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Wisconsin State Guilds Join Other Organizations in Presenting Humanae Vitae Conference

RICHARD J. FEHRING, PH.D., FAAN

The Wisconsin Guilds of the Catholic Medical Association, the Marquette University Institute for Natural Family Planning, and the Marquette Chapter of University Faculty for Life presented a conference on the 50th anniversary of Humanae Vitae.

The Marquette NFP Conference aimed at analyzing the progress made over the last 50 years in developing evidenced-based methods of Natural Family Planning (NFP) and integrating the provision of NFP within women's health care.

The conference was held on July 20-21 at Marquette University and began with two key foundational presentations. The first by John Grabowski, Ph.D. Professor of Moral Theology at The Catholic University of America, with his wife Claire Grabowski, was on the moral differences between NFP and contraception. The second presentation by Kevin Miller, Ph.D., associate professor at Franciscan University, provided clear criteria and examples on how to discern the serious reasons for postponing the transmission of human life.

On July 21 the conference was moderated by Dr. Robin Goldsmith, state director of the Catholic Medical Association, and Dr. Cindy Jones Nosacek, president of the Milwaukee Guild. Richard J. Fehring, Ph.D., FAAN,

Professor Emeritus of Marquette University, provided a historical review of the Catholic scientists who answered the call of Humanae Vitae to develop effective methods of natural family planning; and Dr. Thomas Bouchard, a family medicine physician, presented a paper on the evidence-based effectiveness of NFP methods in helping couples avoid and achieve pregnancy.

Dr. Kathleen Raviele, former president of the CMA, provided a paper on integrating NFP into women's health care; and Dr. Paul Yong, Assistant Professor at the British Columbia School of Medicine, gave updates and case examples on treating endometriosis based on the latest research. Dr. Marguerite Duane, Executive Director of Fertility Appreciation Collaborative to Teach the Science (FACTS), provided information on medical schools and NFP education. CMA members Drs. Jim Linn and Julie Mickelson served as panel responders to the medical presentations.

The afternoon consisted of presentations by various health professionals on how they integrate NFP into their medical practices, including Dr. Melissa Weidert from the new NFP-only St. Gianna Clinic in Green Bay. Jacqueline Gorman, PA and Kate Elenchin B.S.N., CRNA also gave a presentation on the Marquette Method of NFP distance education services.

The conference ended with the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the annual Wisconsin CMA Guild Picnic.