

Saint Augustinus Community, Utrecht, Neederlands

In 2013 the English speaking community has added a new important activity: the "couples and family group".

A "couples and family group" is well-known in Italy where we (Vito and Santina) come from. In Italy a parish often has a "couples and family group" that meets regularly to share the Christian message, the beauty and the challenges of the daily lives of couples and families. Family is defined as a small church where it is possible to live and witness Jesus' love within the couple and in the relationship with parents-children.

At the beginning of this year, inspired by the Carnival event organized for families and children in Saint Augustinus, we realized that there were enough people committed to start this activity.

We had our first "couples and family group" in May. We learned about the first family group in history and the life of Aquila and Priscilla, one of the first Christian couples of the Gospel.

We meet every third Sunday of the month after Mass, we share a potluck lunch where each of us brings food from his/her own country.

After lunch the real meeting starts. While parents are together, some babysitter friends take care of the children that play in another room.

The meeting starts with reading a small chapter from the Bible.

Then we introduce the key aspects of the topic of the day and some questions.

Straight after, each couple looks for a peaceful corner in the room to discuss the topic for about twenty minutes. Each one shares thoughts with his/her own partner.

After the couple meeting we share in the broader group our thoughts related to the topic. Father Herman Lieberom is present during our meetings and provides guidance.

The topic for the first meetings of 2013/14 is the dialogue within the couple. Here are some details:

- Dialogue: good listening (October 20)
- Dialogue: good communication (November 17)
- Dialogue: taking decisions within the couple (December 15)
- Dialogue: quarrel and reconciliation (January 19)

For these meetings we use the interesting material from the *Comunità di Caresto* ([www.caresto.it](http://www.caresto.it)) and *GruppiFamiglia* ([www.gruppifamiglia.it](http://www.gruppifamiglia.it)) in Italy.

*When we meet:*

Every third Sunday of the month from 13.30 h until 16.30h

*Where we meet:*

Pastoral Center of Saint Augustinus

*For whom:*

The meeting is for couples and families

*For additional info write to:*

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**Vito Martielli, Santina Griseta**