



# 2023 MARRIAGE PREPARATION GUIDELINES & CALENDAR



“Look now with favor on these your servants, joined together in Marriage, who ask to be strengthened by your blessing. Send down on them the grace of the Holy Spirit and pour your love into their hearts, that they may remain faithful in the Marriage covenant.”

*The Rite of Marriage—Nuptial Blessing*

# MARRIAGE PREPARATION GUIDELINES

Congratulations on your decision to receive your Sacrament of Holy Matrimony! The marriage preparation process is designed to guide engaged or civilly married couples towards a sacramental marriage celebration and provide essential tools to live out this lifelong covenant. These guidelines for marriage preparation apply to all Catholics in the Diocese of Orlando.

## **A. Preliminary Interview**

The first step is a meeting with the parish priest or deacon to begin the wedding planning and preparation for married life. This should take place between six to twelve months prior to the anticipated wedding date and before any wedding or reception arrangements are made. During this interview, the priest or deacon will provide an explanation of the Pastoral Guidelines for Marriage Preparation.

## **B. Assessment for Determining Readiness**

The priest or deacon will use a variety of methods to assist in determining the maturity of the couple and their readiness for marriage. A premarital inventory (FOCCUS or Fully Engaged) will be administered and diocesan forms will be completed.

## **C. Setting the Date**

The final date for the wedding is not to be set until the entire assessment process (A & B) has been completed and a decision to proceed has been made.

## **D. Instruction**

After the readiness for marriage has been determined, the couple will finalize the wedding date and begin the instruction process. The priest/deacon will outline the sacramental preparation required.

## **E. Wedding Liturgy**

The couple will plan their wedding liturgy with the priest. Areas for liturgical planning include the selection of the scriptures, music, liturgical ministries and other related issues.

If you have any questions regarding marriage preparation, contact the office of Marriage and Family Ministry at 407.246.4882 | 407.246.4930 | [fm@orlandodiocese.org](mailto:fm@orlandodiocese.org).

# MARRIAGE PREPARATION CALENDAR

## PRE-CANA OVERNIGHT RETREAT (ENGLISH)

April 14-15 San Pedro Center, Winter Park

## PRE-CANA DAY RETREAT (ENGLISH)

January 21 Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, Indialantic

February 04 Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, Ocala

May 06 Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, Ocala

May 20 Holy Family Catholic Church, Orlando

August 05 Ascension Catholic Church, Melbourne

October 07 Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, Ocala

November 04 Resurrection Catholic Church, Lakeland

## CONVALIDATION (ENGLISH)

January 28 Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Winter Park

April 29 Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Winter Park

August 26 Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Winter Park

October 21 Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Winter Park

## ONLINE REGISTRATION

Visit the following link to register: <https://www.orlandodiocese.org/ministries-offices/laity-family-and-life-secretariat/marriage-and-family-ministry-welcome/marriage-preparation-welcome/marriage-preparation-precana-retreats/>

**For the following workshops, please call the number listed below to register:**

Marion County Pre-Cana: Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, Ocala | 352.629.8092

Vietnamese Engaged Encounters: St. Philip Phan Van Minh, Orlando | 407.896.4210

**\*Please Note:** Registration is required. The password to access the registration page should be provided to you by your parish. Our retreats fill up quickly. Please plan with time.

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# MARRIAGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

We hope the following information will be helpful to you as you prepare for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. Remember your wedding is only one day; your marriage is a lifetime.

## 1. Initial Interview With Priest

- Between 6 to 12 months prior to your anticipated wedding date, make an appointment with your parish priest or deacon for the initial meeting to discuss the preparation process, even if they will not be the ones celebrating your wedding. If you are getting married out-of-state or at another parish, please provide the following information: name and address of the parish where the wedding will take place, celebrant's name, and wedding date.

## 2. Pre-Marital Inventory

- Take the FOCCUS or Fully Engaged inventory.
- Meet with a facilitator couple assigned by your parish to review the inventory results.

## 3. Marriage Preparation

- Receive formation to help you grow in your understanding of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and practical skills such as communication, parenting, and financial management. If your parish does not offer marriage formation, you may attend a diocesan Pre-Cana Retreat.

## 4. Natural Family Planning (Optional)

- Learn the facts about Natural Family Planning (NFP) and attend a class to learn how to use it. For more details, go to: <https://www.orlandodiocese.org/ministries-offices/laity-family-and-life-secretariat/marriage-and-family-ministry-welcome/natural-family-planning/>

## 5. Documents Needed to Complete the Pre-Nuptial File (prior to the wedding)

- Certificate of Baptism for each Catholic party, dated six months prior to beginning the marriage preparation process. (Obtainable from the parish where you were baptized).
- Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire (Form A). (Couple with priest or deacon).
- Letter of Freedom to Marry (Form B) – two witnesses each, preferably parents or relatives. (Forms will be given to the couple by the priest or deacon).
- Death Certificate of previous spouse or Annulment Decree if you were previously married.
- Canonical Dispensations and Permissions (if necessary; priest or deacon will fill it out).
- Certificate of Participation from the marriage preparation workshop. (Couple will receive it at the class).
- Marriage License from the County Clerk of Court (request it two to four weeks before the wedding). Visit your county's website for more information.

## 6. Planning Your Wedding Liturgy/Follow-Up Meeting

- Meet with your priest, deacon or wedding coordinator to plan your wedding.
- Using the book "Together for Life", select Scripture readings, prayers, petitions, etc.
- Meet with the music director to discuss the music for your liturgy.
- Schedule wedding rehearsal with the church.
- Participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (if Catholic) prior to your marriage.

*"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church." - Ephesians 5:31-32*