

The “Billings Revolution” 70 Years Later: From Fertility Knowledge to Personalized Medicine

My husband Jonathan and I attended the WOOMB International Congress celebrating 70 years of the Billings Ovulation Method this past April at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Rome, Italy. The Billings Method of Natural Family Planning (NFP) was created in 1953 in Melbourne, Australia by Catholic husband and wife, Drs. John and Evelyn Billings. Since then, the Method has been scientifically validated in well over 800,000 hormonal assays which can give couples the confidence they need should they decide to postpone or achieve pregnancy.

With a greater understanding of their shared fertility, couples experience greater love and generosity which results in stable, happier families. With respect of one’s fertility and the gift of life, couples can space children in a morally acceptable and effective way using the simple rules of the Billings Ovulation Method. While studies show the method effectiveness rate to be over 99%, research has shown the Method is also extremely effective in helping couples achieve pregnancy when experiencing lowered fertility.

As a board member for both NFP Saskatchewan and WOOMB Canada, I – along with my husband was thrilled to represent Canada at this International Congress in Rome. A highlight of the congress was a personal message written to the congress participants by our Holy Father, Pope Francis. See the letter here:

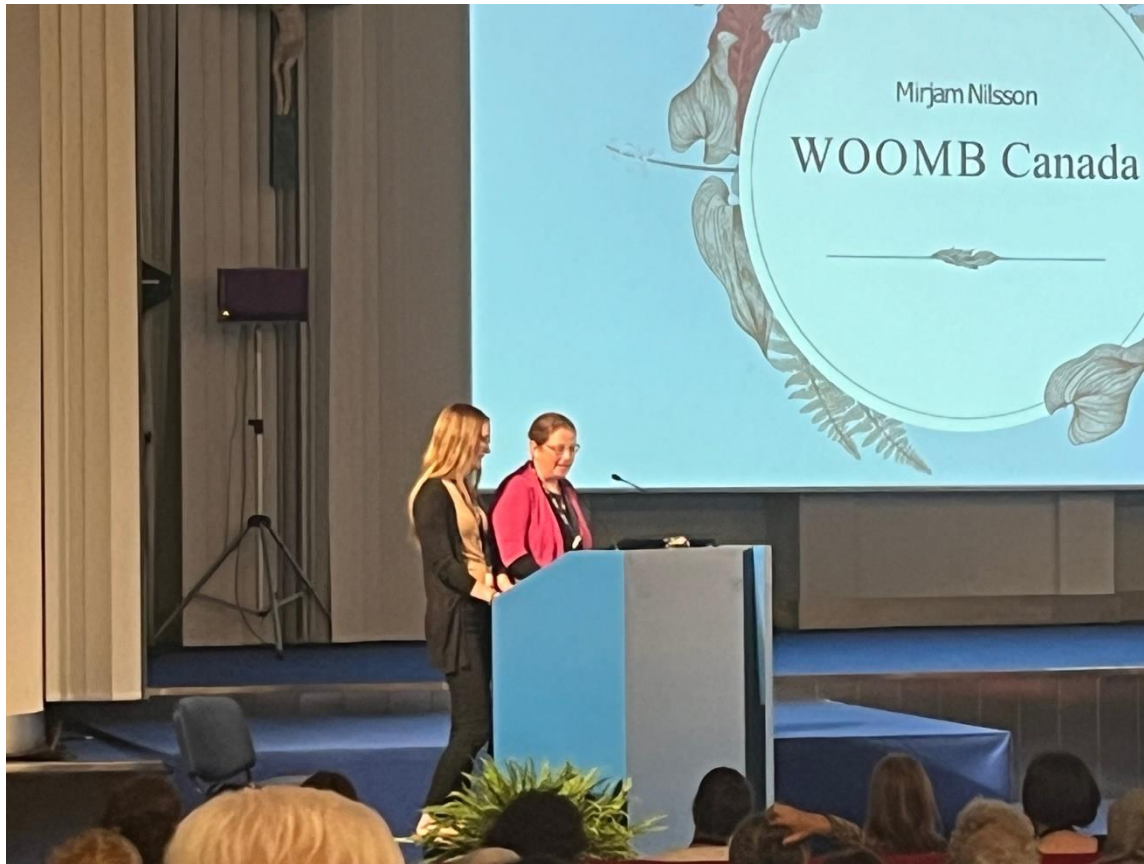
<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2023/04/28/230428b.html>

In his letter, Pope Francis reiterated the value of natural fertility regulation, the dignity of human persons, and encouraged all who promote this work around the world. In answer to Pope Francis’ challenge for ‘serious education in this area’, WOOMB Canada and its affiliates, including NFP Saskatchewan respond with a resounding “yes!”. We take to heart the Pope’s plea to help young people ‘prepare seriously for a great and generous love’. The simplicity of the Billings Method can be easily taught to young people, and indeed we are reminded of the words of Dr. Evelyn Billings, “This is knowledge of her body that every woman ought to have”. Pope Francis also highlighted the problem of declining birth rates; an issue that was repeated by several of the congress’ presenters.

The congress had a variety of presenters speaking on topics from political, scientific, medical, and faith perspectives. Government and church leaders, medical doctors, researchers, and scientists – as well as Billings Ovulation Method experts all came together to share different aspects of the Billings Revolution. Presenters shared how the Billings Method spearheaded a *revolution for science*, as we delved into the history and development of the scientific research of the method. Modern issues of low birth rates and declining fertility, especially as women age, were shown. The societal problems of children being seen as commodities instead of gifts were discussed.

Presentations were given on how the Billings Method has sparked a *revolution for procreative health* including the diagnosis and prevention of medical problems. Doctors, professors, and researchers shared cutting edge advancements on personalized medicine, and fertility preservation among women and men. Discussion on how the Billings Method has been a *revolution for culture* and the promotion and teaching of Natural Fertility Regulation in many different countries, cultures, and religions was shared. Lastly, delegates from many countries had the chance to share the '*Billings Revolution*' around the world from their individual countries. This was a heartwarming opportunity to hear of all the good work being done in the global 'Billings family'.

My husband and I were impressed by the Billings Ovulation Method of NFP back when we were engaged and were looking for a natural method of fertility regulation. We have now been using this simple and effective method for 18 years, and I have been an accredited instructor of the method for 13 of those years. The NFP Saskatchewan Association has now also existed in Saskatchewan for 18 years. In its lifetime, NFP Saskatchewan has hosted numerous training workshops, provides instructors for marriage preparation workshops, mother and daughter charting classes, and has taught hundreds of couples the Billings Method. As a non-profit organization, NFP Saskatchewan has functioned from the support of personal donations, as well as with the help of the Knights of Columbus and the Saskatchewan Pro-life Association. NFP Saskatchewan is an affiliate of our national organization, WOOMB Canada – a registered charity that has been in Canada since 1980.



Gisele King, Saskatchewan (left), and Dr. Karen Macdonald, Nova Scotia (right) sharing the history and current work of WOOMB Canada at the WOOMB International Congress in Rome, Italy, April 28th-29th, 2023.



Canadian attendees of the WOOMB International Congress in Rome, Italy, April 28th-29th, 2023.
L-R: Jonathan & Gisele King (Saskatchewan), Christine Woods (Ontario), Lindsay Elford (Nova Scotia), and Dr. Karen Macdonald (Nova Scotia).