

Family Foundations

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Goodness shares itself

CCL's expanding mission





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The fruit of Humanae Vitae

Our vocation to share the gift!

by Anne Marie Williams

Family Foundations readers are no doubt aware that the Couple to Couple League method often leads naturally to family growth. But embracing the method's emphasis on service and self-gift regularly yields fruitfulness, growth, and evangelization far beyond users' immediate families, impacting whole communities and future generations.

Here, three different stories explore the inevitable societal ripple effects that occur when married couples seek to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness in their sexuality.

get to a CCL teacher training class in order to teach NFP classes at the hospital. Ed noted, “We really didn’t ever think we would be teaching NFP, but we got so excited about it that we were telling others about it even before we became certified.”

After their certification, the Codas’ work branched out in ever-widening circles. Betty said, “We started teaching in parishes, and then the diocesan formation invited us to talk, and then we talked to priest convocations.” Ed added, “And then we were invited to speak at Engaged Encounter, which is a requirement in our diocese.” The Codas went on to become the NFP coordinators for their whole diocese of Honolulu, in part through the support of a particular deacon who “loved that we taught about our religion in the classes.”

Ed laughed as he recalled that before any of their diocesan work, they were teaching NFP informally on the military bases “and then (to) people we knew,” and Betty added, “and then a lot of hippies were coming to our classes!” Teaching NFP became a means for evangelization, as “all of these friends of ours wanted to know about natural family planning, but we taught the class the way it’s supposed to (be taught), with all the Catholic teaching that was involved in it, and we never got any pushback or negativity. They were totally open to learning about it.”

Through their diocesan work, the Codas met Maile Aiu Domingo, a native Hawaiian who had first been introduced to NFP at her own Engaged Encounter weekend during college in Arizona in 1994. Maile went on to attempt NFP on her own, but had only partial success in decoding the system until she discovered CCL co-founders John and Sheila Kippley’s book “The Art of Natural Family Planning.” Like the Codas before her, Maile was edified by its wisdom. “I devoured that book because it brought me biological knowledge of our shared fertility.” What she read in the book gave Maile “words that upheld the values my mom and dad demonstrated to us growing up. The dignity of the marital embrace was communicated to me and my siblings. The wisdom of NFP was the most astonishing discovery to us!” But because the particulars of mucus observations are difficult to learn purely from a book, she pursued the knowledge in CCL’s *Family Foundations* magazine; the sample charts in the back of each issue especially helped Maile learn “how to decipher the code of my body.”

When Maile and her husband moved back to Hawaii after having been trained in Catechesis of the Good



Ed & Betty and Maile’s Story: Hāmau I Loko

Ed and Betty Coda of Hawaii, together with their mentee and friend Maile Domingo, have experienced firsthand the abundant fruitfulness that can come from embracing natural family planning.

Ed described their first contact with the Couple to Couple League at a convention in Chicago. A couple there had given the Codas a CCL book, which they “devoured on the plane ride home.” Ed and Betty were “absolutely amazed at how wonderful it was to have a temperature crosscheck” in addition to the cervical mucus observations they were already utilizing with varying degrees of success. They quickly began to share their newfound knowledge, telling their friends and family who were also struggling with family planning while using a mucus-only method.

While the Codas initially told others about CCL without any formal training in its Symptothermal Method, they were eventually connected with a priest who was a chaplain at a local military hospital. He paid for them to

Shepherd (CGS) and (Pope St John Paul II's) Theology of the Body, Maile reached out to CCL, seeking to make a local connection. In 2006, the Domingos met the Codas, and subsequently went on to become CCL ambassadors themselves. Eventually, the Domingos took over presenting NFP for the Engaged Encounter ministry. Around that time, the Codas were themselves becoming familiar with TOB, and together with the Domingos they began to incorporate TOB and NFP principles, "that mindset of the honor and dignity of your shared fertility" into events they hosted for whole families starting in 2007.

Large potlucks at the Domingo home drawing up to 80 people a week gained a formal structure with the founding of the Hāmau I Loko Foundation. "Hāmau I Loko" means "The Silence Within," in reference to the voice of God that each person can hear within the silence of their heart. Founded in 2014 with a mission to "minister to the dignity of the human person through the *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* and the *Theology of the*

Body," the Foundation is located in Honolulu on the island of O'ahu. Today, it hosts NFP, TOB, and CGS classes/retreats for the Diocese, or any interested community in the islands.

Maile observed, "We find that people are hungry for truth, beauty, and goodness in their lives; the elements that uphold human dignity and build a culture of family. And we offer a way to discover that in our challenging classes. You can just observe the awe they feel in understanding the majesty with which they were made." Ed stressed that the Foundation is all about "a process, not a (particular) program," and about creating an environment where "people come to learn how to live." Families who encounter the Foundation through its various offerings learn "to choose union, communion, family, and forever."

Asked what's next, the Codas and Maile shared that the now-adult children of families who attended the first potlucks in 2007 are stepping into leadership roles with the Foundation, expanding the reach of Hāmau I Loko. Maile envisions a beautiful retreat center where dignity education can thrive. Recently, Ed and Maile presented fertility awareness classes for the first time to high school girls in



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March and high school boys in May. The presentations were very well received, because the young men were empowered to know that their bodies are good, and that they can be intentional about their relationships. The young ladies were equipped with new biological knowledge because, as Maile quipped "An app doesn't give them that understanding!"

After sharing about the couple's blogging, the pending release of a revised edition of the Codas' book *Passionate Parent Passionate Couple*, and the trio's new podcast, Betty summed up the Foundation's attitude toward the future with the famous St. Joan of Arc quote: "I am not afraid. I was born to do this!"

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Brian & Johanna's Story: Charting for Health

While the average CCL user is a woman who, with her husband, is actively seeking to avoid or achieve pregnancy, one Ohio teaching couple is capitalizing on the relevance of fertility awareness-based methods of natural family planning beyond pregnancy intentions, and throughout the entire female reproductive lifespan.

Like many teaching couples, Dr. Brian Burke and his wife Johanna took a CCL class during their marriage prep, with fellow engaged students at Franciscan University of Steubenville. Charting confirmed Johanna's previous observations of cycle irregularities during several years of loosely tracking, and the couple was referred to Dr. Jack Burnham, who taught through CCL with his wife, and was experienced in addressing hormonal abnormalities in his medical practice.

Dr. Burnham's cooperative approach of working with Johanna's body to normalize her hormones through nutritional supplementation made "a dramatic difference" within just three cycles. In fact, the Burkes credit Dr. Burnham's intervention with helping prevent a hormone-deficiency-related miscarriage of their first

child, who was conceived during the first fertile cycle of their marriage.

Johanna commented that successfully utilizing the biological knowledge gained through charting "really sparked something different in us than just the moral side of why we wanted this information." Brian, who planned to attend medical school, knew that he "wanted this information for his patients in the future" and



Johanna marveled at the “dramatic lifestyle improvement when we weren’t even looking at family planning.”

Brian shared that “the fertility signs that God has given us are reflective of a woman’s overall health. It’s not just about avoiding pregnancy, and it’s not even just about getting pregnant and treating infertility. It’s all about recognizing that changes in those fertility signs are reflective of other things going on with a woman’s health that, if she is tracking those things, I as a family physician can identify, diagnose, and treat.” What’s more, Johanna

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observed, reproductive symptoms can point to health issues in other body systems.

The Burkes went on to become certified CCL instructors during the first year of their marriage, and they taught classes in Ohio, and then in North Carolina and in Guam after Brian graduated medical school and joined the Navy. “But along our journey,” Brian noted, “we saw that there was a subset of people that were getting left out of the mix.” While they saw fertility awareness being successfully used by couples for family planning, and mother/daughter fertility awareness programs gaining traction, the Burkes recognized that little outreach

was occurring to single women seeking to get a handle on PMS, abnormal bleeding, and other cycle irregularities.

Recognizing that need, and after returning in 2019 to Steubenville, the Burkes “started giving talks locally, and crafting presentations for the college students with some basic instructions on charting, using a lot of the CCL material and slides with permission. At the same time, we reached out to CCL and asked, ‘can we start to form a single women track?’”

The couple calls this track “Charting for Health.” While many young women have been told that period pain, abnormal bleeding, and debilitating PMS are all normal and unavoidable, and are offered birth control as a band-aid solution, the Burkes educate women on seeking treatment for the underlying causes of those reproductive symptoms. Johanna said, “We see it as our mission to make fertility awareness something that is not just for family planning,” but, as Brian teaches medical residents, “as part of a bigger picture of true, comprehensive women’s health.”

At present, the Burkes are working with CCL to develop an online Charting for Health course to teach young women about fertility awareness for health monitoring purposes. Brian said, “We reach out to young adult women in that single category to help them begin to understand the overall role of fertility and charting in health, so that they can have a better understanding of the dignity of the body, God’s design for them, and how their fertility is really reflective of their overall health status.”

Elizabeth & Seth’s Story: Postpartum Outreach

Elizabeth Timpe first experienced the beauty of CCL for herself, and now shares that knowledge and passion particularly with other moms. The Colorado native recalled that she first encountered CCL at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. While majoring in Biochemistry and minoring in Theology, she took a 1 credit hour course called “Theology of NFP” from a professor who was a trained CCL teacher. When Elizabeth and her now-husband Seth got engaged and moved back to Colorado, they chose to learn the CCL method to meet the marriage prep requirement in their diocese. Elizabeth was surprised and happy to find that “the class was taught by the couple that used to help with my youth group when I was growing up,” who had created a local community of like-minded couples who used NFP.

“Pretty much immediately” after the Timpes finished their CCL class, their teaching couple approached them





about becoming a teaching couple themselves. Elizabeth and Seth “knew right away, because we saw the community that they had created, that we really wanted something like that. We knew that we wanted to get involved with teaching.”

The Timpes finished their formal CCL teaching training three years later, throughout which time they learned that “we were going to have to create the kind of community we wanted, that it doesn’t just happen organi-

As a couple, Seth and Elizabeth are considering recording explanatory videos or a podcast about NFP, to share their experience of and appreciation for the mission of CCL with a broader audience.

cally...We started a married couples group right away, and my sister made fun of us, (joking) that we were ‘advertising for friends.’” The married couples group gradually led the Timpes to found a married couples retreat, which has since become the Northern Colorado Married Couples Retreat and is in its seventh year. Elizabeth noted, “It all started with wanting the community we saw with our CCL teaching couple.”

After they became certified CCL teachers and found that most of their students were engaged couples meeting the diocesan NFP requirement, Elizabeth and Seth got directly involved with the diocesan marriage prep program. Seven years later, they continue their work with the program, and also serve as a mentor couple.

Upon entering motherhood, Elizabeth found herself called to lean in particularly to CCL’s postpartum program. After finding that other women in her mom’s group were struggling in the postpartum period as well, Elizabeth began teaching a dedicated CCL postpartum class, which involved “lots of chart reviews*, and me learning a lot.” Working with the moms group was the precursor to Elizabeth’s new position as a postpartum coach for CCL. She has found the postpartum teaching and coaching, which require her to draw on both her Biochemistry research background and her CCL education, to be particularly fulfilling.

In many ways, CCL has been a touchpoint for the Timpes in various seasons of life, leading them to serve in different capacities within the Church.

First, their CCL class led them to seek and then form a community of like-minded NFP users. Gradually, they became involved with marriage prep ministry and mentorship, as well as ministry to already-married couples. CCL’s postpartum program, coupled with her professional background, equipped Elizabeth to minister to other postpartum moms, first informally and now formally through CCL’s dedicated postpartum coaching. As a couple, Seth and Elizabeth are considering recording explanatory videos or a podcast about NFP, to share their experience of and appreciation for the mission of CCL with a broader audience.

So what connects each of these individuals and couples? Ed and Betty, Maile, Brian and Johanna, and Elizabeth and Seth each started out by taking a CCL class. In each case, what began as personal and marital growth grew into a calling, and with prayerful discernment, beautifully varied responses to that call. Each response then overflowed into the various forms of outreach described here, which benefit each of their local communities to this day—a testimony to the evangelical fruits of CCL. [EF](#)

* Note from ED: Chart review feature is coming back soon!