



Marriage & Family Monthly



Official Newsletter of Marriage and Family Savers Ministries and Institute –
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ORANGE COUNTY MARRIAGE POLICY LAUNCHED

The Hudson Valley Marriage Initiative has taken its next step. On Thursday, March 19, five clergy from various denominations gathered at the Orange County Chamber of Commerce Office Building to begin working on the Orange County Marriage Policy.

This will be a county-wide effort to effectively reduce the divorce rate and increase the number of children growing up in a two-parent home. The strategy calls for a multi-pronged approach to include a minimum standard for pre-marital marriage education, marriage mentor training, regular marriage seminars, retreats and opportunities for education and training, all to be advertised on a central website for the county. The model used

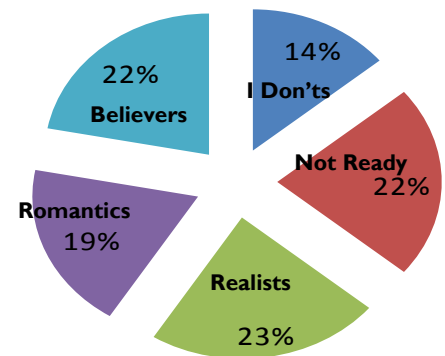
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RECRUITING MARRIAGE MENTORS

Has God helped you overcome difficulties in your marriage? Do you feel a sense of mission to help others who are struggling with their marriages, but you feel ill-equipped to extend a hand. Well, just maybe you are the couple we are looking for to train as a Marriage Mentor Couple. Join our Marriage Mentor Training Class beginning on April 23, and continuing for ten consecutive Thursday evenings from 7:00pm—9:00pm. Give us a call, or send us an e-mail to request an application. This course isn’t for everyone, but it just might be for you.

We’re building an army of “Marriage Savers” and our Marriage Mentors are the Special Forces needed to defeat the enemy of divorce. Don’t pre-judge yourself thinking you may not be qualified. Send in your application and trust God for the results. He may surprise you. * * *

Attitudes of 18-30 Year Olds



According to a new study conducted by www.the.twofus.org, attitudes about marriage have changed dramatically over the past few decades. Our young people no longer have a sense of a “life script” to follow. You know, “First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes Junior in the baby carriage.” In fact young people today often find themselves writing their own life script as they go along. It’s a scary journey for them, and often they find themselves where they never thought they would end up. Marriage

(Cont. On P. 4)

MARRIAGE AND RESURRECTION

But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

--1 Cor. 15:12-14

What does resurrection have to do with marriage? Lots. The resurrection proved that the Bible is true, and Jesus is credible. His methods work. He wasn't just a prophet. *He is God!* The resurrection validated everything he said. He said, "I am the Way" There is no other. He said if you try to keep your life you will lose it, but if you give up your life for his sake you will surely find it. He said unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies it can produce nothing but if it will fall to the ground, and die, it will produce a harvest. He lived and demonstrated the truth of what he taught by willingly giving up his own life for you and me on the cross. Then, true to his word, God raised him up from the dead and gave him the ultimate victory. Because of that demonstrated truth we can trust him to give us victory if, we too, will humble ourselves, take upon ourselves the blame for all the failure in the marriage, and simply give up our lives, our pride, our rights, for the sake of our marriage. The truth of

the resurrection gives us the faith to believe that if we would refuse to defend ourselves, as Jesus refused to defend himself in the face of his accusers, God will raise us up as he did his own Son. Faith in the resurrection gives us faith in God's power to save our marriage if we would humble ourselves to the point of dying to all our ego, pride, and even our own sense of justice. God is faithful. Today, we are living on the resurrection side of life, which never would have been possible without a crucifixion of our own self-life. The resurrection gives us the faith to do "whatever it takes" knowing that God's ways are true. It works!

Question for both of us: *What does the resurrection mean to us personally? Do we really trust Christ with our whole lives?*

Prayer for both of us: Lord help us to understand the power of the resurrection so that we will be able to lay our lives down for one another, regardless of the circumstances, and give you the opportunity to manifest resurrection power in our own lives and marriage.* * *

AM I LIVING IN THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION?

-A SELF EVALUATION-

LIFE B.C. (BEFORE MY CRUCIFIXION)	LIFE A.R. (AFTER MY PERSONAL RESURRECTION)
CONCERNED ABOUT SELF	CONCERNED ABOUT OTHERS
LOOKS FOR THE FAULTS IN OTHERS	LOOKS FOR THE GOOD IN OTHERS
SELF-RIGHTEOUS, LOOKS DOWN ON OTHERS	ESTEEMS OTHERS MORE HIGHLY THAN SELF
HAS TO PROVE THEY ARE RIGHT	SURRENDERS THEIR RIGHT TO BE RIGHT
LOOKS TO BE SERVED	LOOKS TO SERVE OTHERS
GIVES ONLY WHEN SOMETHING IS EXPECTED IN RETURN	GIVES UNCONDITIONALLY, WITHOUT EXPECTING A RETURN
IS EASILY OFFENDED OR GETS DEFENSIVE	IS MORE CONCERNED WITH HURTS OF OTHERS
BLAMES OTHERS FOR THEIR OWN SHORT-COMINGS	TAKES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SHORTCOMINGS
LISTENS TO OTHERS ONLY TO CORRECT OR JUDGE THEM	LISTENS TO OTHERS TO UNDERSTAND THEM
TRIES TO CHANGE OTHERS TO SUIT THEIR NEEDS OR DESIRES	TRIES TO CHANGE THEMSELVES TO MEET NEEDS OF OTHERS
GRUMBLES OVER WHAT THEY DON'T HAVE	HAVE HEARTS OF THANKSGIVING FOR WHAT THEY DO HAVE
THINK THEY KNOW THE ANSWERS TO THEIR PROBLEMS	ARE HUMBLLED BY HOW MUCH THEY HAVE YET TO LEARN
LOOKS TO GOD ONLY WHEN NEEDED	LIVES A LIFE WHOLLY SURRENDERED TO GOD

TESTIMONY FROM TONY AND KRISTIN

As we finished singing, *God is an Awesome God!* in church on Sunday our pastor asked us to think about a situation that we knew God had His hand in and was changing.

My mind immediately focused on our marriage. Six months ago we found ourselves in a situation where we had lost sight of each other's needs. That loss of focus led each of us to decisions that would put the future of our marriage in question. We had come to a place where we needed to make a decision if the marriage we had built over the past 11 years was worth fighting for. Thankfully, we both made a commitment to make our marriage a priority and begin marriage counseling. By the grace of God we began the restoration process one day at a time. Before we knew it days became weeks, weeks became months and we started to rebuild the foundation that was crumbling.

We are proud to report we are now working as a team when it comes to the kids, household jobs, and even problems we are having. Our communication is also improving. When something is bothering one of us we are learning to rely on each other for comfort and prayer instead of isolating ourselves. Through this situation we have learned to take our problems and concerns to the Lord for solving. We make it a priority to find time alone to talk and reconnect. It has been so nice to feel like best friends once again!

It amazes us how God can take something that is broken and put his touch on it and make it whole again. How blessed we are that our God is an awesome God! * * * *

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ORANGE COUNTY POLICY FROM P. 1

will be one that was pioneered by syndicated columnist, Mike McManus, who now heads up Marriage Savers Inc., Potomac, Md. The strategy has proven successful in more than 200 communities nation-wide, with some of the most dramatic results demonstrated in cities like Modesto, California, which has experienced a decrease in the divorce rate of more than 50% since they started their Community Marriage Policy more than 15 years ago.

The initiative is being coordinated locally by Marriage & Family Savers Institute. When asked why he thought this was necessary, Bill Banuchi, director of the institute replied, "We've been spending too much money and energy on the aftermath of divorce. It's time we went upstream with our resources and began working to address our social problems at the root—the breakdown of marriage and the family. All the studies agree," said, Rev. Banuchi, "Healthy Marriages is a win-win situation for everyone including the corporate community, as studies show that healthy marriages even improves the corporate bottom line. It only makes sense, then, for religious, civic and business communities to come together in this common cause for the benefit of coming generations."

This first meeting will be followed up by subsequent working meetings to hammer out details leading up to a formal signing ceremony. Everyone is welcome to join according to Rev. Banuchi, everyone who is concerned with promoting healthy marriages. This will include anyone licensed to perform marriage ceremonies, whether religious or civil.

It was significant that the first meeting was held in the Chamber of Commerce building, because healthy marriages and families should be our most important business. To finance this initiative funding will be sought from public as well as private sources.

MARRIAGE RESTORATION WEEKEND

With Dennis and Juanita Gissentaner
at the Restoration Nest, Fallsburgh, NY.

Call them at (845) 434-2592 or
visit their web site: www.uhwpsalm91.com

18-30 Year Olds From P. 1

has taken on a whole new meaning to this generation of divorce. According to this study of 18-30 year olds, here is how the groups break down;

22%—BELIEVERS—They still believe in marriage as their parents did. They believe it's a holy and worthy institution.

14% —I DON'TS —These don't want any part of marriage. They've seen too much of the negative, and see marriage as an outdated institution that just brings misery and pain.

22%—NOT READY—Someday they might consider marriage, but not until they have met their other important goals in life.

23%—REALISTS—These are the ones who insist on living together first as a trial marriage. They have no illusions about the institution and need to see proof that it will work before they will consider it.

19% - ROMANTICS —Someday my prince will come, and everything will be just perfect. These still believe that marriages shouldn't take work. They

should just happen.

It's apparent that we've got a lot of work ahead of us if we are to regain the place of marriage in our culture that we know to be healthy for society. By our behavior we've taught all the wrong lessons. Now by our behavior, we must start teaching the



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\$39.95 + \$3.50 S&H. Order on line at www.marriageandfamily.org or call **1-877-MSAVERS** to order by phone.



Guided by the voice of a young girl, the impact that one decision has on an entire family becomes unmistakably clear.

There have been many books written by adult experts about divorce and its impact on children. However, ten year old Marina Lombardi set out to express this impact from a child's perspective after a limb on her family tree broke off. Now, as a young woman six years later, she knows with certainty the importance of sharing her story and letting other kids know that they can prevail in the rough waters of their upbringing. Order it at www.artbookbindery.com

Dear Friends,

This is one of our favorite seasons of the year; a time for new life, new hope, new vision. The long cold winter is behind us. It's time to marvel at the wonder of God's creative power: a field in full bloom, the once drab mountainside turn emerald green. Wow! So many of you are contributing to seeing "new life" in marriages. We thank God for those who are taking an active part in this mission by helping to put seminars together, facilitating small marriage groups, and supporting this ministry with your prayers and finances. We're building an army of "Marriage Savers" and we're making a difference. Just ask the children. But we've only just begun! We still need your continued support in every way possible. We must increase our membership and support base. If you have not already joined the Institute please pray about joining today! Just send in the response form with your gift and we'll send you out a certificate, suitable for hanging, a membership card and an audio CD with my message: MARRIAGE: A NATIONAL IMPERATIVE.: Above all, we need your prayers. Please know that we are praying for you and trust that this Spring you too will come to know the Creative power of His love in ways never imagined!



For the King!

Bill & Penny

