decided to make an anniversary weekend, we went to East Canaan Conn., and Ray always considers this our first weekend, because he was open to the weekend and we wanted more for our marriage.

We eventually went to Area Board with Jim and Diane Popp, and we were made to feel so welcome, by all the couples we have met, there are too many to mention in this note, and we are grateful for all their love and our 10/10 became an important part of our life.

And finally, also the gentleness of Kevin and Regina Hickson, who invited us to the challenge of Daily Dialogue; how can you say no when Kevin, with his warm impish smile, hands you dialogue questions?

Marilyn and I are committed to the dialogue and it has brought us so close, and it is amazing, that when we dialogue, it is the only time of our busy day when we just sit and share with each other about our feelings and important aspects of our life and not just the day to day stuff that does not mean much the next day.



Peace Always,
Ray and Marilyn Walther



Dear Marriage Encounter Family,

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks from us & my, Fran's, brothers' family, the Giangiaco'mo's for all the love, & prayer support you have given us over the past 5 years. Johnny was a miracle from the many healings in the beginning of his cancer, till the very end, which baffled the Doctors & staff at Duke University. His positivity & witnessing to God's mercy was inspiring. Never complaining but always being hopeful & then thankful for the extra years he was given, & then every last one of his moments of life. His example was a gift to us all. He appreciated, recognized & often thanked us for all of you & those many prayers that sustained him. He & his wife, Susan, did experience a Marriage Encounter & knew the power of the weekend & of the beautiful community that is so loving & caring.

Though Johnny passed on to Our Father's House in February, his valiant example lives on in our hearts & memories always. We want to say how comforted we felt by your many Mass Cards, Condolence Cards, & kind words in texts, e mails, & phone calls. Your loving embraces, coming to spend time with us, driving us to the, not so close airport, so we could fly from Florida to N.C., were so meaningful. We felt loved like being cradled in Jesus' arms. You helped us through a very difficult time. Thank you, our faithful, faith-filled community. May God bless you for your kind compassionate ways.

We love you,

Skip & Fran DeBlasio





Upcoming Events

Save these important events on your calendar!

June 2016

Family Retreat Day at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Island in Manorville. The Shrine of Our Lady of the Island has been selected by our Holy Father to participate in the Year of Mercy. June 11, 2016.

WWME convention: Tampa Fla. June 17-19, 2016.

July 2016

Dialogue at the Beach @ Captree State Park July 16, 2016
Fun in the sun, relationship & dialogue fellowship with community.

August 2016

Enrichnic @ Our Lady of the Island Shrine: Saturday, August 13, 2016
8am, ending with Mass at 4pm. Please bring: Lunch, something for the sharing table, dialogue books, and open hearts!

October 2016

North Fork Couples Getaway @ the Southold Beach Motel, October 7-10!

Region 20 Enrichment: Oct 1, 2016 Milford Ma. This one-day enrichment is packed with fun & relationship. Well worth the trip.

November 2016

If you haven't made a weekend in a while, why not book on our upcoming weekend on November 4-6 2016?

December 2016

WWME Family Christmas Party December 4th, 2016. Mass will be celebrated prior to the party. Fun for Couples and families.



We're Switching Forks!

Join Us For A Getaway Weekend At The



October 7-10, 2016

We're going for a change of pace! Or should we say, change of PLACE? This year, instead of our usual South Fork trip to Montauk, we're going to visit the scenic North Fork! The North Fork offers a wonderful variety of things to see and do. We have been working hard, planning a fun and enriching weekend for you! There will be a couple scavenger hunt, wine tasting, games, presentations, and some free time to explore the beautiful North Fork. Enjoy trips to the farm stands and lavender fields--if you want to rent bicycles or kayaks, we will have a vendor available for you to contact, or you can bring your own! And don't forget the scenic Town Beach, right across the street from the motel! It's perfect for enjoying a long, leisurely walk with your spouse while gazing at some of the most beautiful sunsets ever. We hope you'll join us!

Each couple is responsible for booking their own room at the Southold Beach Motel. Be sure to mention you're with the Marriage Encounter group, as they have a block of rooms reserved just for us! There are several options for rooms: Single Queen bed room with a view of the garden at \$125/night, Single Queen bed room with a view of the water at \$150/night, and a Queen Suite at \$175/night. The motel requires a 20% deposit of the total stay cost when you book. You can reach them at (631) 765-2233. The reservation deadline is August 1, 2016. Try to book as soon as possible--space is limited!

We look forward to enjoying the North Fork with you! We hope you'll join us!

Love,

Bob & Jeane, Kevin & Regina, Bert & Val, and Chuck & Maria



631.325.0661

258 Eastport Manor Rd,
Manorville, NY

SHRINE OF
OUR LADY
OF THE ISLAND



Family Retreat Day

living the Year of Mercy
in our family relationships



Saturday, June 11th

from 9:30 AM to 4 PM

with Mass at 11:30 AM

Free will donation

Sponsored by Marriage Encounter



www.OurLadyofTheIsland.org

Facebook.com/OurLadyofTheIsland

SAVE THE DATES

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 2016 NORTH AMERICAN CONVENTION



The **2016 North American Secretariat Convention of WorldWide Marriage Encounter** will be hosted by USA Regions 5 & 16 and the Florida West Coast Encounter. Our venue is located in downtown Tampa at the beautiful **Tampa Convention Center**. We are excited to have our WWME family come to our home and experience all that Tampa and Central Florida have to offer. We have put together an awesome team to develop all of the Convention details and attend to your pre and post-convention needs.

Our **2016 Convention Website** is available to provide information to answer your questions and more importantly to accept your online registrations at www.wwme2016.org. You can also keep up with our convention activities by joining our **Facebook** page at 2016WWMEConvention (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/405996172925580/>) or follow us on **Instagram** ([#wwme2016](https://www.instagram.com/wwme2016)) or on **Twitter** ([@wwme2016](https://twitter.com/wwme2016)) for pre & post-convention vacation ideas, and convention updates or to meet with other attendees.

Our theme is **“Loving and Serving with Joyful Hearts!”** We are planning a program that is new and fresh, with time to meet new friends and rekindle old friendships. There are also a few surprises in the works too!

We are developing a **children’s program** so bring the whole family and turn this time into your family’s summer vacation! Mark the date on your calendar, **June 17-19, 2016** and we will see you in Tampa!!

With much love,

*Pat & Valerie Burns
Fr. Dennis Hughes
2016 Convention Organizers
Florida West Coast Encounter Coordinators*



A view of a Tampa Sunset from the patio of the Tampa Convention Center

VISION

“Love one Another as I have Loved you”- John 15:12

MISSION

The Mission of Worldwide Marriage Encounter is to proclaim the value of Marriage and Holy Orders in the church and in the world.

1-877 NYS WWME or wwmeli.org



INVITE A COUPLE TO THE WEEKEND

Weekend Application Form
(Please Print)

His First Name _____ Her First Name _____

Last Name _____ Wedding Date _____

Home Phone _____ Which weekend? _____

Address _____

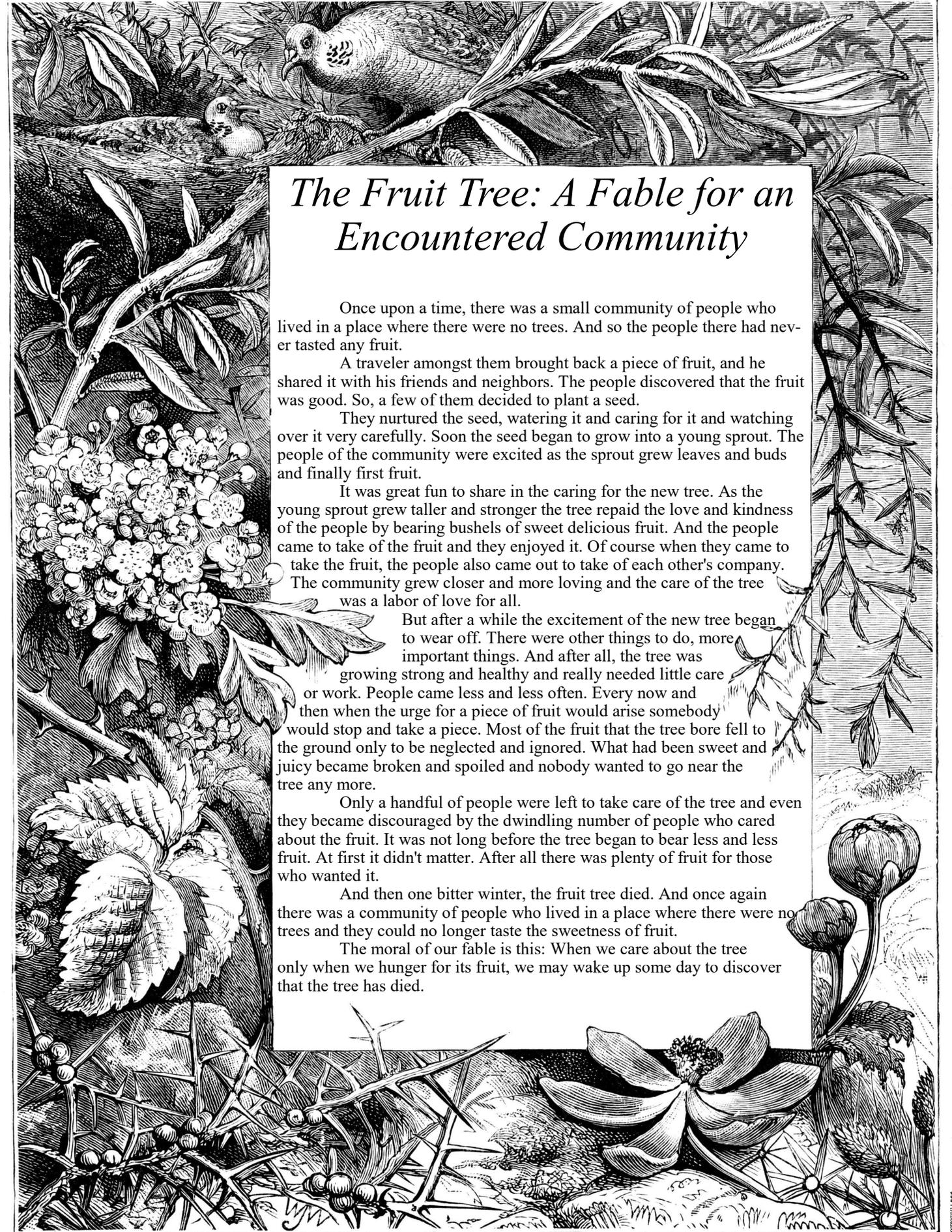
City/State/Zip _____

Parish/Church/Synagogue _____

His Faith _____ Her Faith _____

**Make Check Payable to: Worldwide Marriage Encounter
Mail to application couple with \$50.00 Non-Refundable Application**

**To
John ♥ Toni Torio
5 Ocean Ave
Hampton Bays NY 11946
1877 NYS WWME
697-9963**



The Fruit Tree: A Fable for an Encountered Community

Once upon a time, there was a small community of people who lived in a place where there were no trees. And so the people there had never tasted any fruit.

A traveler amongst them brought back a piece of fruit, and he shared it with his friends and neighbors. The people discovered that the fruit was good. So, a few of them decided to plant a seed.

They nurtured the seed, watering it and caring for it and watching over it very carefully. Soon the seed began to grow into a young sprout. The people of the community were excited as the sprout grew leaves and buds and finally first fruit.

It was great fun to share in the caring for the new tree. As the young sprout grew taller and stronger the tree repaid the love and kindness of the people by bearing bushels of sweet delicious fruit. And the people came to take of the fruit and they enjoyed it. Of course when they came to take the fruit, the people also came out to take of each other's company. The community grew closer and more loving and the care of the tree was a labor of love for all.

But after a while the excitement of the new tree began to wear off. There were other things to do, more important things. And after all, the tree was growing strong and healthy and really needed little care or work. People came less and less often. Every now and then when the urge for a piece of fruit would arise somebody would stop and take a piece. Most of the fruit that the tree bore fell to the ground only to be neglected and ignored. What had been sweet and juicy became broken and spoiled and nobody wanted to go near the tree any more.

Only a handful of people were left to take care of the tree and even they became discouraged by the dwindling number of people who cared about the fruit. It was not long before the tree began to bear less and less fruit. At first it didn't matter. After all there was plenty of fruit for those who wanted it.

And then one bitter winter, the fruit tree died. And once again there was a community of people who lived in a place where there were no trees and they could no longer taste the sweetness of fruit.

The moral of our fable is this: When we care about the tree only when we hunger for its fruit, we may wake up some day to discover that the tree has died.