

Bukas-Loob sa Diyos

A community of Encountered Couples and Families
Joyfully invites you to share the Fruits of our
MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Our Threshold of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE “ENCOUNTER”

The Encounter presented by the **Bukas-Loob sa Diyos** is open to couples married sacramentally in the Catholic Church. The Marriage Encounter is an invaluable experience of renewing our marriage relationship. It enriches the process of communication between husband and wife. It guarantees to make good marriages “better” and not-so-good marriages “good”! It is presented in a full weekend detached from the usual everyday distractions.

An “ecclesial team” trained and prepared for ministering the Encounter process conducts the Weekend; a **“Team Priest”** and at least two **“Team Couples”**, who manage together its instructional and experiential component.

Most, if not all, who received the Encounter experience have fully rediscovered their marriage relationships, strengthened their conjugal and family life and become fully aware of the living presence of God in their marriage and family life.

All of us have discovered through the Encounter what Jesus referred to as **“pearl of great price.”**

WHAT IS MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER?

The Marriage Encounter Weekend is a positive and personal experience for couples, which offers them a technique of loving communication that they can use for the rest of their lives. It is an opportunity to look deeply into their relationship with each other and with God. Also, it is a time to share their feelings, their hopes, fears, joys and frustrations.

Marriage Encounter is not a retreat, nor is it a marriage clinic or sensitivity course. It is not a time to dwell on the past, but a time to look to your future together. The Weekend is a positive, simple, common-sense experience between husband and wife, that revitalizes marriage by helping couples to see how their relationship could and should be. It is a Catholic expression open to all happily married couples regardless of faith, race, age, education or financial status.

WHAT IS MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER FOR?

The Marriage Encounter is for any couple who wants to enrich their marriage. The Weekend is designed to expand and deepen the joys a couple share together whether they have been married for a short time or for many years. Marriage Encounter is also for Priests and Religious who want to revitalize their relationship with the people of God and develop an even deeper appreciation for their own vocation.

WHAT HAPPENS AT MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER?

An atmosphere is created on the weekend in which the couple can concentrate exclusively on one another. A series of talks are given by a team of trained couples and Priest. Each talk gives a husband and wife the opportunity to look at themselves as individuals and to look at their relationships with each other, with God and with others. Marriage Encounter starts with the love you have for your spouse and helps you build, expand and deepen that relationship. The Weekend shows you the way to do this and provides you with the means – the rest is up to you!
The only talent one must have to make a Marriage Encounter is the talent to love and desire to make a good marriage even better.

DOES THE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND RESPECT THE COUPLE'S PRIVACY?

Yes! Marriage Encounter emphasizes communication between husband and wife through a weekend experience, which is free of the everyday distractions and tensions. You concentrate on your spouse to such an extent that you are hardly aware of the other couples who are on the weekend. The presentations are given to the group as a whole. After each presentation the husband and wife have time in the privacy of their room for their own personal sharing using the communications technique they are learning on the weekend. There is no group discussion.

HOW DOES MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER ENHANCE THE MARRIAGE?

The fundamental difference between marriages that are good, average or poor is the level of communication between husband and wife. In all marriages, there are times when we take each other and our relationship for granted. The Weekend presents each couple with the opportunity to get off the “Modern World Treadmill,” to stop

and to take a fresh look at the two of us, at our marriage, and at our priorities.

We learn a communication technique which allows and encourages us to explore the important areas of our life together in a spirit of love and understanding. The weekend experience offers every couple the insights, the tools and the confidence to enrich their marriage and to strengthen their love for one another. For many couples “The Weekend is one of the most significant experiences of their live.”

The following are some of the **“objections and rationalization”** that we received as to why a couple may feel that Marriage Encounter is not for them and our responses:

Objection: “We already have a good marriage.”

Response: The difference between a “good” marriage and a “BEAUTIFUL” marriage is the Marriage Encounter experience. Even if many difficult experiences are made right in the Encounter, many more couples with already good marriages have received continuing blessings after the Weekend.

Objection: “We already have good communication between us.”

Response: Please take a closer look. Can you truly communicate with each other about your intimate feelings, aspirations, fears and anxieties. Do you have oneness and accord in your major decisions?

Objection: “We are too young.”

Response: That’s wonderful! Wouldn’t you want to prevent growing old too fast or growing old alone? Wouldn’t you want to be trained in living fully with each other as early as possible?

Objection: “We are too old.”

Response: Then, you can be young again! Don’t you agree there’s always something you may have missed because you were not always aware of what was really in your spouse’s mind and heart? Wouldn’t you want a fresh look at each other?

Objection: “I don’t feel at ease in spiritual retreats.”

Response: That’s the way many of us felt before (and even during) our Encounter Weekend. But when we saw and met others like us who had successfully coped with the initial “uneasiness”, we soon felt at home with the “Spirituality” of the Encounter. And later, we wanted more of it.

PROCESS AND CONTENTS

There is a “rhythm” in the encounter process –

- The presentation of a truth;
- The personal reflection; and
- The conjugal dialogue,

A truth is drawn from Scripture or from Church’s teaching and made alive by the life experiences of the presenting team. The “encounter truths” build up in four stages:

- The “I” stage
- The “You” and “I” (or “WE”) stage
- The “WE”, GOD and
- The “COMMUNITY” stage;

The “total” truth about ourselves as persons, as spouses, as parents and as members of the Church, unfolds as the weekend progresses.

After a truth is presented, we are given time for personal reflection on these truths. During these reflective times, we learn to commune with the interior life that each of us have.

The conjugal dialogue is the heart of the encounter process. We express our deep-rooted feelings and responses to our spouse, and listen actively to our spouse’s feelings and responses. The dialogue allows us to commune with our spouse and as we probe into the depths or each other in our relationship of consecrated love, we are given the opportunity to finally commune with the Spirit of Love – the apex of our marriage triangle.

The content of the encounter is the new covenant – **the covenant of love** – which is the core of Christian Life. It is the new covenant which we receive and place as the foundation of our marriage, our family and our community. At the center of the encounter is a profound opening of our spirit to the Being who is Love – GOD.

Our **process**, therefore, is to be “**bukas-loob**”. Our content – the ONE who “**fills us**” – is “**DIYOS**” – **THE PERSON OF GOD**.

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS
COVENANT COMMUNITY
Vancouver District

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS



A Union of Encountered Families

Marriage Encounter Weekend



Member
Marriage Encounter
Foundation of the Philippines