



DIocese of SAINT AUGUSTINE

September 16, 2009

Stephen and Claudia Schulz
National Catholic Engaged Encounter
4609 Ithaca St.
Metairie, Louisiana, USA 70006.

Dear Stephen and Claudia,

I write to strongly endorse the Engaged Encounter and support its efforts to be recognized by the International Association of the Lay Faithful.

During my years as Bishop of St. Augustine (1979-2000) and as Bishop Emeritus I have had countless opportunities to witness its value and importance. It is an approach rooted in faith and committed to foster the dignity and permanence of marriage.

I have been particularly impressed by the leadership couples witnessing to their married love whether it be of many years or relatively recent.

However, the engaged couples do not come just to listen to the leaders but they are challenged to reflect on important issues and then share their reflections with each other.

I have always believed in the value of Engaged Encounter but at this point in our culture with its questionable moral values I am convinced that the Engaged Encounter has a significant role to play in affirming the sacredness of the Christian marriage.

A few months ago I presided at the Liturgy for the Southeast Regional Conference of Engaged Encounter leaders. I was deeply moved by the joy and commitment of so many couples that reflected diversity of ages as well as ethnic backgrounds.

I pray that the Roman Pontifical Council for the Laity give this request serious consideration and ultimate approval.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop Emeritus of Saint Augustine