

spouse become comfortable with idea, especially if their friend is ready to go. We encourage waiting a year or even two in order to take time to get to know the spouse, too. Please read the information below carefully, so you, too, can understand what the equal commitment rule really is. And if you have any questions, please ask one of the board members. We'd be glad to talk to you about it.

The Reason for the Rule - The Letter of Agreement states "husbands and wives should make an equal commitment to participate." How are communities and sponsors to interpret this? In the first place, the rule does not imply that Emmaus is primarily intended for married persons. Single persons are as welcome to participate in Emmaus as married couples. The rule does, however, reflect a concern and a hope about the effect of Emmaus on marriages and families.

First, the equal participation rule guards against the Emmaus experience becoming a separating influence in a marriage. The rule is part of our heritage from Cursillo and is based on years of experience with the potential effects of these short courses in Christianity on marriages, positively and negatively. Emmaus can be the occasion for commitments to new life directions, which one's spouse may not understand or appreciate at the time. Disregard for the rule will certainly not result in marital tensions in every case. But the Emmaus Movement should do all it can to strengthen marriages and to avoid practices, which we know have the potential to affect a marriage adversely.

Second, when the rule is followed, Emmaus can indirectly strengthen the spiritual bond in a marriage and family. So sponsorship of married persons involves approaching both husband and wife together and encouraging them to make an equal commitment to participate. This is not only so they can grow together as a Christian family, but also because a strong Emmaus Movement and the church

need our participation as families, not only as individuals...

What the Rule Does Not Mean - The equal commitment rule does NOT mean a wife can never go to Emmaus unless her husband has gone first. While it is always best to schedule husbands and wives to participate during the same set of Emmaus Weekends so they can share their experience and support one another, circumstances may arise when it is necessary and reasonable for husbands or wives to take their Walks at different times or places. In these cases, the order of their participation is secondary and is a practical matter...

The Rule is Wisdom, Not Law - It is important that the wisdom of the rule be honored in Emmaus Communities. The equal commitment rule represents a practical ideal to which Emmaus Communities should be committed and toward which sponsors should work in all cases. It is important to remember, however, that the equal commitment rule represents wisdom, not law.

There is a place for reasonable exceptions. Exceptions can be made by the Board of Directors when there is no possibility of the participation of both spouses and there is reason for assurance that the marriage will not be adversely affected by the participation of only one spouse. In some cases, spouses have never shared their religious lives and have learned to deal with this as a reality of their marriage [or if one spouse isn't a Christian]. Clergy and their spouses have often dealt with a disparity in theological education and participation in spiritual growth events. Furthermore, the importance of involving clergy in Emmaus will often warrant exceptions. Other cases may involve persons who want to go to Emmaus very badly, but whose spouse is unbending in refusing to participate time after time. Each community must prayerfully decide how to handle these cases in grace and when to make exceptions

in view of a person's and families spiritual welfare. [The board generally asks that the sponsor take time to invite the couple over time, and if one member of the couple continues to refuse to attend, then the other person is welcome to attend.]

Source: Bryant, Stephen D. The Upper Room Handbook on Emmaus. Nashville, Upper Room, 1989. 26-27.



KAIROS No. 28 MICHAEL Unit

Please pray for the team going into the Michael Unit April 27th-30th, 2006. There are many needs for the Team more volunteers are needed, on both the inside and outside teams. You can contact Jim Born at **(903) 858-2467 (H) or (903) 539-1159 (C)** or you can email him at TYR103030@yahoo.com if you want to bake cookies for us you can download the recipes from our unit website just use this link <http://www.michaelunit.homestead.com/home.html>

You can sign up to attend the for the closing and get closing instructions at this link. <http://www.michaelunit.homestead.com/Closing.html>

There is an online prayer vigil to signup for setup at <http://www.3dayol.org/Vigil/GetVigil.phtml?pvid=1026&commid=836>

Please pray for this ministry satan really works overtime to confuse the hearts and minds of the men that will be attending this weekend. Pray for the strength of the Holy Spirit to carry this team into the Unit to do battle.

Boy's Epiphany No. 8 at CRTC

The team for the Boy's Epiphany No. 8 is now forming and volunteers are needed. The mission of Epiphany Ministry of Texas is to facilitate change in the lives of young men and women incarcerated in Juvenile Justice Facilities. God's Love is manifested through a three day short course in Christianity and an on-going follow-up process to those incarcerated youth known as "Stars." If you would like to become involved you can download a Team Application at

<http://www.crtc.homestead.com/> and send it to Tom Perdue, the address is on the application.

Yes, it's almost that time again.

TAX TIME!!! I hope the following will help answer questions to do with the funds for sponsorship, scholarships and donations. Remember, this will not be gospel for every household; there are different circumstances. Contact your tax accountant or attorney for details pertaining just to your circumstances.

1. The fee paid to the community for a pilgrim (in turned paid to G.R.A.C.E.)? This is not tax deductible.

Rationale: Payment in which something in return will be provided, such as lodging, food and supplies is not deductible.

2. The monies collected at the Gathering? Yes, it is deductible but see the rational.

Rational: It can be claimed as a tax deduction if there are "no strings" attached to the money given. If you gave money at the Gathering and specify that it goes for Joe Blow to attend a walk then it's not deductible.

3. If a scholarship is given for an unnamed pilgrim? Yes, it is a tax deduction.

Rational: Monies given to a scholarship fund can be claimed as a tax deduction. Again, if strings are attached is where the gray area is—if I give monies to the scholarship fund and I name a pilgrim then it is not a

deduction. If I give, unnamed, it is giving to a scholarship and can be deducted.

4. What about money given to your church and the church writes one check? YES and NO—see rational.

Rational: No: if the money is stated for a fee for a pilgrim to attend the walk, it is not deductible.

Yes: If the money is given to the ABC church, in their Emmaus scholarship fund, and there are no strings attached—then you may deduct it.

5. What about the \$10.00 per pilgrim we pay to Upper Room Nashville? Not a deduction.

Rational: This is considered to be a license fee and not deductible.

6. Donations for weekend supplies and/or food? Yes this is a deductible expense.

Rational: Donations to the community should be made as donations to the community. The board/committee chair makes the expenditure of the funds. This makes the donation a tax deductible item.

Do not shoot the messenger! This is not the Board's rational. This is our government and our tax laws. Again, there are different circumstances—contact the person who does your taxes for clarity.

Thoughts on Sponsorship

Sponsorship is the life blood of our Emmaus Community. Without new folks who come to experience the love of God through the Walk, we neither grow nor flourish. I would offer to you that if you have not sponsored someone, you need to be thinking about how you get started doing so.

When you see someone in Church or elsewhere and the thought hits you that perhaps he or she would be great for an Emmaus Walk... don't discount the fact that God may be putting that thought in your mind. I have come to realize that God will often ask me to sponsor someone I would not normally think

to interact with... but someone who needs the experience all the same. When I think back to the two folks in my Church who sponsored me... neither of them were good friends at the time. When God nudges... follow.

If you don't know the ends and outs of sponsorship... ask someone you know who's done it. It's pretty simple... really...

- Convince someone to attend the Walk, and have them fill out an application. Applications can be printed from www.gracemmaus.org

- You fill out the balance of the application and collect the initial check from the potential Pilgrim... Send it all in quickly.

- Once the Pilgrim is accepted onto a Walk, it's your job to start collecting letters from close friends and family so that you have at least twelve (12) of them to hand in on Thursday... when you hand over your Pilgrim.

- Don't forget to take care of the Pilgrim's family while they are without that member of the family. Assist with child care, cook meals, do whatever you can to make it a good weekend for your left behind family. We don't want to turn off a spouse because he/she had to suffer taking care of the kids while the other was away having a great time.

- Follow up with your Pilgrim after the weekend. Get them to the Babe Chick Meeting, and into a Reunion Group. Pick them up for the first Gathering event. Make sure they are engaged in the Community! It's all up to you. We usually never fill up a Men's weekend. Sometimes we don't max out the Women's. With the hundreds of people in G.R.A.C.E. who have walked, all we need is a few more to take interest in sponsorship, and God's work grows at a much faster pace!

