

My dear sister and brother in the Lord,

I offer you my sincere congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding. The Church shares your joy and excitement as you prepare to declare your vows before God and His Church.

This marriage preparation process is designed to strengthen your love for one another and invite you to embrace the joy of the Vocation to Marriage. I encourage you to use these months leading up to your wedding as a time to grow in holiness and to deepen your relationship with God and each other.

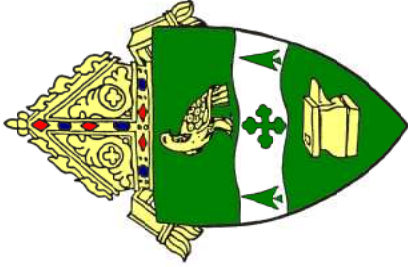
I especially encourage you to pray together as you prepare for your wedding. Open your hearts to God who loves you as His dear children. God desires that you have not only a joy-filled wedding day, but also a joy-filled marriage throughout your lives.

Please be assured of the Church's continual love and support as you prepare for marriage and throughout your lives together as husband and wife.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

George V. Murry, SJ

Most Rev. George V. Murry, S.J.
Bishop of Youngstown



Preparing for Your Marriage

A Resource for Engaged Couples



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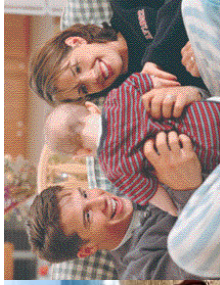
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Preparing for Your Marriage



While many preparations are being made for your wedding day, the Church also asks that you take the next 6+ months to prepare for your life-long marriage together. The following process is not meant to be difficult or burdensome, but to invite you into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, the Church, and each other.

The priest or deacon preparing you for marriage will help direct you through the following process:

1. At least 3 meetings with the priest or deacon.
2. Completion of a pre-marriage assessment tool.
3. Attend one or more formation opportunities.
4. Receive information on Natural Family Planning

You may also be directed to complete a course in Natural Family Planning and/or a Life Skills Workshop.



Meetings with the Priest or Deacon

At these meetings, you will get acquainted with the priest or deacon officiating your wedding, complete the necessary documents, discuss the pre-marriage assessment, and plan the liturgy.

Priest/Deacon _____
Phone _____

Meeting 1: Date _____ Time: _____

Meeting 2: Date _____ Time: _____

Meeting 3: Date _____ Time: _____



Pre-marriage Assessment Tool

You will be asked to complete an assessment tool such as FOCCUS or Prepare-Enrich. This is not a compatibility test, but a tool to help foster communication.

Complete the assessment tool. Date: _____

Review the assessment tool. Date: _____



Formation Opportunities

The priest or deacon will direct you to complete one or more of the following programs:

- Diocesan Retreat Day: *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage*
- Sponsor Couple Program
- Parish Pre-Cana Day
- Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend

Program(s) _____

Date(s)/Time(s) _____



NFP Information

Your parish will provide information about Natural Family Planning as well as the contact information for local NFP instructors and organizations.

NFP Information Received. Date: _____

Catholics who have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation are to receive it before they are admitted to marriage if it can be done without grave inconvenience. To receive the sacrament of marriage fruitfully, spouses are urged especially to approach the sacraments of penance and of the Most Holy Eucharist.