*The following press release provides general information about the USCCB’s national campaign to raise awareness of Natural Family Planning methods. Feel free to use this text in its entirety or include it in a news release of your own.*

DATE: [insert date here]

**NFP Awareness Week Begins July 24th, 2016**

WASHINGTON, DC – “Natural Family Planning. Love, Mercy, Life. Opening the Heart of Marriage” is the theme of this year’s Natural Family Planning Awareness Week, a national educational campaign of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to celebrate God’s design for married love and the gift of life and to raise awareness of Natural Family Planning (NFP) methods. “NFP,” as the U.S. bishops have written, is supportive of Catholic beliefs about married love because it “respects the God-given power to love a new human life into being” (see, U.S. Bishops, *Married Love and the Gift of Life*). The slogan for this year’s NFP Awareness Week was inspired by the Holy Father’s call for a Jubilee Year of Mercy, a special time of grace in the Church wherein all, including married couples and families, are invited to open their hearts more fully to the unconditional love, mercy and life Christ and the Church offer us.

The dates of Natural Family Planning Awareness Week (July 24th – 30th, 2016) highlight the anniversary of the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (July 25) which articulates Catholic beliefs about human sexuality, conjugal love and responsible parenthood. The dates also mark the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne (July 26), the parents of the Blessed Mother.

Resources (e.g., the 2016 NFP Week poster, web banners, prayers, homily notes, bulletin inserts, etc.) and ideas for celebrating and promoting NFP Awareness Week in your area can be found on the USCCB’s NFP Program website: <http://www.usccb.org/nfp/awareness-week/index.cfm>. For more information, contact nfp@usccb.org.