

# ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

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Steven & Claudia Schulz  
Rev Terence Runstedler  
Executive Coordinators  
International Catholic Engaged Encounter  
4609 Ithaca St.  
Metairie, LA 70006  
USA

Dear Steven, Claudia & Fr Terence

Thank you for your enquiry about the Catholic Engaged Encounter programme. This has been running in the Archdiocese of Wellington for many years, and on an average we have three weekends a year, involving about 30 couples a year.

I have found the programme very helpful in ensuring that engaged couples prepare well for the commitment of marriage, and recommend that it continue to be promoted in the Archdiocese. Mrs Louise Kelleher, coordinator of Marriage Education, is also committed to promotion of the programme and on-going accompaniment of those who facilitate it.

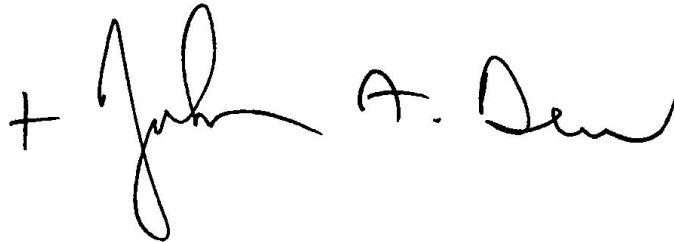
We have found the following most helpful:

- It is a specifically Catholic programme that proposes and models a theological and spiritual dimension to the marriage relationship, involving God and the Catholic community in this relationship;
- At the same time a non-Catholic partner is made to feel very welcome and accepted; they too have expressed appreciation for the weekend; for some, it was the first contact with the Catholic Church, or a positive experience contrary to media images of the Church;
- it allows couples uninterrupted time over a weekend in a retreat-like atmosphere, and generally concludes with Eucharist;

I therefore have no hesitation in recommending the programme to other bishops who have a concern to promote the values of Catholic marriage.

With you, I pray that you will receive a letter of recognition from the Vatican.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol followed by the name 'John A. Dew' in a cursive script.

+ John A Dew  
**Archbishop of Wellington**  
**New Zealand**