



Natural Family Planning: Helping couples conceive and improving relationships

by Matthew and Bernadette Ang

While many have the misconception that natural family planning is only used to space pregnancy, it is in fact an effective method for achieving pregnancy as well. A five-year study by the Ovulation Method Research and Reference Centre of Australia Ltd found that 207 sub-fertile women achieved a known pregnancy rate of 65% using the Billings Ovulation Method. On average, these couples failed to conceive after trying for a period of 15 months before participating in the study. The average period from initial instruction in the Billings Ovulation Method to conception was 4.7 months.

NFP will also cultivate intimacy in marriage and enrich it, since the same qualities that will make the marriage itself a success such as respect, patience, fidelity, regard, self-mastery, understanding, consultation, and love, are practiced when using NFP.

Here we highlight a case where NFP Service in Singapore has helped a couple achieve pregnancy.

A CASE OF INFERTILITY

A couple in their mid and late twenties were trying to achieve pregnancy for two years without success before they learnt about the Billings Ovulation method from Dr Ian Snodgrass at the Nativity Centre. The wife has menses only five times a year while the husband has low sperm count. They finally conceived after being taught how to identify the wife's fertile signs using the Billings Ovulation method.

Ian, on helping the couple and others like them, "I was privileged to be the one who introduced the Billings Ovulation Method to this couple to help them achieve pregnancy. In their case, it turned out to be a simple matter of teaching them to accurately identify the few fertile days they had by using the Billings method. It took only six weeks for them to conceive their son. Other couples who chart subfertile cycles may need intervention by prolife doctors to restore at least some fertile days before the Billings method can be applied. We have been able to help quite a few such couples in our various NFP centres."



With the help of NFP, Cara and Kai now have two children, Christopher and Kayla.

NFP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY

Cara, a Catholic, and her husband, Kai, a free-thinker, both 34-years-old, have been married for almost four years and have two children – two-year-old Kayla and eight-month-old Christopher. They were introduced to Natural Family Planning through Catholic Engaged Encounter (CEE). Here is Cara's account of their experience and the benefits they gained with NFP.

"Teresa Chan-Phua of Holy Cross was our NFP instructor and we owe her a lot. She is a great teacher so we decided to give it a shot! We have always wanted

to have children as they complete a family. Parenthood is a calling. Initially our friends told us that we would need to set aside at least a year to conceive, and that we should not expect instantaneous results. We did feel that being in our thirties, it might take us longer. To our surprise, we succeeded with our firstborn, Kayla, on the first try soon after our first wedding anniversary! Little did we know that we were so blessed!"

"Our main challenge was keeping the discipline of charting. There were days when we had a backlog of three or four days. We overcame it by putting

NFP CENTRES

- Catholic Archdiocesan Youth Centre
- Blessed Sacrament Church
- St Anne's Church
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
- Holy Family Church
- Christ the King Church
- Holy Spirit Church
- St Bernadette's Church
- St Mary of the Angels Church
- Church of the Divine Mercy
- Risen Christ Church
- Holy Cross Church
- Our Lady Star of the Sea Church
- St Anthony's Church
- Mount Alvernia Hospital

For more information, please call the NFP hotline at 9106 1990 or send an email to enquiry@naturalfamilyplanning.sg.

the charts and coloured pens in a folder in my bedside drawer."

"NFP really gave us an intimate understanding of my cycle. My husband, Kai, is more in tune with me (and my moods!) as a result. Not needing to use contraception is another benefit of NFP."

The NFP Service Singapore teaches the Billings Ovulation Method to engaged and married couples and provides refresher lessons to couples at 15 NFP Centres in our parishes. To learn more about NFP, visit the NFP Service Singapore website at naturalfamilyplanning.sg.



THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS...

An annual retreat for Catholic moms organised by Joyful Parenting

How can you make a difference in your role as a mother in the family? How can you find true joy in motherhood? Come discover the answers with Joyful Parenting!

DATE: Tuesday, 1 May 2012 (Labour Day)
TIME: 8.45am to 1.00pm (Light breakfast provided at 8.45am)
THEME: The Pursuit of Happiness – Finding True Joy in Catholic Motherhood
PLACE: Church of the Holy Spirit (248 Upper Thomson Road)
SPEAKER: Sr Florence Wong (FMDM)

To register, please SMS your name and email address to Pamela at 9271 3335.