

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

KEY TO INTIMACY

BY FLETCHER DOYLE

Natural Family Planning is one topic guaranteed to make parishioners put down their bulletin inserts and return their attention to the homily! Yet Natural Family Planning, the only Church-approved method of family planning, is ignored by most Catholics in the United States.

According to a report of the National Survey of Family Growth from the National Center for Health Statistics, only 1.8 percent of Catholic women using some form of family planning in 2006–2010 were using Natural Family Planning. Why the disconnect? Let's explore just what NFP is and why the Church embraces it.

IT WORKS!

Natural Family Planning is considered, even among its proponents, an inadequate title for the various natural methods of fertility regulation. No one has been able to come up with a short phrase that describes all of the personal, medical, and spiritual benefits experienced by married couples who use those methods.



We hope you enjoy these sample pages. For ordering information, visit Liguori.org.



KICHIGIN/SHUTTERS

Pope John Paul II explained in his Theology of the Body teachings that Natural Family Planning, NFP, is a way for spouses to encounter some of the innocence the first couple experienced in their one-flesh union when they were naked without shame and loved according to God's plan.

What is Natural Family Planning?
Women display two visible signs of fertility during their menstrual cycle that are highly accurate in determining

when they ovulate, that is, generate an egg cell that can lead to pregnancy. The two signs are cervical mucus and basal at-rest body temperature. The several methods of NFP place different emphases on these signs—some don't use temperature at all—but in each case, these signs are charted daily.

The character of cervical mucus changes during a woman's cycle, becoming the color and consistency of egg whites at ovulation and often