

Lutheran Marriage Encounter Temple Talk Script

(This talk is offered as a way of giving some information about Lutheran Marriage Encounter. Reference is made to a half sheet (8.5 x 5.5) application form, which may be a bulletin insert or provided by persons making this presentation. This talk could be used after a worship service, read by a couple from the lectern on a Sunday morning, or used in some other setting. Please be sure to speak slowly and loudly, using a P.A. system if possible. It is suggested that one person read the first paragraph, and then the other person the next, and so forth, in order to give some variety to the talk. It will take about five minutes to read this talk.)

Good morning/evening. My name is (*your first name*), and this is my wife/husband, (*your spouse's first name*). Together, as a married couple, we're known as the (*last/family name*).

A Marriage Encounter Weekend is an opportunity for husband and wife to give a beautiful gift to each other -- a gift of honest and trusting love and communication -- which will enrich your marriage and add a dimension to it which will be there for the rest of your lives.

A Marriage Encounter Weekend is 44 hours spent together in a comfortable motel or retreat house. Each couple has their own private room, and everything (including meals) is provided for you -- with the exception of comfortable clothing you bring with you.

The purpose of Lutheran Marriage Encounter is to provide a context for strengthening and revitalizing marriage, and its goal is the renewal of husband-wife relationships and your marriage. It is NOT designed to provide therapy or counseling, and it is NOT conducted as a "groupy" activity or sensitivity session.

The format of the weekend takes the following shape: it is facilitated by a team of four Lutheran couples, one of whom is a Lutheran pastor and spouse. The weekend consists of a series of presentations, with all the couples gathered in one place for the presentations. Then time is given for private reflection and thought. Then the couples go to the privacy of their own rooms to share time and dialogue, completely by themselves. The encounter weekend ends with a worship service at which Holy Communion is celebrated and available for those desiring to commune.

(This paragraph if time permits) Briefly, the history of Marriage Encounter began in Spain, where Father Gabriel Calvo, a Roman Catholic priest, was involved in a ministry working with married couples and their families. He noticed that some couples had a special quality which others did not. Upon further investigation, he found that this difference was largely because of the quality, rather than the quantity, of communication between the husband and wife. The Encounter weekends were first given in Spain, then South and Central America and then in the United States. The first weekend in English was given at Notre Dame University in 1967. From there it has spread to many foreign countries including Canada, Brazil, Australia, Japan, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

Couples of any faith or religious background are welcome at any weekend. In addition to the Roman Catholic sponsored weekends, there are also Marriage Encounter Weekends sponsored by Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and others. The Lutheran expression of Marriage Encounter had its beginning in 1976, and since its beginning has encountered over 65,000 couples. In all expressions of Marriage Encounter, well over a million couples from all walks of life, from recently married to over fifty years married, and from many different faiths have been on a weekend. On any given Friday night, some 100 weekends are beginning around this country with over 3,000 couples in attendance.

The half-sheet information and application form contains a brief summary of the information we have given. *(If it was a bulletin insert, say so, or tell who has copies to hand out.)* It also contains information about the cost of the weekend and explains that people are given an opportunity to make a contribution anonymously during the course of the weekend.

The other side of the half-sheet is an application form which can be completed and mailed, together with a \$45 non-refundable registration fee. Or, if you'd like to give the completed form to us yet today, you may do so. We'll be available to answer questions you have and/or to receive the registration form and check *(give location)*. And there are other couples here, also wearing some kind of name tag like ours. They will also be happy to talk to you or receive the forms.

As you have probably guessed, we found our Marriage Encounter Weekend a richly rewarding experience. Our marriage wasn't and isn't perfect! But we have greatly appreciated the time we had together on our weekend. It was wonderful for us, and we invite you to treat yourselves to a Marriage Encounter Weekend.