

Before You Set A Date!

Dear engaged couple,

Congratulations on your engagement! Now it is time to prepare not only for your wedding day, but for a lifetime of marriage to follow. The Marriage Preparation Program is meant to assist you in both.

Before a wedding date can be finalized in the Catholic Church it must be determined whether or not you are free to marry according to the laws of marriage in the Catholic Church. Conditions which could *delay or prohibit* marriage are:

- A previous marriage which ended in divorce
- Cohabitation prior to marriage.
- Inactive practice of the Catholic Faith.
- Public scandal or past behavior which would cause doubt in the sacredness and holiness of the Sacrament of Marriage.

In the case of a *mixed marriage* (a marriage of a Catholic and non-Catholic) the Catholic party must agree to the following:

- To maintain faithful practice in the Catholic Church.
- To do all in his/her power to insure the Catholic baptism and upbringing of the children.
- Both parties will receive proper instruction about the essential duties and purposes of a sacramental marriage.

It is possible to reconcile any problems that may be present with time; however, no definite date can be set until there is the proper assurance that at the time of your wedding you have complete freedom to marry.

Steps to Marriage Preparation

Marriage preparation assists you in understanding the *purpose and essential properties of marriage* as taught by the Catholic Church. This involves an assessment of your intellectual, psychological and spiritual readiness to undertake the vocation of marriage. The following steps of marriage preparation will help you to do this:

- First, schedule an appointment with your pastor to fill out the M-A Form which simply obtains information necessary for records, and helps determine whether or not you have the canonical freedom to marry.
- Second, you will be scheduled to take a pre-marriage inventory (PMI or FOCCUS). This is an instrument to help create a profile of your current readiness to marriage.
- Third, you will be scheduled to review the inventory profile together as a couple. The profile helps you see where you are already strong in your readiness for married life, and points out possible areas of weakness that can be strengthened before you begin your married life.

- Fourth, you will be scheduled to attend the marriage and family life sessions. You will be with other couples preparing for marriage. Presentations are given on specific topics concerning marriage and family life, followed by personal response and dialog time with your partner concerning your own relationship. *See the dates listed in this brochure.*

- Fifth, you are asked to learn and become familiar with Natural Family Planning. This will be extremely helpful for you in discerning the size of your family and cooperation with God's plan for marriage and family. *An additional fee is asked by the Office of Natural Family Planning who presents these sessions.*

- Finally, you will do the actual planning of the wedding ceremony itself. You will be given assistance regarding the structure of the ceremony, music, and other guidelines for the celebration of weddings in the Catholic Church.



A more thorough booklet detailing marriage preparation and wedding planning will be provided to you after your initial appointment with your pastor. If you haven't done so, contact your pastor to schedule an appointment soon. Ordinarily preparation time should begin *one year* prior to the date of your wedding.

Marriage and Family Life Program Dates

FALL 2009

- August 7 6:00-9:00 p.m.
- August 8 9:am- 4 p.m.

WINTER 2010

- January 22, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
- January 23, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Or
- February 26, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
- February 27, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

SPRING 2006

- April 23, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
- April 24 , 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

All Sessions Held At:
St. Peter Church - Tilden
11358 Highway Q
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

To Register, contact: Deacon Dan Rider
jakobstad@juno.com

Fee: \$60.00

Natural Family Planning Instructions

To Register, or for more information on future
classes, contact the

Diocese of La Crosse

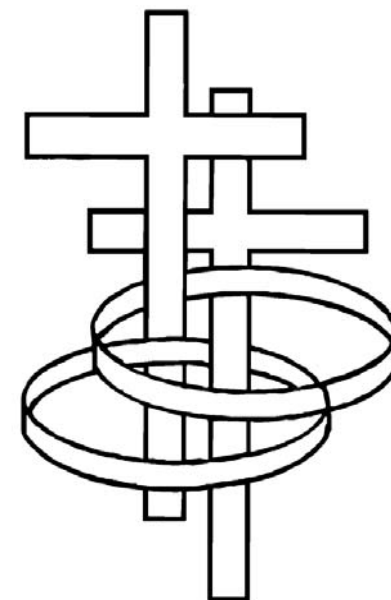
Office of Natural Family Planning

1-800- 255-6226

e-mail: nfp@dioceseoflacrosse.com

Marriage Preparati on Program

Fall 2009 to Spring 2010



Chippewa Falls Deanery