



January
-
December
2016

Family Counselling
centre
FAMILY GARDEN

Report on
activities





This is only third editorial I've ever written in my life, and the annual report that will follow is my third as well... How is it usually said? Third time's the charm? Or third time, good time? Hmmm, good... And what is "good", exactly?

If I were to look back at the previous year and remember just how much has happened around me here in FAMILY GARDEN that could be called "good", there truly was plenty. Buckets of good things, really.

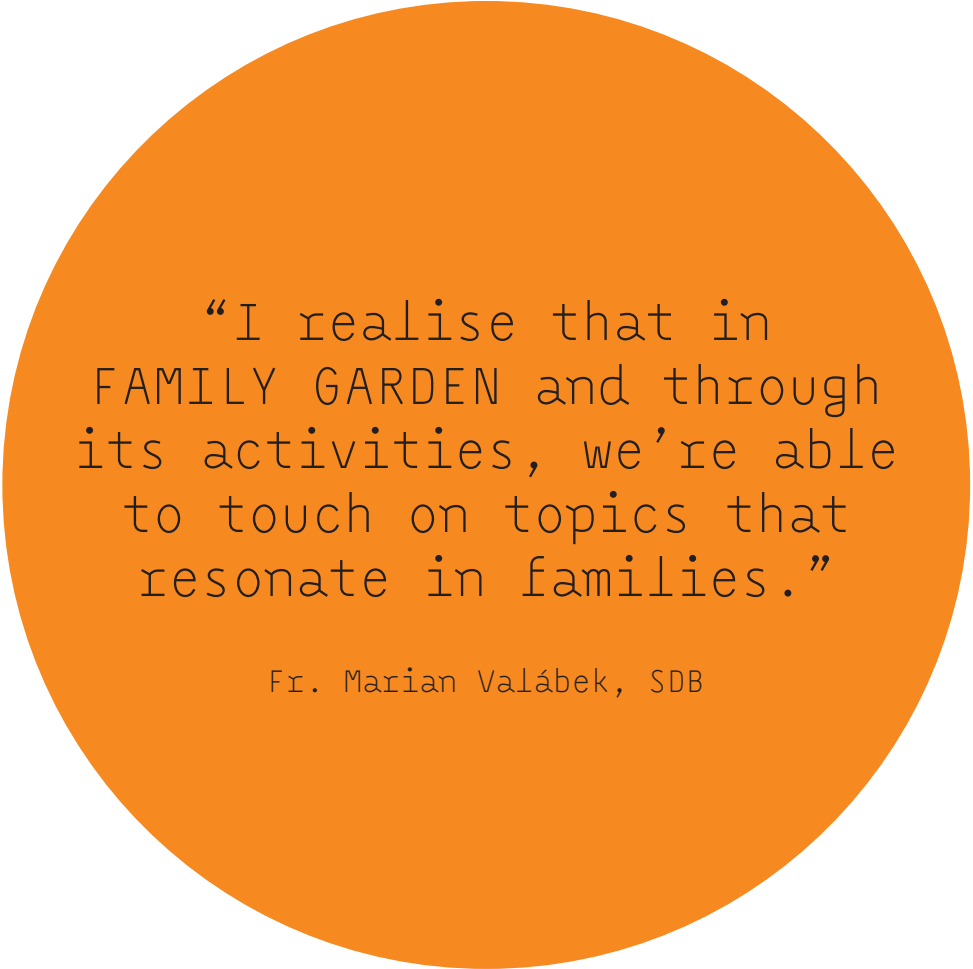
I definitely consider a good thing that once again, many people had the opportunity to come to this place and listen to testimonials of married couples or attend expert lectures on issues that resonate in almost every family; or that there was such a huge interest in marriage preparation among engaged couples that we had to look for another couple that would help us lead the sessions, and even so, it wasn't enough. Or that the calendar in which I was marking Christian coaching sessions was often so full that I needed to approach other outside coaches we work with, and they always gladly said yes to my request for help. The fact that we weren't quite able to meet the demand

for the Christian coach training course was also a good thing – it means that people in parishes, centres, or communities are still willing to serve others, to listen, to provide company, to help.

When we shut the door on our big yellow van for the second year in a row this summer, eight boys from an orphanage in Ukrainian Lvov kept waving goodbye to us until they turned the corner of the Miletičova street and got out of sight. Once again, they were able to spend two weeks in Slovakia, and when I looked at all the host families from Bratislava that came to bid farewell to them, and saw the mix of happiness and sadness on their faces, I said to myself: This really was a good thing.

I'd like to extend a huge THANK YOU to each and every one of you who is about to read this annual report, and who stood by our side and helped us in any way. Year 2016 is behind us. What GOOD things the upcoming year has in store for us, that's something only He knows.

Katarína Baginová
Director of the FAMILY GARDEN
Family counselling centre



“I realise that in
FAMILY GARDEN and through
its activities, we’re able
to touch on topics that
resonate in families.”

Fr. Marian Valábek, SDB

A large, solid orange circle is centered on the page. Inside the circle, the text "About US" is written in a black, sans-serif font. The word "About" is on the top line and "US" is on the bottom line, both centered horizontally.

About
US

Who we are and what we offer

FAMILY GARDEN is a family counselling centre located in Bratislava – Miletičova street, operating since 2014, and staffed by laymen – Salesian cooperators. In addition to Salesian cooperators, FAMILY GARDEN also partners with various specialists, coaches, a priest, gynaecologist, lawyer, financial adviser, married couples, and the entire Salesian family. FAMILY GARDEN brings all these Christian specialists under one roof, helping believers who seek high-quality professional help.

FAMILY GARDEN assists families, married and engaged couples, as well as individuals and lonely people through counselling and preventive work. If you are interested in counselling, we invite you to arrange a private session with one of our experts to talk about any issue you need guidance on. In the area of prevention, we offer lectures, preparation for marriage, as well as educational programmes. If you have a question, or would like to ask for an advice, please send us an e-mail on bratislava@familygarden.sk.

We are here for you!

Salesian cooperators

The Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC) was founded by Don Bosco on May 9, 1876 in Turin. After founding the Salesian Order (Salesians SDB and Salesian Sisters FMA), he decided to establish an association in the likes of the third orders (that the Franciscans and some other orders have for laity), however, he insisted that the emphasis shouldn't lie only in the religious piety, but also in the active life in loving service to others, especially young people – just as he himself has lived. Today there are approximately 30,000 Salesian cooperators (singles, married couples, and diocesan priests) living and working all over the world. Slovakia is one of the countries with the greatest representation of this part of the Salesian family – there are currently more than 1,000 Salesian cooperators in our country. For more information about the ASC centre on the Miletičova street please see www.mileticka.sk/asc

Expert guarantors



Fr. Marián Valábek, SDB

In your opinion, what is the biggest benefit of another year of existence of FAMILY GARDEN, and what leads you personally to still stand by our side, especially during lectures?

I realise that in FAMILY GARDEN and through its activities, we're able to touch on topics that resonate in today's families. In today's "fluid culture", the lectures help to bring stability into families, and light the way in the relationship between a husband and a wife, as well as in the area of raising children. Many people were touched by the testimonials of our lecturers and discussions on questions they have opened. The issues surrounding relationships and raising children provide infinite themes for discussion, and services provided in FAMILY GARDEN are one of many ways we can help to look for solutions to these issues. Because our families are not "the problem"; in fact, they offer us an opportunity to discover new ways in the environment we live in.



MUDr. Marek Dráb, PhD.

Despite your demanding job as a gynaecologist, why have you decided to give your time also to FAMILY GARDEN and to help and counsel our female clients or families?

Because it is my desire to keep experiencing and renewing that feeling we get when we decide to share something with others. And I believe

that in FAMILY GARDEN there will always be enough gifts through which people will be able to change, renew, and heal in their bodies and their spirit.



PhDr. Marián Kubeš, CSc., PCC (ICF)

How did it happen that a well-known psychologist and coach decided to trade a well-deserved retirement for training of other Christian coaches in FAMILY GARDEN, and to devote himself to professional guidance or continuing education of already trained coaches?

Through the years of my business career, I've been experiencing more and more strongly how far we can move away from the plan God has for our lives. Together with my wife, I've seen many couples tossed around in crises; they were facing breakups, and their children suffered. We were aware that in many cases, these naturally occurring conflicts and personal differences didn't have to lead to such critical situations if even just for a period of time, somebody would've been willing to accompany these people on their journey and offered them help. With my wife, we have a joint desire for every Christian community to have couples or individuals that would be able to provide help if the members find themselves facing difficulties. When we saw the rebuilding power of coaching, it grew our desire to become an instrument in God's hands in this way, and to enable others to serve Christian couples this way as well.

Contact us:

Mgr. Katarína Baginová, ACC (ICF)

accredited coach, director of the centre

M: +421 903 821 321

Ing. Elena Štofirová

office manager

M: +421 949 590 504

+421 904 801 697

E-mail:

bratislava@familygarden.sk

Adress:

Family counselling centre –

FAMILY GARDEN

Miletičova 7, 821 08 Bratislava

Facebook:

Follow us on Facebook to see our news, contests, announcements, interviews, messages from our lectures, and videos. In our online profile, you can also watch some of our lectures and testimonials from home if you can't attend them in person:

www.facebook.com/FAMILYGARDEN.sk

How to get in touch:

E-mail

Most often, clients approach us via e-mail.

We usually ask them to briefly describe their problem and after that we arrange to meet up in person with them.

Telephone

If a person can't provide a brief description of his/her problem via e-mail, we can set up a meeting via phone, and when we meet in person, we'll offer different ways to help him/her.

Thank you

We'd like to express an ex-post thank you to our translators, Mgr. Juliana Uhrová and Mgr. Daniela Koronhály, who took on the responsibility of translating our 2015 annual report into English. Thanks to their translation, we had the opportunity to present the report to a foreign audience of those present on January 2017's "Days of Salesian spirituality" in Rome, where it enjoyed great success.

Volunteers

In our endeavour, we partner with a number of specialists, volunteers, and clever young people that are willing to help. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. They prepare various legal and expert documents for us, help with sound system during lectures, set up chairs in the lecture hall, do graphic editing for our printed materials, design and run our webpage, manage our social media accounts, and help us with marketing as well. If you'd like to lend us a hand, please let us know.

dobrovolnici@familygarden.sk



In 2016,
40 volunteers
gave us
3000 hours of
their time.

Thank you.



“I attended your lecture
and appreciated it.
Thank you!”

Facebook comment



Lectures

Topics presented in FAMILY GARDEN

Testimonials of married couples

How we can help marriages facing difficulties

PhDr. Marián Kubeš, CSc.

RNDr. Margita Kubešová

Is it possible to extend forgiveness?

Ing. Marián Horváth

Ing. Mgr. Jana Horváthová

Sexuality – how to live it with responsibility towards each other and towards the children

Ing. Peter Mojto

Mgr. Monika Mojtová

How our marital crisis almost destroyed our love

Štefan Baťo

Renáta Baťová, dipl. dh.

How we mature through raising of our children

Ing. Mgr. Martin Václav

Mgr. Jarka Václavová

How to deal with our feelings?

Ing. Juraj Hatala

Ing. Marika Hatalová

I'm different from my wife

– how am I supposed to deal with that?

Personal differences in a relationship

Ladislav Baránek

Mária Baránková

How to understand each other in a relationship

– and is it even possible?

Ján Kapitulčín

MUDr. Janka Kapitulčinová

How to show love in a marriage

– kindness and gallantry

Ing. Emil Kondela

Ing. Anna Kondelová, PhD.

Expert lectures

Gender ideology in families?

PaedDr. Mgr. Renáta Ocilková

Relationship between a father and a son

– it's never too late

Ing. Ján Balážia

Euthanasia – we can live without it

Prof. MUDr. Eva Grey PhD.

How to raise believing children

Mgr. Richard Vašečka

How the family which we were raised in influences our life

PhDr. Judita Stempelová, PhD.

Is self-acceptance really healing?

Dr. Mária Tiňová

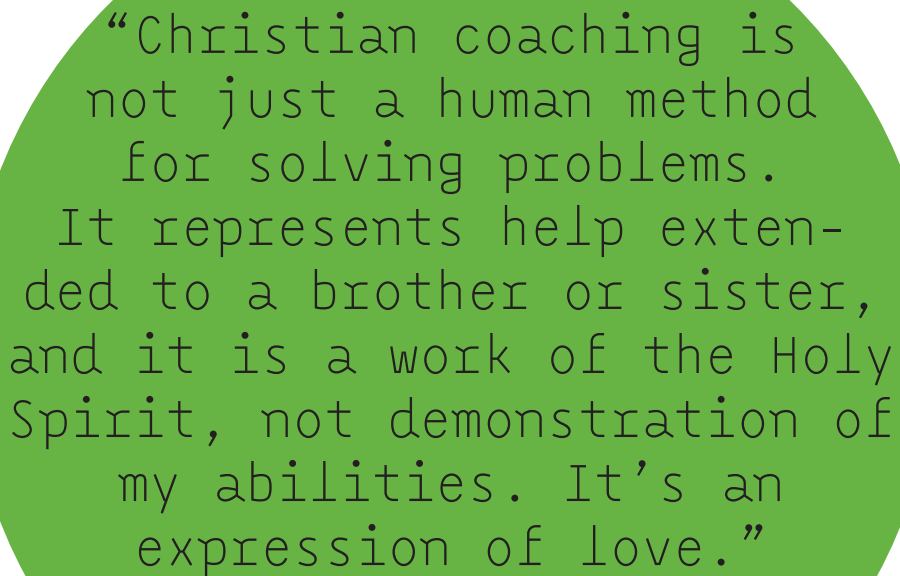
How to improve communication in a relationship

Mgr. Mário Schwarz, PhD.



Lecture of Mr. and Mrs. Beránek

10 October, 2016



“Christian coaching is not just a human method for solving problems. It represents help extended to a brother or sister, and it is a work of the Holy Spirit, not demonstration of my abilities. It’s an expression of love.”

Monika Jucková
course graduate



Coaching

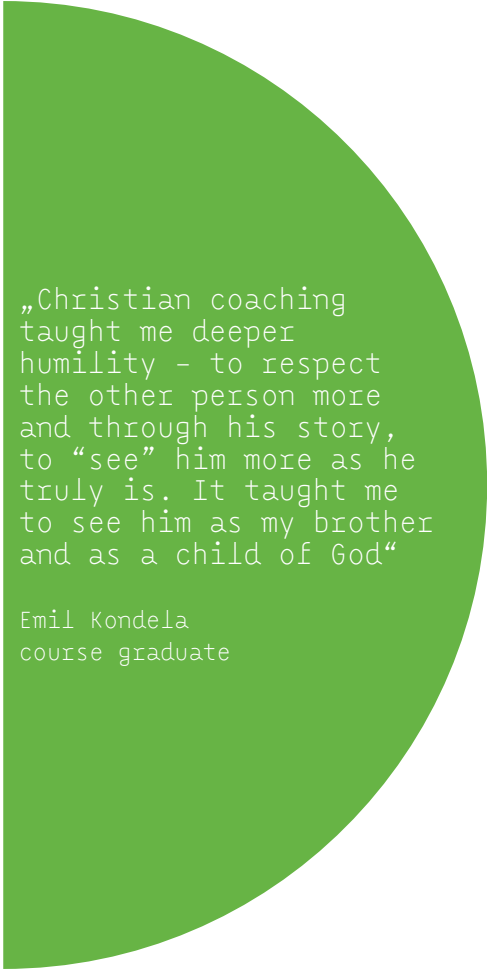
Christian coach training programme

Programme objective

The goal of the programme entitled “Christian coach – basic principles of coaching for volunteers in helping professions” is to provide its graduates with the ability to coach and utilise coaching methods in the process of helping individuals, couples, or groups that found themselves in a situation they are not able to deal with by themselves. Such situations may be a relational crisis, a problem, difficulty, unfulfilled ambition, unexpected life change, lack of determination, unsuccessful vocation quest, difficult decision, etc. A coaching method can prove to be successful, if other methods failed to bring hoped-for results, or aren't suitable. Christian coaching isn't supposed to replace other forms of work with a client; its role is to supplement them effectively. The programme is based on the Christian concept of a human person: each of us is called to be an instrument in God's hands in some way, and each of us can be a gift for someone who needs help.

Who can benefit from this programme?

The programme is intended for individuals who work in various helping professions, as well as those who feel to be called to such service and want to broaden their technique repertoire adding the coaching skills. It is meant for lay people, priests, religious, or married individuals. It can also be of benefit to those who've already had an experience with limitations in life and were forced to revise their attitudes, values, ideals, or perhaps are in such situation right now. This usually happens in middle age. Graduates trained in Christian coaching can effectively serve in parochial and other communities, family centres, counselling centres, etc. The need for such services is constantly growing, and possible areas of focus for these activities are inspirationally described also



„Christian coaching taught me deeper humility – to respect the other person more and through his story, to “see” him more as he truly is. It taught me to see him as my brother and as a child of God“

Emil Kondela
course graduate

in the Holy Father's post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (2016).

What will a participant learn in this programme?

The programme prepares the participants for an independent coaching through teaching them coaching dialogue and its techniques, as well as training them on how to apply this form of help in a community. It covers development of all competences required from coaches by the International Coach Federation (ICF). As an example, among other places, a skilled coach will be able to effectively work within a parochial community in close cooperation with priests, who are often approached by people in difficult life circumstances, when a coach might be able to take over a certain phase of accompanying/guiding from the priest. This way, a coach complements other helping and personal development professions through the distinctive coaching approach.

Why the title "Christian coach"?

For Christians, God represents the focal point of their lives, and Christian coaching can and wants to respect this fact. It means that if we are helping a Christian, who found himself in difficulties of any kind, is looking for answers for his various questions, and who wants to follow Christ in his life, this desire to follow Him is what becomes a key value, a foothold the coaching arises from. Subsequently, the coach's role in the framework of coaching dialogues is to help his client to either start out on such journey, or to enable him to walk it better. Here probably lies the biggest difference between a Christian and secular coaching. Therefore, it is completely natural for the coach to pray for his client, and to keep him in his prayers even outside of their sessions. During each meeting, a Christian coach is conscious of the fact that that's a child of God sitting across the table, and that at the same time, they are both children of God within the Church. If the coach learns to ask the right questions, it will be enough. Then he just needs to let the Holy Spirit to do His work, and He'll take care of the rest.



"I'd like to thank Mrs. Baginová for the Christian coaching she provided for me. Through her questions, she helped me to get back on the right path and discover what I needed to work on. I especially like that a Christian coach is *only* helping his client to find his own answer; to look for it and discover it is the client's job."

client of the centre

In 2016, 45 participants went through the coaching training; specifically, 23 women and 22 men with various professional backgrounds.

"The benefit of a Christian coach is undeniable. This time and age places new demands on each end every member of the society. At the same time, it also brings more confusion, chaos, and higher pace into relationships, work environment, and all the responsibilities a person has.

A Christian coach helps his client to stop, to ask pressing questions, as well as to face difficult, but very important answers. He helps us to dig deep, so that we wouldn't be just shallow people, but would be able to live a really good and high-quality life. Sometimes a person thinking he knows many answers already, and considering himself a "pretty good person" can be shocked - a coach will lead you out of this certainty, and will help you move forward to a new level of relationships and a new level of life in general.

A Christian coach can open a person's eyes, give hope and freedom, show possibilities, and is unbelievably good at listening and understanding.

female client of the centre

“What I discovered through Christian coaching, wasn’t only room for a change in life of the coached person. When I was starting the course, I had no idea it would give me such vast opportunities for my own spiritual growth.”

Miriam Nemcová
course graduate


“What’s wonderful about Christian coaching is the fact that it is very human and deeply preventive at the same time. As a Salesian sister, this moves me very much – that a person ponders and reassesses his own situation, and doesn’t just accept opinions from the outside. This means that there is no dualism of style in the sense of “even though you live this way, this is how you should be acting”. Quite the opposite: Coaching embraces the entire reality of a person and invites him to take part in looking for a solution of his problem, so potential decisions arise truly from inside, and a person is involved in the whole process. Simply put, it takes the pressure away, and one can breathe freely, even if it looks that the solution might be more difficult or even

truly challenging. That’s one “ingredient” that is really enticing in Christian coaching: Christian coaching is about reason and religion, but also about kindness.

It’s about being present in a person’s life, for real, truly and tangibly. And as a coach, I am not plagued by worry if what my advice isn’t wrong, because I don’t give any advice. We look for answers together and I’m simply joining the client in his search.

Metaphorically speaking, coaching is a compress for swollen sores of life. If I were to express my experience in a way of statistics, I’ve accompanied 40 individuals so far, most of which were young people.”

Eva Rušinová, FMA
course graduate



“I’m very grateful
for your help to engaged
couples that are interested
in knowing their fertility
and want to enter
the married life with
the asset of this valuable
knowledge.”

female client
of the fertility awareness
centre



Fertility
awareness
centre

Fertility awareness centre

At the end of the year 2015, we opened a new centre, in which we offer either individual or group courses on the physiology of the female and male fertility. Those interested can learn to correctly evaluate their own fertility records, and take advantage of the individual expert guidance. Two teachers of the Billings ovulation method, as well as a physician are available.

The centre offers its services to:

Girls and young women

- interested in learning to know their own fertility;
- interested in knowing a natural and reliable alternative to hormonal contraception;
- wanting to be well prepared for marriage by being familiar with their fertility and natural family planning methods

Married couples

- that experience their sexuality with a sense of fear of unwanted pregnancy;
- that suffer because they haven't been able to conceive

Women that have recently given birth or nursing mothers

- that would like to understand their fertility during this challenging time

Contact person:

MUDr. Renáta Mikušová, PhD.

Contact: plodnost@familygarden.sk

Web: www.familygarden.sk/plodnost

“I thought I wouldn't need to know the natural family planning method so thoroughly, but married life has showed me that after a third baby it was really high time for that. Thank you for your help!”

female client
of the Fertility awareness centre

“Thank you for your time. You've given us a huge gift, because we believe that now, we'll be able to live out our marital sexuality according to God's plan.”

engaged couple

Physiology of fertility is a beautiful gift



S MUDr. Renátou Mikušovou sme sa rozprávali o tom, čo ju vedie k spolupráci s Family Garden a prečo je dobré poznať fyziológiu plodnosti.

What is your ministry in FAMILY GARDEN and in what ways is it fulfilling for you?

The FAMILY GARDEN citizens' association was established on the initiative of the Salesian cooperators of the centre in the Miletičova street in Bratislava as a Christian organization dedicated to helping families in need. It was established even before the beginning of the Synod on the family in Rome, and in this fact itself, I see the work of the Holy Spirit, who in recent years has been prompting the Church to turn its attention and energy on families. As a Salesian cooperator, I was personally deeply touched by this idea. From the beginning, I've wanted to lend a helping hand to this association in some way. I completed the Christian coach course and I'm offering my services as my work responsibilities allow me.

You practice expert counselling in the area of fertility. How did you end up focusing on these particular issues?

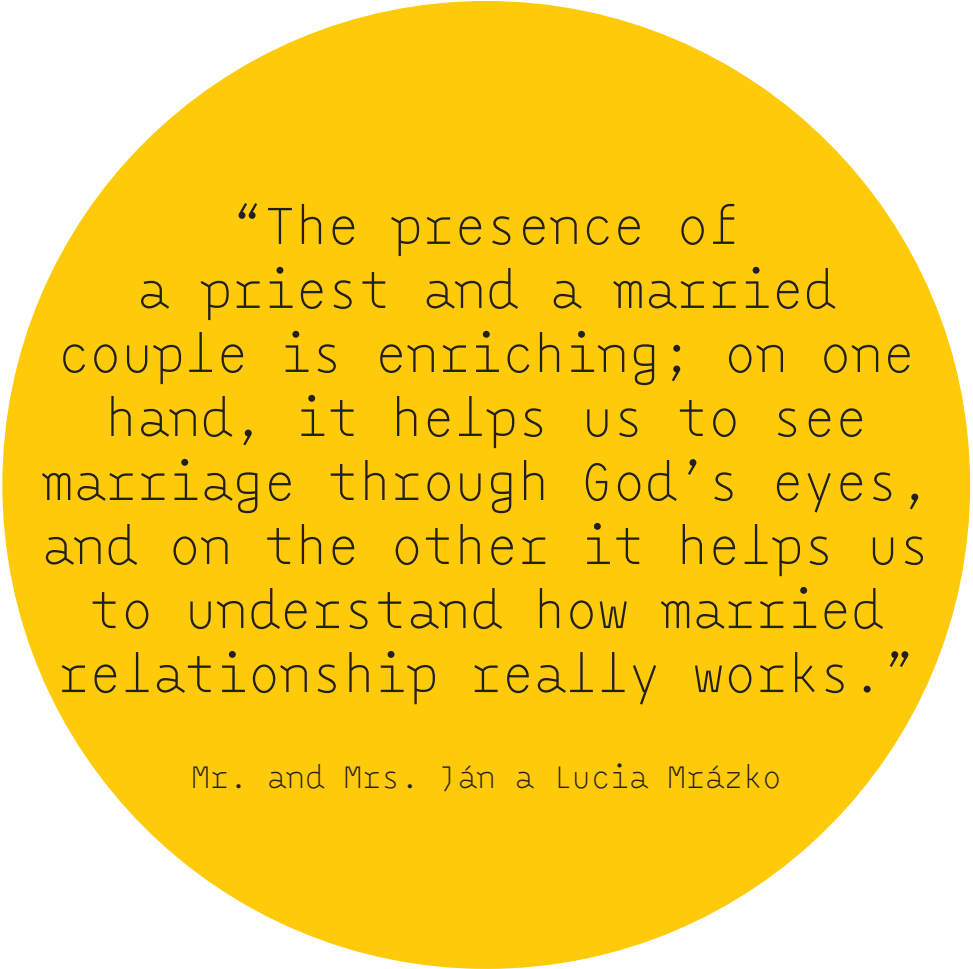
Natural family planning methods have been my pet interest for a long time. As a physician, histologist, and embryologist, I've been working with them since the beginning of my professional career. On various platforms, I've been giving lectures about the physiology of fertility, natural family planning methods, or deceit and harmful effects of contraception to students as well as adults. Since I'm mother of four and together with my husband we've been trying to practice chastity in our marital sexual life, I've got ample personal experience as well. As a couple, we've been using the Billings

ovulation method, of which I'm a certified instructor.

How can your centre help us, if we decide to set up an appointment with you?

The fertility awareness centre, which is a part of FAMILY GARDEN as well as the Centre for the family in Bratislava, contact engaged as well as married couples. We meet with couples, but also with young single women or married women who come on their own to learn how to understand their own fertility and utilise this knowledge in practice. I try to make my students understand that the physiology of fertility is a beautiful gift that has been given to married couples to use for their own good, as well for the good of their children, the entire Church, and society as a whole. However, it is important to understand it and to learn to use it in accordance with God's law, simply so that they could be happy.

The thing is that physiology of fertility never follows the rules of mathematics; this assumption is one of the mistakes of today's society. Our society tries to convince its members, and young people especially, that everything can be precisely calculated, programmed, measured... and subsequently used. I love explaining the beauty of the physiology of fertility to our young generation in particular. I try to help them understand that the Creator invites them to work with Him. My personal experience has shown me that this endeavour can help married couples to better understand the depth of the sacramental marriage, and at the same time, to deepen their love relationship as well.



“The presence of
a priest and a married
couple is enriching; on one
hand, it helps us to see
marriage through God’s eyes,
and on the other it helps us
to understand how married
relationship really works.”

Mr. and Mrs. Ján a Lucia Mrázko



Marriage
preparation
for engaged
couples

Marriage preparation

A marriage preparation is a prerequisite for entering the sacrament of marriage. However, way too often it's being narrowed to only a brief information about the Church position on marriage, even though its objective should be to prepare engaged couples for problems they may be facing and advise them on how to solve them correctly, or how to set right expectations regarding married life.

FAMILY GARDEN offers engaged couples a well-planned marriage preparation, led by experienced married couples in cooperation with a priest.

The preparation takes place every quarter in evening hours, and the sessions are run in groups. There are usually 9 sessions, and an instruction on the natural family planning, led by a physician, is included.

Those interested in marriage preparation with couples from FAMILY GARDEN can register in person in the parish office of the Mary, help of Christians parish, Miletičova 7, or via e-mail: fara.mileticova@gmail.com.

“The marriage preparation in the Miletičova centre with the Bagins and the priest, rev. Ján Krupa, SDB gave us the opportunity to get to know each other even better and to deepen our relationship. We went through several topics that prepared us for our life together, and on which we've been drawing up to this day. A big plus is also the fellowship group that's formed thanks to our regular get-togethers. When all of us got married, it evolved into a married life group, in which we still meet to share common values, joys, and troubles.”

Mr. and Mrs. Ján a Lucia Mrázko



We asked two seasoned married couples that in the last year have once again led marriage preparation courses in FAMILY GARDEN, what motivates them to willingly give their time to share their experiences with young couples.

Mr. and Mrs. Pavol and Monika Kotula

We have been married for almost 29 years, and can say with certainty that what brings us the biggest satisfaction in life are loving relationships within the family that then radiate outward into our surroundings as well. Of course, our family isn't immune to troubles of different kinds, but we work on overcoming them together. Shared joy is a double joy, and shared sorrow is half sorrow. We also feel that the biggest gift that a father can give to his children is to love their mother (and vice versa) We'd like to witness that living this way is possible, however, it's necessary to ceaselessly tend the fire, not just expect it to keep burning on its own without any wood. That's why we keep opening our home to engaged couples... and to tell the truth, it's not only us that are giving; we receive a lot from them, too.

In 2016,
4 married couples
from FAMILY GARDEN
were working with
24 engaged couples,
giving them more than
60 hours of their time.



Mr. and Mrs. Jaroslav and Renáta Mikuš

Renátka:

The main motivation to work with engaged couples for us is the fact that we realise how much we ourselves have been given as an engaged couple and later as a young married couple. In our marriage, we are continually experiencing God's love in tangible ways. Every single day, we can see that sacramental marriage is a breeding ground for growing in love, and we'd like to talk about it to the young people and give them hope that without a doubt, living this way is worth it.



Jaro:

We've been working with families for years, and have seen what consequences an insufficient preparation for a sacramental marriage can have. That experience is one of the reasons why we've decided to take on the responsibility of working with engaged couples; first through our testimonials and lectures, and later, through guiding them in their preparation for marriage. As long as we'll be useful and our example will appeal to others, and as long as we'll manage to stay young at heart and be able to provide this service, we'd like to continue working with young people. Our own children are grown now, they don't necessarily need us to be home for them every night. When we see so many problems in families around us, we simply consider it our duty to pass on our experiences to young people, and tell them to consider their sacramental marriage to be a serious decision, but on the other hand, to encourage them not to be afraid to enter the bond of marriage. In addition, we appreciate the opportunity to help create a new marriage preparation methodology that's been gradually propagated in dioceses. As lay people, we're happy we can take part in these sessions, feel useful, and at least partly relieve the burden that lies on the shoulders of the clergy. And our experience from recent years has shown us that in cooperation with priests, a preparation designed in this way might be more challenging, but it is also better and more comprehensive. And that gives meaning to everything we've been doing.

Veronika:

“We’ve decided to enrol in this kind of marriage preparation, because we wanted more than just 2-day group instruction. A marriage lasts a lifetime, and we gladly took advantage of the opportunity offered to us by Salesian cooperators - to peek into their private life during our regular meetings, to see and hear how their married life works, and how they’ve overcome various situations. Since the groups consist of 6 people max, there was a time for a discussion during each session, and we could ask anything in an intimate atmosphere, which was very helpful to us. Of course, you can be prepared for everything, but thanks to our teaching couple we discovered several problems and potential stress situations in married life that we weren’t aware of as an engaged couple. We very much appreciate the time they’ve given us.”

manželia

Tomáš a Veronika Danekovci

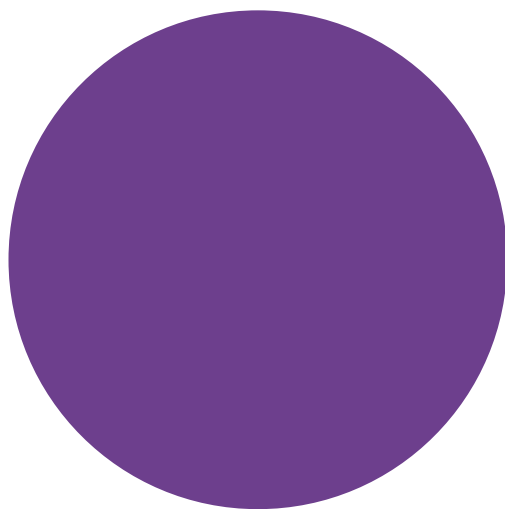
Tomáš:

“Our friends have had a very good experience with the marriage preparation organised by FAMILY GARDEN cooperators. We’ve decided to enrol as well, and can only confirm the good impression our friends had. During our sessions, we’ve received a lot to think about and talk about, and these ideas still help us to work better together living under one roof, to pay attention to each other’s needs, to bring harmony and joy into our relationship, and to create a family together. A “proof” of a good functioning family for us was to meet and get to know the kids of these cooperators. Their counsel and experience regarding raising children have been very helpful to us, and we could see the “results” of their parenting with our own eyes. I hope that one day, we’ll have such a great family as well.”

“A family that is open
to love won't stay
closed in itself;
on the contrary, it opens up
to others, helps as well as
accepts help. FAMILY GARDEN
was born out of this need
of mutual help, and I'm very
grateful for that.”

Fr. Jozef Ižold, SDB
Provincial of Salesians
in Slovakia

Activities



1 March 2016

Article on coaching

In the March issue of the Bratislava biweekly magazine you may have found also the article about FAMILY GARDEN titled Sometimes it's enough to hear people out.

1 April 2016

Lecture on gender ideology in the LUX Television Network

In the news summary, you may have watched a report on the "Ideological background of gender ideology" lecture, presented by ThDr. Ing. Vladimír Thurzo in FAMILY GARDEN.
<http://www.tvlux.sk/archiv/play/9648>

4 May 2016

Get-together of married couples from FAMILY GARDEN with Slovak families in Switzerland

During the Pentecostal period in the middle of May, our ASC coordinator Renáta Mikušová and her husband were invited to La Foula, a beautiful Swiss village in the Alps, close to the Swiss-French border (about 10 km by air from Mont Blanc) to give a lecture. In a mountain hut, where children camps take place in the summer, got together 19 Slovak families living in this Alpine country. They came here to encourage each other, recharge, and gain new physical and spiritual strength for their lives. This gathering of mostly families with small children took place under the patronage and with huge help of Slovak Salesian missionaries in Switzerland, especially of Fr. Pavol Nizner, SDB and Fr. Jozef Bago, SDB. The programme reflected requests of married couples themselves, who were also the organisers of the long weekend getaway. Morning prayers, lectures on various topics related to marriage and one-on-one conversations in the morning, Holy mass, the Rosary, a short walk, Adoration, and of course, eating as well as playing games together – all of that helped the couples to unite and recharge in every aspect.



5 May 2016

How to gain respect in personal life, family, and business?

A discussion on this topic, led by Marek Hyravý, took place in Zichy palace in Bratislava.

The discussants were:

- Richard Vašečka – teacher, evangelist, and member of the Slovak Parliament
- Katarína Baginová – Christian coach, director of the FAMILY GARDEN centre
- Rudolf Lukačka – coach, businessman, manager

17 September 2016

Deň rodiny

A rich cultural and entertaining programme took place in on the 17th of May during afternoon hours in the Medical garden in Bratislava. Several family-assisting organisations had the opportunity to present themselves to the public, among them our FAMILY GARDEN counselling centre as well.

The family day took place under the patronage of the Slovak presidency of the Council of the EU and Mayor of the city of Bratislava, and marked the 8th year of this Slovak family event, held by the Forum of Christian institutions.



18 September 2016

Festival of young families in Trnava

FAMILY GARDEN went on a trip! On the Festival of young families in Trnava – Kopánka, Mr. and Mrs. Bagin testified about their life together. This event serves as a get-together of young families and families young at heart, and offers them an opportunity to encourage each other and to draw new strength for everyday life. It is primarily intended for families from the city of Trnava and its vicinity; however, its doors are open to anybody who wants to come and have a good time.

7 October 2016

1st conference of Christian coaches

The conference took place on October 7th and 8th in the city of Trenčín on the premises of the Piarist monastery. More than 30 Christian coaches from the entire Slovak region came to the event, held by the FAMILY GARDEN centre in partnership with the Family centre in Trenčín.

“A Christian coach sees his client first of all as a child of God,” a professional coach Marián Kubeš said in his welcome address. Thanks



to Mr. Kubeš and his help, coaching started to develop in Christian circles in Slovakia.

The main topic presented on the conference was coaching of married couples in crisis, as well as new techniques in coaching individuals facing life difficulties. Discussions, reciprocal coaching, as well as model situations were all part of the programme. The coaches had also the opportunity to use their practical skills in smaller group setting. Among guests of the first part of the conference was also member of the Slovak parliament Veronika Remiášová. "The instrument of coaching opens new possibilities and demonstrates a positive application of gifts a person has been given," Ms. Remiášová said in her inspirational lecture and testimony.

Main lecturers were Mr. and Mrs. Marián and Margita Kubeš (coaches), Fr. Marian Valábek, SDB and Katarína Baginová, director of the FAMILY GARDEN Family counselling centre. As of now, FAMILY GARDEN is the only platform in Slovakia, where Christian coaching is cultivated.

12 November 2016

Conference in Baďín

Challenges that marriages face

The Baďín conference focused on how the Amoris Laetitia apostolic exhortation on love and family can be utilised in the growth of parochial pastoral care of families. Among the invited lecturers were also Mr. and Mrs. Kamil and Katarína Bagin, representing FAMILY GARDEN.

The conference entitled "Message of Amoris Laetitia and pastoral perspectives in Slovakia" took place on Saturday, November 12th in the St. Francis Xavier seminary under the patronage of Mons. Milan Chatur CSsR, the eparch of the city of Košice and chairman of the Family council of the Bishops' conference of Slovakia.

Among the Slovak bishops present on the conference were Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, Mons. Marián Chovanec, Mons. Tomáš Galis, Mons. Marek Forgáč, and Mons. Milan Chatur. Mr. And Mrs. Kamil a Katarína Bagin from the FAMILY GARDEN centre in Bratislava

„Rodinný duch je výsostnou charakteristickou črtou saleziánskej charizmy. Preto sa teším, keď v našich dielach mladí vidia aj rodiny, ktoré sa tiež podieľajú na saleziánskom poslaní sprevádzať mladých v ich vyzrievaní.“

don Pavol Boka, SDB
delegát pre pastoračiu
mládeže SDB

contributed with their lecture Marital relationship and the spousal involvement in parochial pastoral care. The Bagins talked about how marriage is a journey, not a one-time event. Since they both work with children, they can often see how a family crisis affects their behaviour, and can negatively impact the way the spouses experience their marriage relationship as well.

Katka and Kamil also outlined the work of FAMILY GARDEN – our family counselling centre, in which priests, married couples, coaches, gynaecologists, lawyers, and other experts work together in providing guidance and consultations.

However, they reminded the participants that launching counselling centres shouldn't be limited to some organisational or technical "how-to", because by focusing solely on human resources we risk forgetting that people's problems often don't have purely human solutions.

They concluded their lecture stating that today, more than ever before, it is necessary for spouses to closely work with a priest.

The main guest of the "Message of Amoris Laetitia and pastoral perspectives in Slovakia" conference was the vice-chancellor of



the John Paul II. Pontifical institute in Rome and consultor of the 2015 Episcopal synod, Mons. Jose Granados, who explained in detail the message of the “Amoris Laetitia” exhortation to the attendees.

21 November 2016

TV Broadcast in the LUX Television

Topic: Guidance of engaged couples, married couples facing crisis, and other individuals through Christian coaching.

What is coaching, and what is Christian coaching in particular? What possibilities does it offer? Watch the “By the well in Samaria” programme from the archives of the LUX TV with guest coaches Marián & Margita Kubeš, and Salesian Fr. Marian Valábek, SDB.

<http://www.tvlux.sk/archiv/play/1258>

12 December 2016

Interview in the Postoj daily newspaper:

Don't expect fairness in marriage

Interview with Mr. & Mrs. Kamil and Katarína Bagin about difficulties in marriage and how to overcome them.

<https://www.postoj.sk/19563/v-manzelstve-necakajte-spravodlivost>



Ukrainian orphans spent some time in Slovak families

For the second time, a couple of Bratislava families opened their homes to boys from the Salesian orphanage in Ukrainian Pokrov. In the course of 10 days, the boys had the opportunity to enjoy sports (badminton, bowling, tennis, soccer), adrenalin thrill (climbing wall, rope centre), culture (folklore performances, visit with the mayor of Ružinov city district),

“In the name of our province, I’d like to thank you, sincerely and from the bottom of my heart, for your willingness and openness, as well as for your time, effort, and care you invested into preparing and carrying out the entire visit of the boys. I have no idea how much energy, time, and financial means it has cost you, but may the good Lord repay you all of that. Here, we pray for all our benefactors, and I try to serve Mass for them every week. And you are among them! Here in Ukraine, we appreciate any help much more. Our boys had the opportunity to spend some time with your families, to see you pray, eat, and communicate together, and could be a part of it alongside with you. As they all said - they could simply experience an ordinary life of a family. They said you’ve met them with an extraordinary attention, interest, and selflessness. They were aware of all of that and appreciate it very much.”

don Karol Maník, SDB
provinciál na Ukrajině

and relax (swimming, paddle boarding). They did also some work painting fences and picking up trash in the Andrej Hlinka park, as well as cleaning of the go-cart track in the Salesian centre in Mamateyova street. The visit of the Adidas headquarters in Slovakia was also an exciting experience for them. We hope they enjoyed their trip and brought home a lot of memories – just as their host families enjoyed having them here and can’t say enough good things about the time they’ve spent together.

“A big thank you goes to FAMILY GARDEN for the entire organisation and effort related to this once-a-year event. It’s a wonderful work, and I believe I can say not only for myself, but for my husband as well, that we’re proud to be a part of it. I’ve been touched by how well-mannered the boys were, and by their humbleness, obedience, respect, and trust toward us. It was a gift to me to see these young people praying in public, I felt the Holy Spirit reside in them. Once again, thank you to everybody, and may the Lord bless us and keep us, as well as our boys and all their carers and benefactors, father Mychajl that takes care of them, and all the Salesians that fight a good fight in Ukraine!”

Lucia & Bofo Fojtík
hosting family



How we have managed our resources in 2016

Income

Gifts and contributions	€22,424.00
Grant from the Ružinov city district	€2,496.00
Income from the 2% tax contribution	€1,430.78
Total:	€26,350.78

Economic

result

€2,922.21

Expenses

Administration	€7,141.43
Printed materials & marketing	€7,776.83
Operation	€798.97
Purchasing of furnishings & equipment	€7,711.34
Total:	€23,428.57

What is in store for 2017

Our FAMILY GARDEN centre will be moving to new premises of the “Momma Margita family centre” in Trnávka district. The former school building in Pavlovičova street, where the centre will be located, went through a reconstruction that is in its final stages. On the new premises, we will have not only office space and rooms for consultations with clients, but also a large room for various training courses.

We will continue to offer the Christian coach course that is becoming more and more sought after.

Starting in January, regular expert lectures and testimonials of families organised by FAMILY GARDEN will be happening once a month. Even after moving to new premises, these meetings will stay in the hall in the basement of the church in Miletičova street.

In the first six months of the 2017, our visitors had the opportunity to listen to the following lectures:

13/2/2017

How to communicate/reason either at home or at work respectfully and without anger?

13/3/2017

Child raising principles in our family

10/4/2017

How to teach children to use internet responsibly for their own and others' sake?

15/5/2017

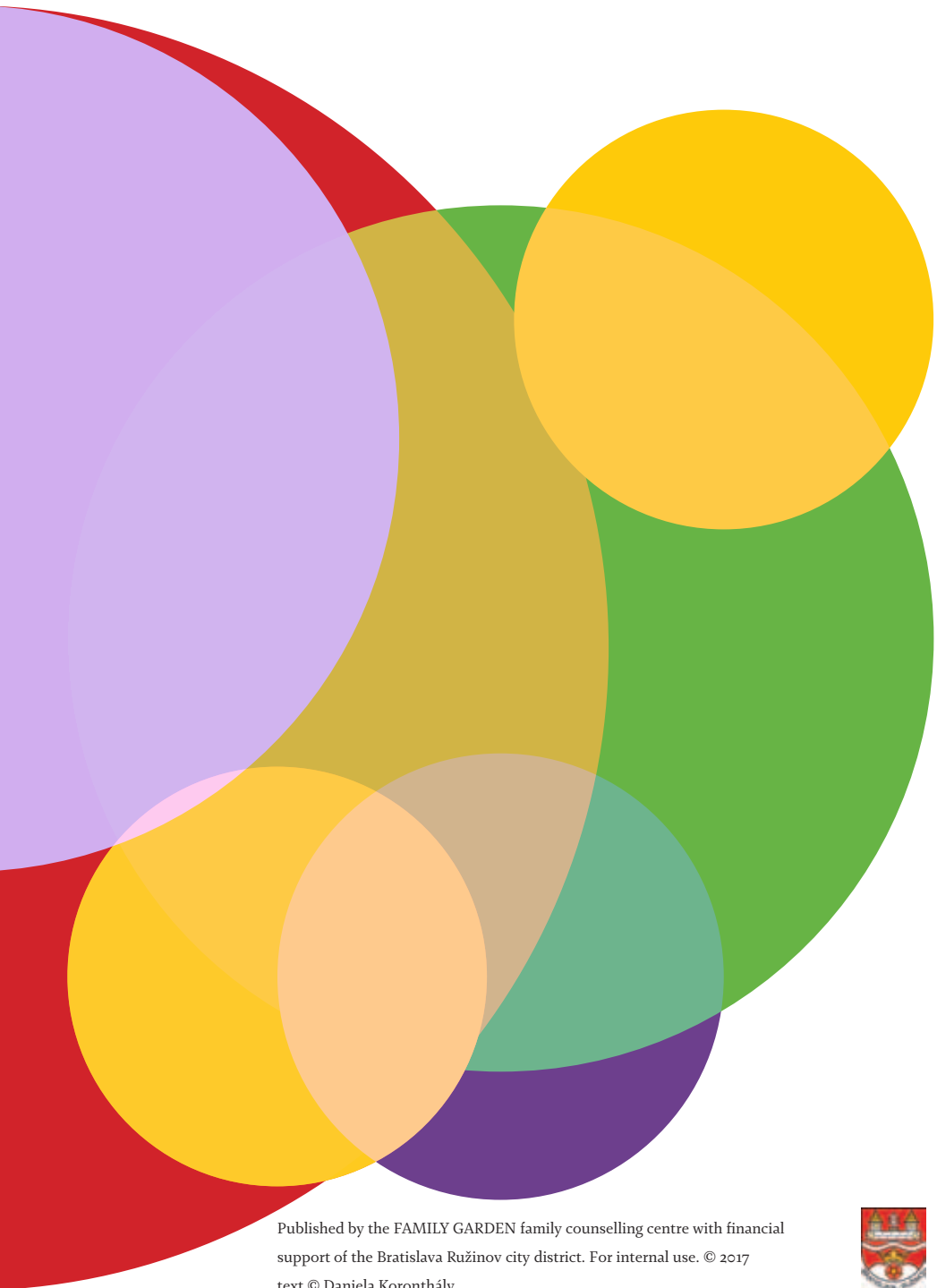
I push my own agenda and you keep eluding me – How can we be happy together?

12/6/2017

Differences and complementarity of men and women

This year, we will continue with marriage preparation as well as individual consultations with clients.





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