



2024 EUME Young Blessed Couples Retreat

From September 6th-9th a Young Blessed Couples Retreat was held in Budapest, Hungary. The retreat was organized by a collaborative effort between the Blessed Family Department of Europe and the Middle East and the European Chapter of High Noon. Invited were couples who had been blessed after 2020, setting the focus of the program on those young couples who are still establishing themselves in the midst of big life decisions such as where to live and when to have children. Thirteen couples were present in all: four staff couples, seven participating couples, and two supporting families from the local community.

Gaining Food for Thought

In the registration form, couples were asked which topics they would like to hear about. As a result, Saturday and Sunday morning were full of insight, inspiration, and time to learn and discuss as a couple. There were lectures (held at the local Peace Embassy) on the purpose of the Blessing, conflict resolution, intimacy, and preparing for parenthood. There were also testimonies on serving the community as a couple and preparing to become parents. On the last day, there was time to work on creating a vision together as a couple.

The lectures given by Andrei and Diana Esanu on *Conflict Resolution* and by Francesca Cirelli on *Preparing for Parenthood* were especially appreciated by the participants and named as their favorite talks in the feedback.

Connecting to Community

Connecting to other couples in similar situations was an important goal of the program. We played games together, had group discussions, separate wives and husbands sharing, and went sightseeing together.

A Romantic Retreat

The program aimed to balance a romantic holiday with the opportunity to connect with other young couples as well as gain some useful tools for their relationship. To create the retreat experience, the couples stayed in a hotel right in the center of Budapest and were given a welcome package with recommended activities and restaurants to go to in their free time. Saturday evening, the couples had the free time to go out on a date to the place of their choice and create precious memories together. There was also a photoshoot where each couple could get professional photos taken by Andranik Karagezian-Skrodzki in the city park.

To close the program, all the couples received handmade gifts from Agnes Emese Berta on behalf of the Hungarian Blessed Family Department to commemorate their time in Budapest and from Sandra Karagezian-Skrodzki on behalf of the organizing team to support them in continuing to ask deep questions in the future.

Retreat Organizing Team

*Marea Toresen,
Andranik & Sandra Karagezian-Skrodzki,
Francesca & Andreas Gundacker-Cirelli,
Marinela Stefanc*

A special thanks to the Hungarian BFD for the beautiful gifts and to the Esanu family for coming to give their precious content on communication, conflict resolution and serving the community while also taking care of their new baby.

Report written by

Marea Toresen

