SmartLoving Marriage

Promotional Pulpit Talk

### Best Delivered 4-8 weeks before the seminar.

### Confirm with the priest that he is expecting you to give pulpit talk, ie date and time during the mass

### Put up posters and place brochures on seats

### At the end of the mass be available for questions and collect excess brochures

### Pulpit talks are a great way to raise awareness in the parish about the seminar. If you are short on couples to speak, target the masses where there are lots of couples in the 1-20 year marriage range.

### A number of couples have asked for assistance in speaking publicly about SmartLoving Marriage at their parish. This outline has been prepared to minimise the effort required on your part, but please feel free to modify it to suit your style. The most important thing is to be genuine and honest - people will respond, because your life of passion is so attractive. We all dream of a life-long love affair, but for many it seems too good to be true. Your personal testimony of the struggles to live as God desires, will inspire and encourage, regardless of whether any couples register for SLM.

Preparation

The pulpit talk needs to convey the basic information (relationship enrichment experience, for all married couples, it’s private, the date, the venue, cost, how to book in). It helps to present the information a little creatively, by using the following format.

Introduction

Usually you will have been introduced by the celebrant. If you haven’t been, you may say something like: Good morning/evening. My name is XXXX and this is my wife/husband YYYY. We would like to speak with you about the SmartLoving Marriage Seminar for married couples, which will be held in a few weeks time.

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Begin with a short story or analogy to illustrate the benefits of SLM. Include a short reference to the specific benefits to your relationship. If possible, the husband should tell part or all of this story, as it is most commonly the men who are reluctant to come. Eg

Last year, I got a Mexican Hammock for my birthday. Now Mexican hammocks are a little different to the average hammock - they’re made for 2. We got into the habit of swinging in the hammock together each evening. It became a time to catch our breath, debrief from the day’s activities, and reconnect with each other. Some days it rained, or we skipped it on our way out somewhere else - on these evenings, we really missed ‘our time’ together, and had trouble putting the distractions of the day aside to be present to each other. In truth, the hammock was just an accessory; we could just have easily had ‘our time’ on the lounge or in the park. What made the difference, was the SmartLoving Marriage Love seminar, is like this. It’s “time out” with each other, an opportunity to reflect and reconnect, to work through some of the clutter that makes living a passionate marriage akin to running an obstacle course.

or something like this:

We took a holiday for our wedding anniversary last year. As we were driving, Betty suggested we turn off the main road. I agreed reluctantly expecting to have to backtrack. At the end of the road, we came to a beautiful little beach. We decided to stop to eat our lunch and enjoy the scenery. Eventually, we had to go, but our little detour turned out to be the highlight of our holiday - a treasure we weren’t expecting. SmartLoving Marriage was also like this. We agreed to come only reluctantly, and expecting to regret it. It also turned out to be a high point in our relationship; a time when we felt very close and connected.

Alternatively, you may prefer to tell your story of how you came to do SLM including your reservations, and how the experience enriched your relationship. Eg

Initially, I didn’t want to go, but agreed only reluctantly because of Jan. I was afraid of some group therapy thing - it was nothing like that. SmartLoving came at a time when we were just beginning to slip into disillusionment with each other. We were still committed and still very much in love, only the sparkle had faded.

or something like this:

When our friends first asked us to go, we were offended, believing that they thought our relationship was in trouble. We almost didn’t go as point of pride, but are we so glad we did. We discovered things about ourselves and each other that have made it so much easier to be in relationship.

What to Expect

Tell them something of what to expect on the seminar, but take care not to overdo it - It is better to have them ask you individually after Mass. Eg

The seminar is facilitated by married couples, who illustrate the ideas with examples and stories from their own life, which makes it interesting and relatable. Once you’ve got the background on a topic, the rest is up you. Detailed worksheets and reflection questions help you to apply the ideas to your own relationship. Every exercise has time together as a couple to discuss and share what you’ve learnt about yourselves. The focus of the seminar is sexuality and how we relate as men and women.

The next seminar will be held at: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We have placed brochures at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. If you require more information, you can visit the web site ([www.smartloving.org](http://www.smartloving.org) ), speak to us after Mass, or phone the number on the brochure.

A Fun Alternative

A number of couples have role played a conversation between a husband and wife discussing SLM. For example:

W: This SmartLoving seminar looks interesting - do you want to go?

H: No way! that’s for couples with problems - we don’t need that!

W: Actually, it says that its for loving couples who want to rekindle the fire. We could do with a bit of passion, don’t you think?

H: Yeh, would be nice! but I don’t want to spend the weekend talking to other people about our private lives - I hate that group stuff.

W: Says on the brochure that it’s private - no group therapy, no counseling.

H: Well anyway, I’d rather go to a nice hotel with you for the weekend.

W: We can do that anytime, but we won’t always have this opportunity. I heard that couples feel like they’ve fallen in love again.

H: That’s a bit hard to believe!

W: Remember when we did that marriage preparation when we were engaged- you didn’t want to go, but in the end you thought it was really good. Why don’t we talk to these couples after Mass and see what they’re like.

H: Okay,I suppose we haven’t done anything like this for quite a while. But I want to get our romantic weekend too.

W: It’s a deal - you book the hotel, I’ll book us into SmartLoving!