

# SUPPER & SUBSTANCE MANUAL



**Faith and Marriage**  
*an Apostolate of the Willwoods Community*

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## **Introduction to Supper & Substance**

Supper & Substance provides the opportunity for married couples to have an evening out together while enjoying a delicious meal and witnessing an inspiring presentation on marriage as well as building and strengthening fellowship with other couples that may be walking along similar paths and sharing similar experiences. Couples have been strengthened and parishes have grown closer together in this simple yet effective program.

The evening includes two segments: the meal (***Supper***) and the presentation (***Substance***). Both segments can be carried out in a variety of fashions.

**Supper** includes a simple but delicious meal often centered on a theme. Many parishes put emphasis on creating a romantic atmosphere by providing candles, dimmed lighting, flowers, music, etc, while other parishes create more of a festive atmosphere with prizes, music, centerpieces and dress. Whatever your parish's Supper & Substance committee decides is fine – there are no “rules” to what the supper consist of; however, *one important goal is to keep the cost low to the couples.*

**Substance** features a carefully chosen couple who is faithfully living out the teachings of the Church and who will share their personal joys and struggles of living out their sacrament. The goal of the substance is to gain insight on the truth of marriage from a couple's lived experience and inspire those couples attending to draw nearer to Christ. The presentation is normally around 30-35 minutes and occurs during dessert. (See Attachment 1: the Substance of a Supper & Substance)

In addition, you can include Mass to open the beginning of the evening for a *Supreme* Supper & Substance.

This manual is designed to assist you in successfully planning and implementing your own parish based Supper & Substance event. Use it as a guide to construct a well thought-out, creative, and inspiring experience for everyone involved.

The Willwoods Community promotes Supper & Substance by offering assistance through the Faith and Marriage Office to help parishes organize and maintain this marriage enrichment program. For additional information, please contact the Faith and Marriage Office at (504) 830-3716 or check our website at [www.faithandmarriage.org](http://www.faithandmarriage.org) for additional information.

## **Chapter 1: Forming Your Team**

### **I. Forming Your Team:**

- a. The first step in your Supper & Substance journey is choosing your team. This is a very important step, as these are the people who will be responsible for “making it happen,” therefore, you need leaders and enthusiasts.

### **II. Choosing Your Chairman:**

- a. It’s important to convey to this person that they will not carry this job alone. An entire team will work on this event together, so as to never overwhelm one person or one couple. This person is intended to choose the other committee members and “get the ball rolling.” The chairman must then oversee all aspects of the dinner, calling meetings, and then keeping in touch with each committee to see that they are on track.
- b. Seek someone holding the following characteristics: true concern for the program and determination to get it rolling, enthusiasm and ability to motivate others, strong communication skills, pleasant personality enabling that person to get along well with a variety of people, and someone who may know different groups of people in the parish or be extroverted enough to reach out to new couples in the parish.

### **III. Choosing Your CORE Team Members (couples):**

- a. The chairman should hand-pick a suggested group of 8-12 couples/volunteers. When selecting your core team of couples, look for couples that contain the following characteristics: love of the sacrament of marriage, hardworking, ability to work as a team, concern and love for the parish, enthusiasm, creativity, and dedication to make the dinner a success.
- b. Try to choose a bit of variety in your committee couples. Consider your committees: decoration, promotion, volunteer/server coordination, and catering/solicitation (See chapter 3 for a description to the different committees). When considering couples for solicitation, approach couples that may be involved with organizations that may be able to help in this respect. Use your resources and think of the gifts and talents of the friends around you. Creativity and variety are key factors in a strong Supper & Substance team!

### **IV. Additional Volunteer Couples:**

- a. If additional couples express the desire to help with Supper & Substance, thank them immediately for their generosity and take down their contact information. Even if you already have your committee selected, they can perhaps be of help to one of the committee leaders or at minimum help in setting up the day of or making couples feel welcome the night of the event.



## **Chapter 2: Book It! - 3 Months in Advance**

### **I. Book the Event:**

#### **a. Day & Time:**

- i. Typically, a Saturday evening from 7:00pm - 9:30pm works best.

#### **b. Book it with Your Pastor:**

- i. The presence of a priest, particularly the pastor, is of the utmost importance. It is important for him to see the interaction and relationships of the married couples in his parish. Equally, it is important for couples to see the presence of a priest at such a function and see his support and encouragement in their marriages.
- ii. If your pastor and/or parochial vicar are unavailable for a date, then it is suggested that you choose another date.
- iii. Your pastor, assisting priests, deacons, and nuns should be invited *free of charge* for the evening.
- iv. Ask for the support of your pastor, assisting priests, and deacons in making personal invitations, pulpit announcements at the end of mass and bulletin inserts.

#### **c. Checking the Calendar:**

##### **i. Church Calendar:**

1. Check with your Church parish calendar for other events that may be on or in the same weekend as your Supper & Substance. You don't want your event being lost or competing with other happenings going on in the parish.

##### **ii. Community Calendar:**

1. Check also with the community calendar for fairs or other festivities that might be in conflict.

##### **iii. Sports Calendar:**

1. Check the schedule for your local favorite High School, College and National sport teams.

- a. It is highly recommended that a Supper & Substance not compete with nighttime televised games or home games. If you do decide to schedule during a favorite sports season, it is suggested that you capitalize on a bye week to ensure a greater turnout.

- iv. Depending on your area and your parish, there might not be any one perfect weekend, however, let that not deter you from moving forward. The best thing is to discern as a group which weekend is less busy and begin moving forward with that weekend. There will more than likely be something on someone's calendar preventing them from attending.

- v. As a final note, remember your job is to provide a well planned and enriching event for married couples. Please do the best that you can to encourage couples to attend but please do not place the success of the night in a number. When it comes to turnout remember Jesus said to Peter, “Feed my sheep” he did not say to worry about counting them!
- d. Book Your Presenter(s):
- i. Choosing your presenters:
    - 1. Speak with your core team members to choose the presenter for the evening together. Use the “What to look for in a Supper & Substance Speaker” to help you in decide on a couple together. (Appendix 1)
    - 2. You will need to ask them to send in a brief bio of the two of them. You would want to have this in advance so as to as to add it on any marketing pieces and handouts or programs for the evening. You will also use their bio the night of to help introduce.
  - ii. Guiding your presenters:
    - 1. To help the carefully chosen presenting couple understand what is being asked of them, give them a copy of “The *Substance* of a Supper & Substance”. (Appendix 2)
  - iii. Getting a Gift for your presenters:
    - 1. Being the presenting couple is meant to be a volunteer opportunity. If, however, the parish would like to give the couple a stipend to help offset travel expenses and/or any other possible expenses (babysitting, etc.), then let them know that you can do that for them. If it is in the budget to add to that or if you can find a donor to give a little gift to the speaking couple, than please do so.

## II. Picking a Theme:

- a. Overview:
  - i. Parishes all over the diocese have taken on the program of “Supper & Substance” with different approaches that have made the evening very successful. Planning your events with different styles each time throughout the year allows you to enjoy different atmospheres with your community and tap into different ages and personalities in your parish. While some couples prefer a classy candlelit dinner with music, others may really enjoy having a party with a Sock-Hop theme, colorful decorations and the opportunity to boogie! Be creative so that you can connect with all couples of every age in your parish. You may be surprised on how much fun you’ll have putting it all together and then reaping the benefits when the couples you least expect come out of their shell to mingle in the crowd!

**b. Deciding What's Best for Your Parish:**

- i.** Consider all of the age ranges of couples in your parish.
- ii.** Consider how united and communicative your parish is already.
- iii.** Consider the budget and financial situation of your parish.

**c. Suggested Themes:**

**i. Elegant / Classy:**

- 1. "I Still Do"** – Renewing the promise: Have a mass with a special focus on marriage, asks the priest to highlight this theme in the homily and offer a blessing to all the couples at the end of Mass. Ask couples to help with welcoming all coming into the church, reading and bringing up the gifts.
  - a.** Decorate the parish hall like a wedding reception with champagne, roses, candles, romantic music or even a band to accompany the event.
- 2. "That's AMORE"** – Italian dinner, Italian music, dressy-casual, candles, etc. (See Appendix 3 for sample Program)

**ii. Simple / Low-Budget:**

- 1. Tailgating Party** – BBQ with all the fun sides, favorite sports team shirt, keg of beer, etc.
- 2. Potluck Party** – get the parish involved with the food and make a great night a very low cost.
- 3. Beans & Jeans** – Red beans & rice, bread, salad and a simple dessert all in a casual atmosphere.
- 4. Cajun Style** - Crawfish boil, casual attire, newspaper over tabletops, Zydeco music playing, ladies in parish bake pecan pies for dessert, etc.

**iii. Costume / Dance:**

- 1. Fiesta!** - Mexican food, Mariachi band, sangria to drink, etc.
- 2. Sock Hop** - Fifties attire, roller skating servers, karaoke, malts, dancing, etc.
- 3. Costume Party** - Dress as famous couples, costume prizes, old movie reel décor, etc.
- 4. LUAU**- Hula attire, Hula-hoop competition, beach décor and getaway prizes, etc.

**III. Consider Your Budget:**

**a. Overview:**

- i. Every event planning needs a budget. The following lists of items should be considered. Remember that you may be able to get a large portion of these items donated. Solicitation is important. Do not view it as “begging for money,” but rather as a chance to get the whole community involved!

**i. Food:**

- ### 1. Meal, dessert, salad, rolls and condiments

1. Ice, soft drinks, iced tea, lemon, coffee, cream, sugar, sugar substitutes
2. Wine (beer is optional)

- i.** Plates, salad bowls, and dessert plates
- ii.** Coffee cups, drinking glasses, and wine glasses
- iii.** Napkins, eating and serving utensils
- iv.** Table linens
- v.** Table Centerpieces & Decorations
- vi.** Room Decorations
- vii.** Name tags, markers & pens
- viii.** Copies of flyers/registration forms and evaluation forms
- ix.** Music (recording or live)
- x.** \_\_\_\_\_
- xi.** \_\_\_\_\_
- xii.** \_\_\_\_\_
- xiii.** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Chapter 3: Who Does What? - 2 Months In Advance**

### **II. Setting Up Your Committees:**

#### **a. Overview:**

- i. Now that you've chosen your date, your theme, and your presenter, it's time for your core team to split up into separate committees to "divide and conquer!" Use each couples gifts wisely. Look at each committee and decide which couples would work best with one another, would lead a group best, and would be best suited for which tasks (in terms of both their talents and their connections with various groups and vendors). This is a team effort and every facet of the team is important and every connection and input that the community as a whole can provide will be a successful factor. The committees are as follows:
  1. **Decorations & Set-up**
  2. **Catering / Solicitation / Other Fundraising**
  3. **Promotion & Tickets**
  4. **Volunteers/Servers Coordination**
  5. **Event Presentations & Gifts**
  6. **Childcare**
- ii. Keep in mind that the couples in your core team that choose to "chair" these committees will not need to do this alone. Now is the time to draw from other parish volunteers and recruit more help! Details of the committees' duties are as follows:

### **III. Duties and Responsibilities for Your Committees:**

#### **a. Decorations & Set-up Responsibilities:**

- i. First determine the capacity of the building that you'll be using and set the limit of couples to be invited (be sure to determine this with all other committees).
- ii. Determine the number of tables & chairs needed. There will need to be tables for the food & drinks, greeting/sign-in, the presentation area, the sound system, any gifts that might be used for door prizes, etc.
- iii. Decide and draw the layout for the evening. Have everything down even to where the trashcans will be placed.
- iv. Decide table linens, centerpieces, wall décor, etc.
- v. Discuss (if applicable) extra activities during evening (karaoke for a sock-hop, prizes for costume contest, D.J. table, picture scene area for Christmas party, area for photographers, etc.).
- vi. Discuss with "Solicitation /Fundraising" Committee as to how much of your ideas could be donated from local vendors.
- vii. Create "programs" with a schedule for the evening, menu, and acknowledgments for all tables. (See Appendix 3 for sample Program)

viii. Appropriate lighting for the evening.

ix. Assign seating and tables.

1. Group seating:

a. A traditional seating environment for a Supper & Substance is group seating. There are many reasons why this is a popular choice but one particular is the social opportunities with other couples. This is a great way for couples to meet people and get to know another couple better.

b. Something to be ready for:

i. Assigned seating: This will ensure that a couple is not left to a table alone.

1. FYI: Some couples come thinking or wanting to sit with a friend or family member. You might want to ask on the registration form if they want to sit with other couples

2. One-on-One seating

a. You might want to consider one couple per table. This might be a real treat for the couples as they may always be in a situation where they never have time to actually talk to each other without distractions from family or even friends.

b. Added Bonus: Come up with questions that spouses can ask each other during their dinner. Questions can range from something fun to something deep.

i. Fun Questions:

1. What is your favorite color, food, place to visit, movie, song, book, memory, etc.

ii. In-depth Questions:

1. What have you always wanted to do but did not? (Then have the spouse come up with a way to make that a reality in the near or distant future). What was something that your spouse has done for you that made you feel loved? What do you want for your spouse?

iii. Enrichment Questions:

1. What is God's plan for our marriage? What can we commit to do for our marriage that will make it stronger?

c. If you do decided upon this option, you might want to create a way in which couples would be able to interact during the night. Part of the fruit of a Supper & Substance is the fellowship with other married couples in the parish.

b. Catering / Solicitation / Other Fundraising Responsibilities:

- i. Meet with Decoration committee to see what is needed other than food and beverages.
- ii. Consider theme and solicit for food and drinks for the evening.
- iii. To maintain a low cost for the evening, have, at most, beer and wine (white & red) on the menu.
- iv. Call or use the “Sample Solicitation Letter” (see Appendix 4) to begin contacting local vendors. For quick ideas of vendors or supporters for the night, look on the back of the Church bulletin.
  1. You may use the format of the letter to cater to whomever you are asking assistance from.
  2. Try to involve parish members’ restaurants and companies.
- v. Generating money for the event.
  1. Put on a low budget fundraiser.
    - a. Sunday dine in or take out Spaghetti dinner fundraiser
  2. Write a letter to parishioners, organization, or business that might be willing to sponsor all or part of the night. (See Attachment “Seeking Sponsorship”)

c. Promotion & Tickets Responsibilities:

- i. To promote your event and organize registration, create a catchy flyer with a registration form. Theme should be apparent. (See sample flyers/forms in Appendix 6). Receive permission from the pastor to have flyers in the back of Church and insert them in the Parish Bulletin.
- ii. Take registration at “Parish Presentation Sunday.” (See Chapter 4)
- iii. Place announcement in Parish Bulletin. If possible include it on the parish’s website. If the parish has a school, see if you can get their contact information and email or mail out the information to them.
- iv. Find volunteer couples to make pulpit presentations before or after Mass. Usually this can be done around four weeks before the event. (See Chapter 4)
- v. Once registration starts coming in, contact couples to confirm that you received their information and that they are registered for the event.
- vi. Refunds may be available to couples needing to cancel before the event, but not after the fact.

d. Volunteer / Server Coordination Responsibilities:

- i. Other parish groups (Youth Group, Knights of Columbus, etc.) may be recruited to help with various tasks that the formed committees may need assistance with (set-up, serving, cooking, clean-up, etc.). This is a great way to share the beauty of the sacrament of marriage with others in the parish!
  1. Student Volunteers: Contact a list of student volunteers (from parish youth group, confirmation group, local school, etc.) to help out with



the Supper & Substance before, during, or after the event. Many students need service hours because of certain programs they are involved in. Find out if your event can qualify as something the kids can participate in to receive service hours. (See service hour sample letter for student volunteers in the Appendix 8)

- ii. Organize and communicate in advance the attire for volunteers during the event. If the evening were classy, a more formal look would be appropriate. But if the evening were themed to the fifties, then the attire would continue the atmosphere.

e. Event Presentations & Gifts Responsibilities:

- i. Purchase special gift or have something donated for speaker(s).
- ii. Solicit local restaurants, hotels, and other vendors for gift certificates, etc., for door prizes.
- iii. Decide who will present the gifts to the speakers.
- iv. If you have door prizes, decide how they will be awarded and who will present them to the winner. Numbered tickets seem to work well here.
- v. How was the night? Have volunteers pass out evaluation forms sometime after the presenters have presented. (See sample evaluation in Appendix 7)

f. Childcare

- i. Reserve location
- ii. Identify & Confirm Volunteers
  - 1. Keep at least a 6 to 1 ratio of children to adults.
  - 2. In addition to the adult servers, you may also want to accept assistance from older youth, but do not include them in your childcare provider- to- child ratio. Youth may earn service hours. (Appendix 8 for the service hour form)
  - 3. If in the event an unexpected last minute turnout for childcare came and more help is needed, you may want to use some of the committee members to help. It may be a good idea to see who might be able to be removed from the Supper & Substance event and transferred over to eh Childcare if in the event a need presents itself.
- iii. Registration:
  - 1. To save room on the Supper & Substance flyer/registration form, you may want to have a small spot on the flyer letting you know if a couple is planning or not planning on using the childcare. You can gather that information from the “Promotion & Tickets” Committee Couple.
  - 2. If they check off that they plan on using the childcare services, then you contact them directly to gather the remaining information you

will need to ensure both you and they are prepared properly and fully informed for the event.

- a. See Appendix 11 for a sample Childcare Registration Form
- b. See Appendix 12 for a sample Letter to Parents
- iv. Come up with an agenda for the kids. (See Appendix 12 for a sample agenda)
- v. Collect materials and reserve equipment they may be needed for the night
- vi. Print out sign in / sign out sheets (See Appendix 13)
- vii. Ideas for the kids while their mom and dad are at the event
  1. Older kids: Letters to let them know that they are proud of them and their commitment to each other
  2. Younger kids: Pictures of the whole family that says at the top, “I love my family”

## **Chapter 4: Announcements! Announcements! - 1 Month in Advance**

### **I. Presentation / Advertisement to Parish**

#### **a. Overview:**

- i. Now you’re ready to advertise for your event. This should begin one month before the big night! This will give people enough notice without being told so far in advance that they might forget. You will need to be in contact with your pastor and priests as to how you will carry out the following steps of this process.

#### **b. Flyers are ready:**

- i. See Appendix 6 for Sample Flyer Registration Form

#### **c. Presentation Sunday: 4 Weeks Before Event**

- i. Select couples to give a brief pulpit presentation at the end of every mass. (See Appendix 9 for a sample Pulpit Presentation)
- ii. Ask that your pastor/priest to reinforce the program and put in a good word to the congregation at the end of mass.
- iii. Have registration tables at every entrance/exit of the church with, at the very least, 2 people present (1 person to pass out flyers, 1 person to take registrations).
- iv. Couples may only reserve when they have paid.
- v. It is always good to give a sense of urgency to “act now!” on reservations.

- d. Bulging Bulletin Sunday: 3 Weeks Before Event
  - i. Ensure that EVERY bulletin has a flyer/registration form in it.
  - ii. Have Supper & Substance representatives present to pass out bulletins.
  - iii. Remind the pastor and other priests to continue to put in a good word to the congregation at the end of masses from now until the event.
- e. Call the Press:
  - i. Have someone in the committee take pictures of the event to use for in-house promotions to possibly put in the parish bulletin and on the parish website. Pictures can also be used for promoting future Supper & Substances.
  - ii. Call any local newspapers and tell them what you are doing and invite them to the event to take pictures.
  - iii. You could also use the paper as a form of advertisement for your event.

## **Chapter 5: Let's Get Together! - 2 Weeks in Advance**

### **I. All Committees Meet as a Team:**

- a. Overview:
  - i. This is a great opportunity for all the members of the core team to get together again and recollect their thoughts and get up-to-speed as to what's going on with the rest of the group and make sure everyone is on the same page! The overall chair of the Supper & Substance Core Team should run this meeting.
- b. Action Items for the Meeting:
  - i. Make sure all committee chair people are present ready to take notes.
  - ii. Each committee shares what they have done so far.
  - iii. Each committee shares what is left on their "to-do list."
  - iv. Now's the time to ask for help from and offer help to other committees.
  - v. Assign someone to contact and confirm the presenter(s).
  - vi. Discuss the schedule, layout of the area, and all the ins-and-outs for the event and what needs to happen after the event. Make sure all members understand when and where they need to be and for how long.
  - vii. Make sure you have a cleanup crew for the night. In many parishes, core members were all required to stay for clean up. Whatever is decided, just make sure that it is understood beforehand.
  - viii. Follow up with the parents about what you need from them and how the Childcare is going to work. (See Appendix 12)

## **Chapter 6: The Main Event – Day & Night of**

## I. The Main Event

### a. Overview:

- i. The moment everyone has all been waiting for is just hours away. So what do we do now? Here's a step by step glance as to how your day and night should run leading up to the main event and during the dinner.

### b. Leading Up to the Event:

- i. Decoration/Set-up Committee and other Volunteers:
  1. Set up during the day.
  2. It's best to set up as early as possible in the morning, so that if you run into problems, you have time to correct it.
- ii. Catering Committee:
  1. Makes sure all is in place. (Do not forget the corkscrew.☺)
- iii. Volunteer/Server Coordination Committee:
  1. They should make sure volunteers are on the job, dressed, and knowledgeable to the schedule of the evening and where to go if there is a problem.
  2. Volunteers should be assigned to tables and duties to organize traffic and confusion.
- iv. Chairman and Core Team Members:
  1. Should arrive an hour before to greet the presenter and prepare to greet guests as they arrive.

### c. During the Dinner:

- i. Guests are greeted at door with table assignments and name tags.
- ii. Wine and beer table is open as guests arrive.
- iii. Volunteers serve guests. (Committee members can now enjoy their meal!)
- iv. Make sure no couples are alone.
  1. *That's why assigning tables is so necessary, making sure that not only tables are not overcrowded, but that no couple sits alone.*
- v. Presentation during dessert:
  1. Chairman or other core team member introduces the presenting couple.
- vi. After presentation, thank them and present to them their gift.
- vii. Announce door prizes, upcoming Willwoods Married Couples Retreat (you may go on line for a list of dates for the next retreat) & your future Supper & Substance (if booked yet).
- viii. Have volunteers pass out evaluations and thank guests for coming and ask to fill out evaluations on tables.

### f. The End of the Night:

- i. "Clean up crew" stays to clean.

- ii. Be sure to return all borrowed items.
- iii. Sign service hour sheets for volunteer students (if necessary).

## **Chapter 7: Wrapping It Up – After the Event**

### **I. Days After the Event:**

- a. “Thanks be to God!”
  - i. Give God and everyone who was involved a big high five, your night was, no doubt, a success.
- b. Keep us in touch:
  - i. Now, for the sake of the Willwoods Community, we’d like to stay in touch and hear about the “ins and outs” of your night. Please take a few minutes to do the following and send it to:
    - 1. **Summarize it for Us:**
      - Write a brief summary of your evening, detailing the theme, location, décor, presenters, and overall feel of the evening.
      - Send 1-2 pictures of your evening to possibly be used on our Supper & Substance webpage.

### **II. Re-Evaluate:**

- a. Read over evaluations and make notes in a Supper & Substance notebook for major pros and cons to keep in mind for future events.
- b. Send an evaluation to core team members and ask for their input on the organizing and planning pros and cons.
- c. Keep in mind that, merely gathering parishioners together for the evening for conversation alone is priceless and should be considered a success and a feat to thankful of. Praise God!

## **Chapter 8: Key Points to a Successful Supper & Substance**

### **I. Pray**

- a. Put it in the intentions at mass and be sure to include it again after the event has been done to give thanks to God.
- b. Cover the parish, presenters, couples, and even your team in constant prayer leading up to and after this great event.

## **II. Non-Threatening**

- a. In many marriages, one spouse (often the husband), is:
  - i. Apathetic toward marriage enrichment activities.
  - ii. Scared to death that they will be asked to “share” with other couples.
  - iii. Concerned they will be recruited for some marriage enrichment function that they don’t want to attend.
- b. Therefore, try and maintain a very non-threatening environment in order to attract and maintain these couples.

## **III. Substance:**

- a. Select the Presenting Couple carefully.
- b. The presentation/talk should:
  - i. Be a *personal* sharing with *relatable* experiences.
  - ii. Not be abrasive or condemning.
  - iii. Be a positive and relatable presentation on the joys and struggles of the vocation of marriage.

## **IV. Romantic and/ or Uplifting atmosphere:**

- a. The ambiance created with decorations, music, and dimmed lighting is the little things that really make the evening special.
- b. It *does not* require a fancy meal, plush facility, or expensive decoration. Your creativity and personal touch means most to these couples to make this evening different from the rest.

## **V. The Committee:**

- a. 8-12 couples divide the workload of chairing committees without over burdening one couple.
- b. Choosing dedicated people makes ALL the difference.

## **VI. Price & Budget:**

- a. Maintaining a modest price. Makes this an affordable & attractive date for even the poorest couples in our parish.
- b. It’s important to try your hardest to stay within a reasonable budget. If you feel you don’t have the budget to work with, start simple. And start asking your community vendors to help. It can be done!

## **Appendix: Samples and Extras**

*\*The following samples are yours for the taking and the copying!  
Enjoy!*

### **Appendix 1: What to look for in a Supper & Substance Speaker**

#### **Step 1: Pray for guidance**

This is a very important aspect since this is so fundamental to the goal of the event. Place the question in God's hands and ask him to guide you and the group in choosing the right couple for the event.

#### **Step 2: Do they walk the walk?**

Since their witness is louder than what they will say, it is important that this couple be a validly married Catholic couple, in good standing with the Church, upholds and believes all the teachings of the Catholic Church. This couple is someone who deeply values their faith, the sacraments and who strives daily to live faithfully their love for each other and their love for God.

#### **Step 3: Where might you find them?**

The two easiest & closest places to look for couples are in your own parish or in your diocese. A third place can be, depending on your budget, to look for a couple who speaks nationally on marriage and who spend their full time and energy helping others to build a Christ centered marriage.

Parish Couple (Possibly include a Deacon and his wife, Are there couples in the parish that are involved with an engaged couple mentoring program

Local Couple: Many times a Diocese has a married person or even a married couple working for and in charge of the Family Life Apostolate. You can see if they themselves would be open to coming and sharing their journey in faith as a couple. If they are not available, find out if they can recommend a few faithful couples who have been or are currently involved in marriage ministry such as Retrouvaille, Engaged Encounters or Marriage Encounters.

National Presenting Couple: This will obviously cost more than finding someone close to home but then again it might be something that can draw a great crowd and provide some real insights into the faith and their marriage. While this might increase the cost, the higher attendance and the help of sponsorship can change help ease the concern of shortfall in the budget and might even prove to be something that can draw in a little revenue for the ministry or the parish. See Appendix 5 Seeking Sponsors

While a speaker couple is the norm, you might want to consider having your own parish priest lead the Substance of the Supper & Substance. Since the priesthood and marriage are both Sacraments of Service (CCC 1534) and from the very fact that he has gained much insight into marriage through grace, his studies, prayers and experience working with and helping many couples, he has much to offer!



## *Appendix 2: The “Substance” of a Supper & Substance:*

The “substance” is a simple witness given by a married couple. The purpose of this presentation is to gain wisdom and knowledge on the sacrament of matrimony through the couples lived experience. The presentation normally is around 30-35 minutes and occurs during dessert. The goal of the presentation is to draw couples closer to each other – closer to God.

### **The presentation should be *accessible*:**

Unfortunately today, many couples are un-catechized. A great witness and moving story can fall on a poor foundation or rocky soil. Your talk can be a simple way of introducing the amazing life giving truth that brings life and freedom.

Providing a real witness of your own marriage, struggles and joys, personal anecdotes, painful experiences and humor will help to make your story and your message accessible and engaging.

Be careful not to assume that the couples grew up Catholic (or that all are Catholic) and are familiar with the saints, rituals, prayers, and even definitions of words (e.g. novena, liturgy, etc.). Our mission then is not to hide or water-down but rather to reveal and breakdown this amazing truth.

### **The talk should not be just motivating but also *enriching*:**

We need to provide substance for these couples to chew on. While at times it might be baby food, nonetheless, it is something that will nourish them and help them to understand the “why” behind the “what.”

To address this need, all of us need to go deeper in our own understanding of the truth. We must allow Christ even more into our hearts and into our minds. This requires us to love more and know more of the calling and relationship that we have in Christ.

### **Know your audience:**

More than likely, you will have a group of diverse couples. One couple may be celebrating their 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary and another couple may be celebrating their 42<sup>nd</sup>. There may be couples that have just started their adventure in parenting, couples that have many sons and daughters - who maybe grown and have children of their own, and then there may be couples that have been married for many years but for some reason are unable to have children.

The key point here is to stay focused on speaking about the couple and their marriage, i.e. their relationship with God and each other. Once this is firmly established, and then you may want to speak about children and how they play a beautiful role in our call to holiness as spouses.

### **Two spouses, one talk:**

When speaking as a couple, a very important aspect of the talk is to make sure that you are both giving one talk, versus two different talks. This is worked out through God’s grace, a lot of prayer and teamwork.

It would be wise to ask friends, family, and your pastor to assist you in prayer. This will help guide you and protect you as the two of you prepare the talk. Also, have those who will be in attendance covered in prayer. How comforting it will be to know that when you walk into the room to give the presentation everyone including the presenters have all been lifted up many times in prayer.

## Appendix 3: Sample Event Program:

*St. Joseph Parish Presents:*

# *"That's Amore"*

*6:30pm*

**Wine Social**

*7pm*

**Welcome**

*Jason & Elise Angelette*

**Opening Prayer & Blessing of Meal**

*Archbishop Gregory Aymond*

**Buffet Dinner, Courtesy of Lagniappe Luncheonette**

*Menu:*

*Italian Salad*

*Lasagna w/ Garlic Bread*

*Coffee & Spumoni*

*Ice Tea & Choice of Red or White Wine*

*8pm*

**Evening Presentation**

*Tom & Caroline McDonald -*

*Co-Directors of the Family Life Office for the Archdiocese of Mobile*

*8:45pm*

**Closing Remarks**

*Jason & Elise Angelette*

**Closing Prayer**

*Dr. Chris & Christine Baglow*

*Special thanks to the following for their help & generosity:*

**Little Italy Florist**

**St. Joseph's Youth Group**

**St. Joseph's Knights of Columbus**

**Lagniappe Luncheonette**

## ***Appendix 4: Example Solicitation Letter***

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter is to introduce our Supper & Substance Program at (name of your parish) to you and ask for your assistance. Supper & Substance Dinners were initiated in the Archdiocese of New Orleans and carried on through the Willwoods Community to offer a night of enrichment for married couples. They're able to share a meal with other couples and be entertained by an inspiring presentation on married life. It's a wonderful opportunity for ministering to married couples.

We are planning our next Supper & Substance event on Saturday, (date) at which we expecting a large number of couples from our parish to attend. We are writing this letter to you today in hopes that your florist would be able to donate some arrangements for our table settings and help set the tone for the evening. All donations are prominently acknowledged in our program and during our Supper & Substance Dinners. Our theme will be (insert your theme) and we feel the lovely arrangements that you create would be the finishing touch for our event.

Any assistance that you could give us would be greatly appreciated. You come highly recommended and praised by your community, giving us an even greater reason to want to get you involved. Thank you for time.

Sincerely Yours,

Jane Doe  
Chairman, Supper & Substance Committee

## Appendix 5: Seeking Sponsorship

While Supper & Substance is not meant to be a “money maker” for the parish and should be seen as an “investment for the future of the Church and the family” there are ways to not only help pay the cost and stay in the black but also build a small financial investment for the success of future Supper & Substances as well as other marriage enrichment opportunities. This possible added benefit should not however be the main goal and focus.

In seeking sponsors it can take a little extra time and planning but the payoff can make a big difference to the night and the future of your Supper & Substance program. To help you along the way we have provided a checklist of what you will need to do as well as provide to you a sample letter and a sample donor return card to help get the ball rolling.

You will need:

- Addresses of couples in the parish
  - Speak with your pastor about this to get his permission and insights. Ask him if someone in the parish office can help you with getting address labels of parishioners. Depending on the size of your parish this might be a little large of a job but they might know how to slim down the numbers to just married couples. They should also know how to use bulk mailing which would drastically cut down the cost of postage.
- Business size envelopes (#10 Envelopes)
- Flyer/registration form for the event
- Sponsor Letter
- Return sponsor card
- Pre-addressed return envelope (#6 ¾ Envelopes)
  - On the pre-addressed envelop, you will want to have the address of the couple in charge of the **Catering / Solicitation / Other Fundraising**. This helps the secretary at the parish office from being bogged down with extra mail (unless the person in charge of this committee is the secretary☺).
  - When checks come in to reserve tickets or to be a sponsor for the event through this mail out, then the person in charge of the **Promotion & Tickets** needs to receive the registration information so as to mail tickets out to the couples who have reserved their places.

### Sample Sponsor Return Card

I would like to reserve \_\_\_\_ table(s) for 4 couples each or \_\_\_\_ tickets to the  
**Mary Mother of God Supper & Substance - \$40.00 per couple**

I would also like to support the Supper & Substance through being a

**Faith & Marriage Champion - \$500.00**

**Enrichment Sponsor - \$250.00**

**Patron Couple - \$100.00**

To ensure acknowledgement in program, donations are due by February 28

Name or business / organization to be seen on program and/or table:

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## Sample Sponsor Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We would like to extend a warm welcome to you to our first **Supper & Substance** scheduled for **Friday March 25<sup>th</sup>**. The event will be held at the parish hall. Our goal is to offer a night of enrichment and enjoyment to married couples in and around our parish. We hope that the two you will be able to attend.

*In addition* to joining us to receive the gifts God has to offer us through our experienced presenters, \_\_\_\_\_, *we extend the opportunity to further be a part of this event*. Much is involved in this endeavor. We pray that you take a moment to discern how you might be able to assist us in this undertaking. Those of you able to give monetary support, we are offering 3 levels of sponsorship (listed below):

### **Faith & Marriage Champion: \$500.00**

*Includes name or business tribute on table, acknowledgment of your patronage in the evening's program, Eight tickets to the dinner*

### **Enrichment Sponsor: \$250.00**

*Includes name or business tribute on table, acknowledgment of your patronage in the evening's program, Four tickets to the dinner*

### **Patron Couple: \$100.00**

*Includes acknowledgment on the evening's program, two tickets to the dinner*

Your donation will allow this night to not only be possible but affordable for couples, allowing those who may have not been able to attend, come and receive what God has for them in their marriage. To ensure we reach new couples and remind returning attendants, we invite you to ***get involved by saving the date, reserving your tickets or a table and inviting your friends and family to come along!*** Spread the word and call today. Thank you in advance for your prayers and your assistance in making this plan come into action.

In Christ Jesus,

Couple(s) Name(s)  
*St. Joseph Supper & Substance Team*  
*(Contact information)*

## Appendix 6: Sample Flyers and Registration Forms



**CATHEDRAL OF THE  
SACRED HEART**  
1212 E. Moreno St. Pensacola, Florida (850)438-3131




**PRESENTS:**

# Supper & Substance

## Evening of Marriage: Garden of Lights

Supper & Substance is an evening for married couples celebrating the gift of marriage through a delicious dinner and an inspiring presentation.

There is *no cost* to you and free childcare will be provided!

Space is limited, so please reserve your seats today!



**Friday, April 20th**  
**Mass: 5:30pm**  
**Supper & Substance:**  
**6:30pm - 9pm**  
**Ave Maria Hall**



Guest Speakers:  
Jason & Elise Angelette  
Co-Directors of Faith & Marriage  
Winwood Community

**Registration Form:**  
 3 ways to register: You may *mail* the form to the above address, *email* the information to [reganlager@yahoo.com](mailto:reganlager@yahoo.com) or *call* the church secretary at (850) 438-3131 before April 12th.


Couple's Names \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_


Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any special dietary needs? \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to utilize our free childcare, please provide names and ages on the back of this form.





**St. Andrew the Apostle  
Family Life Ministry**  
celebrates the



# Krewe of S & S

## Supper & Substance


**Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**  
**The Tower**  
**3131 Eton St.**  
**Daiquiris & drinks at 6:30**

**\$30.00 per couple**  
 Space is limited, register by 1/22/12  
 Mardi Gras Ball to follow dinner  
 Costumes or Mardi Gras attire

**Menu:**  
 Tossed Green Salad  
 Shrimp Creole  
 Cajun Corn  
 King Cake

**Presenting couple: Elise & Jason Angelette**



**Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional information call C.C. at the rectory 393-2334**

# St. Anselm Bandstand!!



*We're goin' hoppin',  
 We're goin' hoppin' today,  
 Where things are poppin',  
 In the St. Anselm Way,  
 We're gonna drop in,  
 On all the music they play,  
 On the Bandstand (Bandstand!!)*

**Join us on Friday, the 12th of November  
 for a hoppin' good time!**  
**We'll be dancin' and singin' and eatin' and drinkin'**  
**from 7:00 - 11:00 pm in St. Joseph Hall.**  
**Enjoy a D.J. playing tunes from the 50's & 60's**  
**and a karaoke contest with cash prizes!**  
**Come dressed in your favorite outfit from the**  
**Bandstand era!**

\*\$25.00 per couple      Presented by Supper & Substance

**Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

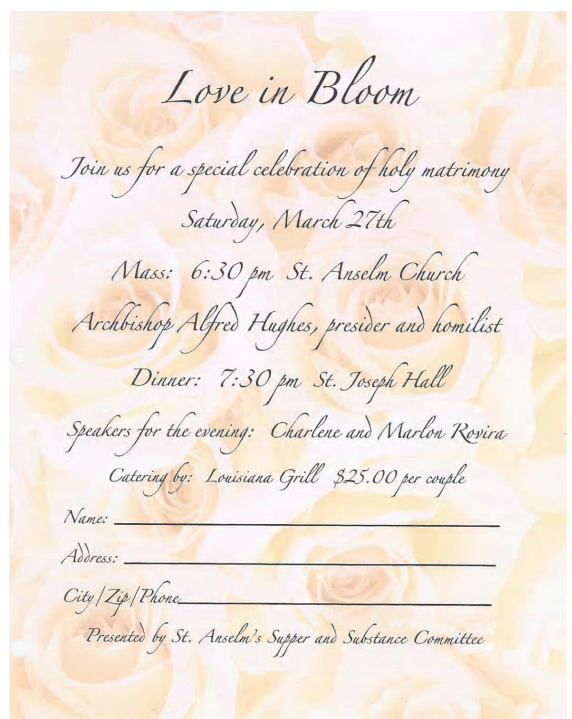
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/State/Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Love in Bloom



*Join us for a special celebration of holy matrimony*  
*Saturday, March 27th*

*Mass: 6:30 pm St. Anselm Church*  
*Archbishop Alfred Hughes, presider and homilist*

*Dinner: 7:30 pm St. Joseph Hall*

*Speakers for the evening: Charlene and Marlon Revira*  
*Catering by: Louisiana Grill \$25.00 per couple*

**Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/Zip/Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Presented by St. Anselm's Supper and Substance Committee*

## *Appendix 7: **Sample Evaluation Form***

Please take a few minutes to evaluate our Supper & Substance dinner. Your comments will help us in planning future programs. Thank you for your interest.

*Please circle your answer.*

1. How would you rate the meal?

Excellent      good      fair      poor

2. Do you feel it was a good value?

Excellent      good      fair      poor

3. How would you rate the atmosphere we tried to create?

Excellent      good      fair      poor

4. How would you rate the speakers/subject matter?

Excellent      good      fair      poor

5. Would you attend another Supper & Substance?

Yes      No

6. Is there anything you would like to suggest that we could change or add to our next Supper & Substance event?

7. Any other comments you would wish to make?



*Appendix 8: **Service Hour Form for Student Volunteers***

To Whom It May Concern,

\_\_\_\_\_ worked at our parish Supper &  
Substance dinner this evening from 6pm to 10pm helping with  
the set-up, service and clean up for our event.

Four hours were performed. Thank you for this opportunity.

God bless,

\_\_\_\_\_

## *Appendix 9: Sample Pulpit Presentation*

“Good (morning). My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and this is my husband/wife \_\_\_\_\_. We are members of the Supper & Substance Committee here at (*name of parish*) and we are very excited to be here today to tell you about our upcoming event, on (date and time). The theme of the evening is (“*That’s Amore*”). (Add your own creative line here) *It will be an evening of good Italian cooking with love in the air!* All married couples will have the opportunity to spend an evening out and dine, sip wine, and enjoy a lovely dinner catered by *Italiana Café*.

All in all, it will be an evening that you DO NOT want to miss! Supper & Substance Dinners are a wonderful way to meet other couples from our parish community, share a fun evening with your spouse, and enrich your marriage by listening to our speakers for the evening, *Jane and Deacon John Doe*.

After mass today, we will be at each of the entrances to distribute invitations. We have limited seating and these spaces will fill up quickly, so we suggest turning in your registration forms early. The cost is \$40 per couple, which includes dinner, wine and beer, music, and presentation. (Now that’s what we call a cheap date! ☺) So mark your calendars, get a babysitter – if you need one and plan on joining us for this lovely night. We look forward to seeing you!”

## Appendix 10: Other Benefits from a Supper & Substance Program

### Other Benefits from a Supper & Substance Program:

Supper & Substance is more than just eating a dinner and listening to a talk. It is a creative and effective way to attract and awaken couples to the importance of doing more for their marriage in a non-threatening and appealing way!



#### Backdoor Approach!

Supper & Substance is a **backdoor** approach to get couples to do more and learn more about marriage. There are many couples who would not necessarily be interested or available to attend a retreat or a lecture on marriage but would be more open to a dinner event that boasts of being “fun” along with “doing something rewarding for your marriage”.

It is a **gateway** program that leads to the building up or reviving of a parish marriage ministry. Not only marriage ministry itself, but many other programs, initiatives and ministries have blossomed from a parish's participation in Supper & Substance.



Along with its ability to propel couples to become more proactive in their marriage, Supper & Substance can act as a **springboard** for other parish programs and events.

Supper & Substance is also a great **evangelizing tool** for parishioners. Because of its special dynamics, couples feel more welcomed to invite friends or family to the church to do something special for their marriage as well as join in the fellowship of a vibrant community!

#### EVANGELIZING TOOL



## Appendix 11: Childcare Registration Form Instructions

### Childcare Registration Form Instructions

Please complete this form, detach it and mail to \_\_\_\_\_ (S&S Childcare Coordinator)

Address:

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*Please note:*

- Pack 'n Plays are very helpful for young ones not yet walking!
- For children in diapers, please provide diapers and wipes.
- Refreshments will be provided for your child, however, if your child has special needs or preferences, please label all items left with the babysitting team and provide instructions.
- Children may be dropped off at \_\_\_\_\_ (location) starting at \_\_\_\_\_ PM (at least 15 min before the start of the Supper & Substance).

Questions: Please Contact ...

- Contact Person 1, cell phone and email address
- Contact person 2, cell phone and email address

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-

### BABYSITTING REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete this form and return it to (Name of S&S Childcare Coordinator) & (Mailing address) \_\_\_\_\_ of email information to \_\_\_\_\_.

Child's Name	Age	Medical Needs/Allergies
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## Appendix 12: Sample Letter to Parents

### Suggested letter and procedures for the childcare Services provided the night of the Supper & Substance:

(Name of Church Parish) Supper & Substance Committee has developed a separate Childcare Ministry to serve the team and couples of the Supper & Substance event. Our ministry is under the direction of a very generous parishioner volunteer who has (past experience in teaching and assisting at a Pre-K school here in \_\_\_\_\_ (city).

The Supper & Substance Childcare Coordinator has in turn formed her own team of childcare providers, usually numbering about additional volunteers. We attempt to keep at least a 6 to 1 ratio of children to adults. In addition to the adult servers, we also accept assistance from older youth, but do not include them in our childcare provider- to- child ratio. Youth may earn service hours. We also ask each Committee member of the Supper & Substance team to be available for childcare service in the event our need increases for a particular event.

All adult volunteers must have completed Safe Environment training as set forth by the Diocese of \_\_\_\_\_.

Registration for those requiring childcare is mandatory. See attached registration form.

The initial childcare registration consists of the child's name, age and any special needs/allergies. Additionally, the parent must reserve a spot for their child prior to event. This way we have a more accurate number of children for whom we will need providers. Registration for childcare opens about two weeks before the event, by email, on a first come first served basis, as space is limited due to limited

Dear Parents:

We are very excited about being with your beautiful children during your "Supper & Substance" this \_\_\_\_\_ (day).

Just a few reminders for you... *For those who have reserved spots:* Childcare opens at \_\_\_\_\_ (at least 15 min prior to the start time of the S&S). Children may be dropped off at \_\_\_\_\_.

Supper & Substance will be at \_\_\_\_\_ starting at \_\_\_\_\_ pm.

Please sign each child in, make their name tag, and be sure to leave a contact cell phone number. Please bring any special needs for your child...diapers, wipes, special dietary needs, allergy meds,, pack 'n plays, etc.

If your child is a "toddler", that is, not yet able to walk on their own, *please provide a pack n play* or something similar to assist us...adult arms are not always available throughout the evening.

A light snack will be served!

Thank you to \_\_\_\_\_ and (their) extraordinary and generous team of volunteers!

Please let us know if you have any questions/concerns/suggestions!

God bless you all...

adult volunteers. There is no charge for this service. A day or two before the event all parents are emailed with instructions for the childcare service.

The notes typically include the following:

Parents are asked to drop off their children at a special location up to 15 minutes before the Supper & Substance event begins.

At drop off the parent signs their child in providing the following information: Parent name and emergency phone number, child's name, age and special needs. Parents are also asked to provide a pack n play for non-walkers. We try to hold the babies as much as possible, however, there are times when arms must be free to attend to other children. Name tags are made for each child.

Our coordinator pre-plans each childcare event. A typical evening may look something like this if the Supper & Substance event begins at 6:30pm and ended at 8pm

6:15pm:	Parent signs child in, makes name tag. Child engages in free play. Toys are provided. Weather permitting, outdoor play might be allowed.
6:30pm	Craft begins in small groups; play continues for others. Depending on liturgical pr calendar season, a craft is prepared for the children: Mardi Gras masks, Valentine prayers, Play dough Crown of Thorns, etc.
7:15pm	Clean up
7:20pm	Songs and dancing
7:30	Prayer, snack (juice and cookies, goldfish during Lent!), movie
7:50	Song and closing dance
8:00	Parent signs child out

## *Appendix 13: Sign In & Sign Out Chart*

### **Supper & Substance Childcare Sign in/Sign out Chart**

<b>Parent's Name</b>	<b>Emergency Cell Phone</b>	<b>Child's Name &amp; Age</b>	<b>Allergies/ Needs</b>	<b>Sign-out (Parent Initials!)</b>





## *Appendix 14: Frequently Asked Questions:*

- **How many times a year should we do a Supper & Substance?** at least one, maybe twice. To help keep the interest and to “spice” things up a bit and maybe reach out to different groups, have the two S&S’s different in theme (i.e. romantic theme to a fun and festive theme)
- **Does a Supper & Substance night have to provide Childcare?** No, but it sure takes away excuses couples have in not getting out of the house and be with each other on a date night. Also, when it comes to the childcare, don’t just see it as “let’s find something to do for the kids” while the parents are getting filled, make this a great way to evangelize to the children at their level!
- **How much money should we set ticket prices for the couples?** You want to find ways to absorb expenses and to make sure the cost of the tickets are low to ensure that you have not priced anyone out from the night. If you would like to at the end of the night, take up a collection (love offering) to help continue the ministry and help make sure that all expenses are paid and that the parish is not set back from the event (although this event really should be seen as an investment).
- **We just had our 4<sup>th</sup> Supper & Substance and we have not seen a bit of a drop in participation, what should we do? Here are some things to consider:** Invite new couples to be on the committee. Review your evaluations and see what people have been saying. What kind of advertising is going on in the parish (I am sure you notice that when an event that really matters is about to happen in the parish a very nice marketing plan is in place. How can you duplicate the same?) Is the pastor on board and has he been helping to announce it during key times?
- **We have done a few Supper & Substances and we continue to see the same couples, how can we reach new couples in the parish?** This question might be answered a little in the one above but I will say that not to worry, remember Jesus said feed his sheep not count them. It is important however to make sure though that we are doing all we can to reach out to more and new people. Look at your marketing, maybe make personal phone calls, getting more personal invitations out there after mass or during church events. And then make sure when you have them there that it is a night they will be truly inspired. Then those couples will spread the good news better than any billboard.
- **How important is our pastor’s support of the program?** This is assuming that the pastor is okay with the program at the parish, but if he does not give his support to the program it will not last or will not be as successful as it could be.
- **Our parish is going through a really tough time right now; I do not think we have the volunteers or the ability to potential have the parish lose money on this. Do we wait till it is a better time for us?** Meet everyone where they are. Make it more simple, make it less costly, but still offer an opportunity for couples to get together and fellowship as couples and grow as spouses!
- **Our parish already has a marriage ministry team. Do we need their permission to do this?** First talk with your pastor about this. It would be important to find a way to team up in some way

or make sure you are not competing in the parish. find a way how this event can help them and how their works that they are doing can assist in bringing couples together.

- **Is it a good idea to invite other parishes to join in on the event?** We have seen it where parishes have teamed up and then parishes have run solo. Either one would work and maybe it might be good to plan trying both out.
- **How can S&S fit into your Marriage Ministry Program?** Marriage ministry needs to be diverse in its ability to reach and meet couple. You have a variety of wants and needs in a parish and Supper & Substance can play a big role in meeting couples where they are as well as a way to help couples be introduced and encouraged to do more in their faith. Let us help you with your planning to help make sure that you are maximizing and reaching out to all your couples.
- **What is the next thing we should do after the S&S is over?** Strike while the iron is hot! The night of the event, there will be, Lord willing, couples who begin to see that they need to do more in their marriage and for their marriage. There are a couple of levels you might want to consider of how to take advantage of this awakening and help guide them so that the night is not just a one hit wonder for the couple. Is there another Marriage event scheduled on the calendar? At minimum you want to let them know that you will be getting in touch with them soon and that you want to let them know of another event that you are planning or that the parish is planning and that you want to encourage them to take advantage of to continue learning and growing in your relationship with God and with each other. Encourage a commitment from the couples: Going to mass as a family every Sunday, Praying as a couple, Have the prayer cards on the table

Please call us or email us any questions you may have...

## **Special Thanks to:**

Special thanks go out to Father Neal McDermott and Deacon John & Linda Pippenger for the creation of Supper & Substance as well to all who have helped contribute to the work and who have worked in their parish to make Marriage Ministry a priority and from all the insights we have gained from their great work!

A very brief back ground on Supper & Substance:

As the campus minister at a Catholic College, Father Neal McDermott OP. would offer during lent a gathering of college students called soup & substance. Once Fr Neal became pastor of St. Dominic's Church in New Orleans, he and the Pippengers decided to offer a marriage gathering that would be cost effect but also be something special and inspiring. From that the idea to do a dinner date night at the parish was thought of and then the name Supper & Substance came to be. From the 20 plus years ago when it first started at St. Dominic, the fruit continue to grow and marriages have been strengthened, the parish became stronger and other ministries followed. Why? You strengthen the marriage, you then will strengthen the family and those families will make a very active and faith-filled parish!