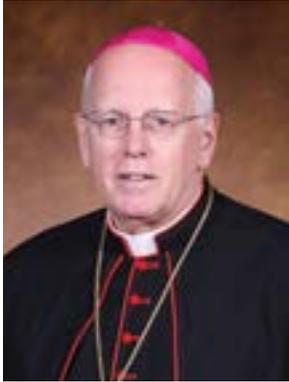


I
Said
YES!
♥

CATHOLIC DIOCESE *of* SIOUX FALLS

ENGAGED COUPLES GUIDE

2016-2017
TO MARRIAGE PREPARATION



Dear Engaged Couples,

“God who is love and who created man and woman for love has called them to love. By creating man and woman he called them to an intimate communion of life and of love in marriage: ‘So that they are no longer two, but one flesh’ (Mt. 19:6). God said to them in blessing ‘Be fruitful and multiply’” (Gen 1:28). (Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 337)

You have heard this call of God in your lives. In doing so, you have pledged your love for one another and are now preparing to publicly declare a life-long commitment to one another before God and His Church. This booklet is provided by the Diocese of Sioux Falls to aid you in your preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage. These guidelines along with the instruction from your pastor can help you take seriously and prepare well for this sacred moment.

May God who is love grant you His choicest blessings and draw you to Himself. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, may He prepare you for that intimate life of love by which you will reveal His love. Through your fidelity to one another in good times and in bad and your openness to children and their care, your vocation to marriage will be joyful, fulfilled and blessed.

Give praise to the Lord.

+ Paul Swain

The Most Rev. Paul J. Swain
Bishop of Sioux Falls



CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ENGAGEMENT!

Congratulations! If you are reading this, you have promised your life and love to a special person that you now joyfully call your fiancé. This is a beautiful and exciting time, one to be cherished. Your engagement is not just a time to prepare for a *single* day in your lives - your wedding day - it is a preparation for together saying “yes” to your vocation to marriage for *all* the days of the rest of your lives.



By seeking to be married in the Catholic Church, you are publicly acknowledging that you believe there is something more to marriage than a paper contract legally binding you together. In fact, Christian marriage “implies a response to God’s vocation and the acceptance of the mission to be a sign of God’s love for all the members of the human family, by partaking in the definitive covenant of Christ with the Church. Therefore, spouses become cooperators with the Creator and Savior in the gift of love and life. Hence Christian marriage preparation can be described as a journey of faith which does not end with the celebration of marriage but continues throughout family life.”

During your journey of faith over the coming months, you will have the opportunity to meet and interact with many people and utilize a variety of resources, all meant to help you grow into a deeper understanding of marriage, faith and ultimately love for your future spouse. In addition to your priest, you may meet with a deacon, marriage sponsor couple or other individuals. You may be given handouts, websites, books or videos.

It is the prayer of many that your hearts and minds will be open to the work of the Holy Spirit during this preparation time. May you be drawn closer to the heart of Jesus and be engulfed in His love as you spend time with Him in prayer, spend time with one another, meet with others and reflect on the materials presented to you. At least six months of preparation is required, but you may find you need more time to grow in your faith or to grow together. This is why it may be wise to wait to decide on a date for your wedding until you have spent some time in preparation.

As you read through the rest of this guide you will find sections on various aspects of marriage preparation. Many of these sections has a corresponding section on the “Marriage Preparation” page of the Office of Marriage, Family & Respect Life (OMFRL) website at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife. There you will find all of the resources listed in this booklet, along with additional articles, videos, brochures, and more, to support you during this preparation time and into your married life.



DO YOU COME FREELY, TOTALLY, FAITHFULLY & FRUITFULLY?

“You are created in the image and likeness of God.” Has anyone ever told you this? Have you ever really thought about what it means? Do you believe it?

While this is an amazing thing to think about from an individual point of view, it’s even more amazing when you learn that “God who created man out of love also calls him to love—the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being. For man is created in the image and likeness of God who is himself love. Since God created him man and woman, their mutual love becomes an image of the absolute and unfailing love with which God loves man.”

And how does God love us? We can look to Christ for our answer. He loves us freely, totally, faithfully and fruitfully. We are likewise called to love one another in this way, and in fact, on your wedding day, both of you will be asked to consent to the following:

- “Have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage? (Freely and Totally)
- Will you honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives? (Faithfully)
- Will you accept children lovingly from God, and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church? (Fruitfully)

As you can see, the wedding vows reflect how Christ loves us. Let’s look more closely.

When you love freely, no person or desire is controlling you. Ask yourself, am I getting married - making a lifetime covenant of love with this person - because everyone else thinks (s)he is perfect for me? Is my love based primarily on sexual attraction or activity? Am I addicted to alcohol, pornography, gambling, or something else that impedes my ability to love freely?

When you love totally, you hold nothing back. Even if you overcome desires that may be controlling you, thereby allowing you to love freely, you must *choose* to give all of yourself to your future spouse, to put his or her needs above your own. Are you holding onto past relationships? Are you keeping something from your future spouse that (s)he should know?

When you love faithfully, you are committed to your spouse for the rest of your life - emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Do you think if it doesn’t work out you can just get a divorce? Do you flirt with others at work or through social networking? Do you desire to be with someone else, or engage in an activity, more than spending time with your future spouse? Being faithful involves much more than not having an extramarital affair.

When you love fruitfully, your love is life-giving, open to the possibility of new life through the conception of a child, and it is invigorating emotionally and spiritually as well. Do you have no intention of deepening your faith together? Do you plan to use contraception in your marriage? (You may be surprised to learn that contraception is a violation of this vow. Please see “God’s Green Plan for Your Family - Natural Family Planning” on page 7.)

Pope Saint John Paul II describes these elements of love so eloquently: “[C]onjugal love involves a totality, in which all the elements of the person enter - appeal of the body and instinct, power of feeling and affectivity, aspiration of the spirit and of will. It aims at a deeply personal unity, the unity that, beyond union in one flesh, leads to forming one heart and soul; it demands indissolubility and faithfulness in definitive mutual giving; and it is open to fertility.”

As you continue in your marriage preparation, you will hopefully explore more deeply the elements of spousal love, what Pope Saint John Paul II calls “betrothed love”. If you haven’t already, you will likely realize the unique ways in which men and women express love. While often seen as opposed to one another, in fact, the ways men and women love are complimentary, and part of our very nature. Remember, *together*, as male and female, we image God’s love.



For Further Reflection...

- “Theology of Her Body”/“Theology of His Body”, a book by Jason Evert
- “The Good News About Sex and Marriage”, a book by Christopher West
- “Love and Responsibility”, a short video with Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons
- “How Sexual Baggage Can Weigh You Down” a short video by Fr. Thomas Fitzpatrick
- “Sex and Love: Is ‘Making Love’ Love?”, a short video by Sr. Lynn Marie Welbig, PBVM, PhD, JCL

View videos online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife



THREE TO GET MARRIED - MARRIAGE AS SACRAMENT

Marriage is one of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church. A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of inward grace from God, or more specifically, a sacred and mysterious sign, ordained by Christ, by which grace is conveyed to your souls. Marriage, then, is an outward sign which reveals the Lord Jesus to you, and through which, His Divine Life and Love are communicated through grace.

The internal grace conveyed to your souls through your “yes” to receiving the Sacrament is the ongoing and continual divine help from Christ that is necessary to live out the Sacrament of Marriage - the help needed to love freely, totally, faithfully and fruitfully, day in and day out for the rest of your lives. When couples receive the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage, “Christ dwells with them, gives them the strength to take up their crosses and so follow him, to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to bear one another’s burdens, to ‘be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ,’ and to love one another with supernatural, tender, and fruitful love.”

Distinct from the other sacraments, the Sacrament of Marriage and the Sacrament of Holy Orders are directed toward the salvation of *others*. “If they contribute as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that they do so.” In other words, the ultimate goal of the Sacrament of Marriage is to help your spouse (and any children) get to heaven. What an awesome responsibility. What an awesome gift.



For Further Reflection...

- “Hope and Pandora's Box”, a short video by Kevin and Shannon Miles
- “Marital Love: Noun or Verb?”, a short video by Bart and Barbara Workman

View videos online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife



SO YOU THINK YOU'VE FOUND MR./MRS. RIGHT, BUT HAVE YOU ASKED GOD?



Marriage is unique in that it is not only a Sacrament, but also a vocation. When we hear the word vocation in the Catholic Church, we tend to think of priests or sisters. But the reality is that every person is called by Christ to live their life in a particular vocation. Therefore, there are two very important questions to answer both personally and as a couple: “Is Jesus Christ calling me to the married life?” And if so, “Is He calling me to unite my life with this particular person unto death?”

In the course of your preparation, you may come to the conclusion that this marriage is not an answer to God’s call. This discernment is not something to feel bad about, nor should it be seen as a failure. In fact, it is a blessing to discover this before you are married.

You might be thinking, what a depressing thing to say to an engaged couple. But because marriage is one of the most important decisions you will make in your life, the Church wants you to take sufficient time to step back from the romantic feelings of your relationship, and truly get to know each other on a deeper level, so that God can reveal to you His will for your vocation.

In order to know and understand His will, we must be in relationship and communication with Him through prayer. Prayer has many definitions, but simply put, it is a personal response to God’s presence. God is always here for us. As the old saying goes, if you feel distant from God, you need to ask yourself, “Who moved?” But also remember that God



does not impose or force Himself on us, we must seek Him, we must *respond* to His presence.

Prayer and discernment, then, go hand in hand. It isn’t likely that you will say a prayer and then God will speak to you in a burning bush, or shout from the heavens. More often than not, He will speak to you in the depths of your heart, or whisper to you, perhaps in a moment of silence, or in the words or encouragement of others. Discernment in the spiritual life is a process of sifting those movements that are from the Holy Spirit, directing us to a deeper union with God, from those that lead us away from Him.

Marriage preparation is a wonderful time to develop and deepen your prayer life and to discern not only your vocation to marriage, but all that comes with that decision, so that when you walk down the aisle, you can experience a fullness of peace and joy knowing that this is God’s will for your life, and you are fully prepared for what He has in store for you. This is why it is also a time to begin to sort through issues, conflicts, and wounds from your past, and to celebrate and build on shared values, hopes for your future, and how you complement one another. Prayer and discernment is key to this process, for God knows both of you inside and out. He knows your past and your future. Invite Him into your marriage preparation:

We thank you, O God, for the love You have implanted in our hearts. May it always inspire us to be kind in our words, considerate of each other’s feelings, and concerned for each other’s needs and desires. Help us to be understanding and forgiving of human weaknesses and failings. Increase our faith and trust in You and may Your prudence guide our life and love, especially during this preparation time. Reveal to us Your will for our vocations, and grant us the gift of discernment so that, in all things, our love may be fruitful for Your glory. Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us. Saints Joachim and Anne, parents of Our Lady, pray for us. Amen.



For Further Reflection...

- “You think you have found Mr./Mrs. Right, but have you asked God”, a short video by Fr. James Mason
- “Eyes to See and Ears to Hear: The Gift of Discernment in Daily Life”, a three part video by Fr. Scott Traynor
- Prayer & Discernment Page of the OMFRL Website

View videos online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife



GOD'S GREEN PLAN FOR YOUR FAMILY - NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

One of the questions you will likely be asked during marriage preparation is “How many children do you want?” While this may seem premature, it is important to begin discussing the desires you have for your future family. If one of you desires a large family, and the other is not open to the gift of children, you have a lot to talk about! It is also helpful to talk about your plans for fulfilling those desires well before the honeymoon. This may go against what you believe, or what you have been taught by family, friends, in school, by your doctors or nurses, and from the culture, but it is the truth - contraception is not a safe and responsible way to plan your family, it thwarts God’s plan for life and love in marriage, and its use is an intrinsic evil. But do you know why?

The marital embrace was created by God to draw you together as one in intimacy and love in a unique and satisfying way while fulfilling God’s commandment to “be fertile and multiply”. It is simultaneously self-giving and life-giving, and God’s plan is that these elements not be separated. This is to help ensure that the act of marital love actually draws you closer together. When either element is absent, the act can easily be abused, with the most obvious example of engaging in it for purely selfish physical pleasure.



Recall from the previous section how we are called to love one another - freely, totally, faithfully and fruitfully. We are also called to this kind of love in each act of “making love”. If contraception is used, the marital embrace is neither free, total, faithful or fruitful.

Many couples wrongly assume that this teaching means that Catholic couples are called to have as many children as possible. While this may be what some couples discern is their call, many others, at least for some period in their marriage, may have a serious reason for delaying a pregnancy.

And the good news is that there is a natural, healthy, drug free, and scientific way that is highly effective in both delaying the conception of a child, and also in helping you to conceive a child. The method is Natural Family Planning (NFP).

In short, using the observable biological signs that God placed in a woman's body, couples together track her fertility, and exercise the freedom to abstain from the marital embrace when they have together discerned through prayer that they are not ready for a(nother) child, and engage in the marital embrace during times of natural infertility, which is the majority of a woman's cycle.

The scope of this guide does not provide the space necessary to discuss the fullness and beauty of the Church's teachings on NFP, but please consider these important points.

- NFP is the only method of family planning in line with Church teachings - it's God's Divine Plan!
- NFP empowers husband and wife to know and understand each other's body and the gift of fertility.
- NFP helps foster respect, trust, communication and cooperation between husband and wife.
- NFP helps to train a man to love a woman as Christ loves the Church, strengthening a couple's spiritual bond with God and with each other.
- NFP enhances couple communication and intimacy, building healthy and loving marriages with less than a 4% divorce rate.
- NFP nurtures a deeper understanding and acceptance of children as blessings to be welcomed, treasured and loved beyond measure, building healthy and loving families.
- Periodic abstinence, while not always easy, provides periods of time to focus on other ways to love and care for each other. Abstinence can make the heart grow fonder!
- NFP is up to 99% effective when used to avoid or delay the conception of a child, and has been highly successful in helping couples conceive when issues of infertility arise. NFP is not the old school "rhythm method".
- Unlike oral contraceptives, there are no unwanted or harmful side effects.
- NFP is as green and natural as you can get, with no synthetic drugs or chemicals, no devices, and no surgical procedures, yet scientifically researched and tested.
- NFP is inexpensive, with minimal, and sometimes no ongoing costs after initial instruction and supplies.
- Charting of fertility signs provides a valuable health record and diagnostic tool.

Individuals, couples, doctors, and nurses located throughout the diocese are professionally trained and devoted to helping you learn Natural Family Planning. Your priest and the OMFRL are also available to answer any questions or concerns you may have and to provide you with resources and encouragement.



NFP METHODS, INSTRUCTORS & PHYSICIANS

1. Ovulation Method (Creighton Model)

Creighton Model Fertility Care practitioners provide NFP instruction in a series of private, personalized sessions with long-term professional follow-up care available. This method, which follows an allied health care model (NaProtechnology), has a high success rate not only in achieving and avoiding pregnancy, but also in treating infertility, chronic miscarriage, ovarian cysts, and other gynecologic problems. (Description by Creighton Model Personnel)

For more information, or to schedule an introductory session, please contact:

Aberdeen **Avera St. Luke's Fertility Care Services:**
(605) 622-5730 | (605) 226-2232 | msfike@abe.midco.net

Marilyn Wachs, CFCP
David Wachs, MD, CFCMC, CFCP
Michael Knapp, DO, FCMC
Susan Gutenkauf, FCP
Krystal Stuwe, FCP

Milbank Liane and Paul Rausch: (320) 305-0360 (call after 5:00 p.m.)

Sioux Falls **Avera McKennan Fertility Care Services:**
(605) 322-4434

Barb Giles, RN, FCP, IBCLC

Yankton Donna and Chuck Kramer: (402) 357-3596 (Fordyce, NE)



For Further Reflection...

- "NFP is...", a short video by the Diocese of Phoenix
- "Go Green, Thinking Outside the Pill", a short video by Barb Giles, RN, FCP, IBCLC, Avera Fertility Care
- "Natural Family Planning, A Better Way", a short video by Dr. Glenn Ridder, Family Practitioner and NFP Medical Consultant
- "Contraception, Why Not?", a CD or DVD by Dr. Janet Smith

View videos online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife

2. Sympto-Thermal Method (Couple to Couple League)

Couple to Couple League teachers are married couples that teach awareness of fertility and infertility patterns to alert for possible medical problems. This method helps couples achieve pregnancy if and when they've had difficulty. Sympto-thermal method is 99% effective in postponing pregnancy, 100% natural and safe, and low in cost so all couples can get the help they need. It also helps keep your marriage communication growing and is morally accepted. (Description by CCL Personnel)

For more information, and to schedule an introductory session, please contact:

Chamberlain	Dr. Renee C. & Matthew Schroeder: (605) 234-1534
Huron	Angie & Brad Schutt: (605) 461-8887
Mitchell	Sandra & Wayne Petree: (605) 425-2325
Pierre	Michele & Pat Snyder: (605) 222-8319 or (605) 222-8345
Salem	Sandra & Wayne Petree: (605) 425-2325
Sioux Falls	Sandra & Wayne Petree: (605) 425-2325

A Home Study Course is also available through the CCL website at ccli.org.

3. Marquette Model of NFP

The Marquette Model (MM) system brings 21st century technology to NFP. It is a system that uses an algorithm with other biological signs of fertility (i.e., urine hormones, mucus and/or temperature) to help identify the woman's fertile window. The Clearblue fertility monitor is an at home device that measures hormone levels in urine to estimate the beginning and end of the time of fertility in a women's menstrual cycle. The information from the monitor can be used in conjunction with observations of cervical mucus, basal body temperature, or other biological indicators of fertility. The MM was developed by professional nurses and physicians at Marquette University in the late 1990s. Learning how to monitor fertility through NFP aids a couple in the understanding, appreciation, and holistic integration of this precious gift. (Information from Marquette University Institute for Natural Family Planning)

For more information, and to schedule an introductory session, please contact:

Watertown	Bridget Bauman BSN, RN, NFP Student Teacher: (605) 886-4049 or icparishwatertown.org
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4. Medical Consultants & NFP-only Physicians

Aberdeen	David Wachs, MD, CFCMC, CFCP, Family Practice: (605) 225-0378 Michael Knapp, DO, FCMC, Family Practice (605) 225-0378
Chamberlain	Dr. Renee C. Schroeder, DO, Family Practice (605) 234-6584
Sioux Falls	Jane O. Gaetze, MD, FACOG, OB/GYN: (605) 322-8886
Sioux Falls	Glenn Ridder, MD, Family Practice: (605) 328-5800



ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GROW FONDER - LIVING TOGETHER BEFORE MARRIAGE

Some couples choose an engagement lifestyle which is a cause of concern for the faith community. Specifically, cohabitation or an intimate sexual relationship, is a serious block to healthy marriage preparation and has been proven to be linked with problems later in marriage.

A couple might think that living together will help them get to know one another better so that they will have a better chance of a happy marriage. Actually, the exact opposite is true. Statistics show that couples who have lived together divorce at rates considerably higher than those couples who have not lived together. We offer this information not as a scare tactic, but as an important invitation to take this marriage preparation time very seriously.

Cohabiting and sexual intimacy outside of marriage is also in opposition to Church teaching. This kind of opposition is sin, not because an arbitrary human law is being broken, but because it is acting outside of God's great plan for man and woman in the marriage covenant, which has been created and intended to flow from vows of permanency ("until death do us part") and faithfulness. Only within the permanency of the marriage covenant can you love one another freely, totally, faithfully and fruitfully, as described previously.

Cohabiting and sharing a sexual intimacy outside of marriage can set in motion negative thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors toward one another and cloud a proper discernment of true love. Sexual intimacy outside of marriage is often treated as something owed to the other and focused primarily on physical pleasure.

If you are living together, or sexually active, you will probably be asked by the priest to separate and to maintain a chaste relationship. This will free you from living in opposition to Church teachings and allow you to understand more deeply the beauty of our human nature and God's plan for sexual intimacy within marriage. It can allow you to start your relationship anew without the pressures and distractions of sexual activity, and thereby enter the Sacrament and receive the graces with a proper disposition.



For Further Reflection...

- "Two Questions for Every Engaged Couple?", a short video by Fr. Joseph Vogel

View video online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife



SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Interfaith couples may wonder if marriage preparation will be different for you. The same requirements for marriage preparation apply when one person is not Catholic. This is so even if you want your ceremony to take place in a non-Catholic Church. You will need approval, called a dispensation, to be married outside of a Catholic parish. During your preparation, you will likely explore the teachings of each others' faith and how you plan to live out your faith in your marriage. This is especially important because if you are Catholic, you will be asked to promise to do all in your power to have your children baptized and raised in the Catholic faith. Catholic couples will also spend time discussing these same issues because many times couples are not at the same place on their journey of faith, or disagree about the role faith will play in their marriage together.



For Further Reflection...

- "Faith and Interfaith in Marriage", a short video by Fr. Charles Cimpl

View video online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife

Youthful marriages are a particular concern because of the statistics of failure. If you are a teen considering marriage, the Church wants to take special measures to enhance the strength of your union. As an extra precaution against a hasty decision with lifetime consequences, diocesan policy requires your priest to consult with the bishop before witnessing the wedding of a minor.

Pregnancy will not rush marriage preparation, but rather suggests that special care be taken so that the couple is prepared for the vows of marriage and parenthood.



Remarriage involves a new relationship and new challenges. If one or both partners has lost a spouse or experienced a divorce, and now desires to remarry, the priest will help you obtain premarital enrichment that meets the special needs of your situation. For remarriage after a divorce, a declaration of nullity (annulment) of any prior marriage is ordinarily required. Please confer with your priest about this, so that he can discuss this process with you and obtain a copy of the declaration before proceeding with marriage preparation.

Convalidation addresses the desire of a man and woman who were married outside of the Church to enter into a valid Catholic marriage. If you desire that your marriage be validated, please consult with your parish priest for assistance appropriate to the circumstances.

All the policies and procedures for marriage preparation in our diocese are designed to benefit you and your future marriage. But if you believe there is a very serious reason for an exception to your case, you have the right to appeal. Your priest will explain how to initiate an appeal through the Chancery Office.



MARRIAGE SPONSOR COUPLES

A priest may choose to have a Marriage Sponsor Couple assist in your preparation by meeting with you several times. They work alongside and in cooperation with your priest, and oftentimes review and discuss your personal inventory results (described in the next section).

This married couple can be a great resource and blessing to you, bringing with them experience and wisdom from living their own vocation. The couple chosen for you is a sign of the prayers and support of your parish and the whole faith community. They will welcome you into their home, share both your enthusiasm and any concerns for your upcoming marriage, and help you along the way.



FOCCUS PERSONAL INVENTORY

Diocesan marriage policy requires you to complete an evaluation of your relationship. This evaluation is commonly referred to as a personal inventory. The one primarily utilized in the Sioux Falls Diocese is FOCCUS.

FOCCUS stands for Facilitating, Open, Couple, Communication, Understanding and Study. It is designed to help you learn more about yourselves and your unique relationship, strengths and weaknesses. It is a tool to help you identify and work through a multitude of topics, including lifestyle expectations, friends and interests, communication, problem solving, religion and values, parenting, family of origin, sexuality, finances, and others. It is not a compatibility test or a predictor of success or failure. The ultimate goal is to facilitate open and honest communication.

Therefore, it is important to complete the inventory in a timely manner and to answer the questions honestly without consulting one another. Based on your answers, a report is created for your priest or Marriage Sponsor Couple to use in facilitating discussion on these topics.



AREA MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Priests and others have generously volunteered their time and talents to lead a series of marriage preparation programs at various locations throughout the diocese to supplement the individual preparation you will receive with your priest. Your priest will likely ask you to attend one of these programs or an Engaged Encounter Weekend.

Aberdeen

Three seminars are presented in a monthly rotation. *Marriage Readiness* deals with financial and legal issues, values, adjustment in early marriage, and seeking intimacy. *Sacrament and Celebration* discusses the sign and essentials of sacramental marriage, Protestant traditions, and planning the liturgy. *Christian Sexuality and Family Planning* considers Natural Family Planning, sexuality, parenting, and the relationship of parish and family life.

- When:** Second Sunday of each month
(except May, it moves to the third Sunday)
1:30-4:00 p.m.
- Where:** St. Mary Parish hall (west entrance)
409 2nd Avenue NE, Aberdeen
- Contact:** St. Mary: (605) 229-4422; Sacred Heart: (605) 225-7065;
Newman Center: (605) 229-1011

Sioux Falls

This series of four, two-hour sessions aims to help those who are preparing for marriage learn more about how marriage in the Lord is lived. Topics include sacrament and theology of marriage, interfaith marriage, the wedding liturgy, finances and budgeting (emphasizing values), sexual intimacy, Natural Family Planning, and couple communication. Cost is \$25.

- When:** First Four (4) Thursdays in October, February, or May
7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Where:** O’Gorman Jr. High School, 3100 W. 41st Street, Sioux Falls
- Contact:** Your Parish Priest; Outside Sioux Falls – OMFRL (605) 988-3755

Brookings

A set of four Thursday evening sessions is offered in the fall and in the spring. The main sessions are: 1) Spirituality of Marriage, Biblical Foundation, and Church Requirements; 2) Communication and Prayer; 3) Finances and Extended Family; & 4) Sexuality and Natural Family Planning. Cost is \$25.

When: 2016 Fall Dates:

Thursdays October 6, 13, 20, 27 at 7:00 p.m.

2017 Spring Dates:

Thursdays February 9, 16, 23 & March 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Pius XII Newman Center, 1321 8th Street, Brookings

Contact: Fr. Andrew Dickinson – Pius XII Newman Center: (605) 692-9461

Vermillion

A set of five evening classes is offered each semester. The sessions include: *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage*; couple communication; finances; spirituality and sexuality; and Natural Family Planning and child rearing. Registration is required. Cost is \$40.

When: 2016 Fall Dates:

Tuesdays November 8, 15, 22, 29 &

December 6 from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

2017 Spring Dates:

Tuesdays March 21, 28 & April 4, 11, 18 from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Where: St. Thomas More Newman Center, 320 E. Cherry Street, Vermillion

Contact: Fr. Jeff Norfolk - St. Thomas More Newman Center: (605) 624-2697



ENGAGED ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Engaged Encounter is a weekend away from the distractions and tensions of everyday life, giving you the privacy to talk honestly and intensively with each other. Engaged Encounter uses a dynamic process based on listening, writing, and dialogue. The process encourages you to concentrate on your relationship. Young and more mature couples alike find Engaged Encounter a rich experience.

The schedule of the weekend is Saturday 8:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Weekends are held in area Catholic schools and no housing is offered on the weekend. The cost is \$100.00 and must be sent with registration. If you have to cancel, \$50.00 of your payment is non-refundable.

Register early because many weekends fill quickly. Dates may be subject to change. A confirmation email will be sent after receipt of your registration and a letter will be sent prior to the weekend giving more detailed information.

To view a complete list of all the dates and locations for the Engaged Encounter weekends, visit the Office of Marriage, Family and Respect Life website. Just click on the “Marriage Preparation” link in the menu.

The Engaged Encounter registration form is available for printing on the website. Please mail the registration form and payment to:

**Engaged Encounter
Bart and Barbara Workman
3800 S. Orchid Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57110**

Please note that registrations cannot be accepted by email. Inquiries regarding availability may be sent to: esdcee@gmail.com





RESPECTING THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY



Oftentimes, considerable time is taken in planning your wedding day and the events leading up to it. Please know that the priest and others from the parish are there to assist you in preparing the wedding liturgy and ensuring a beautiful and welcoming environment for your guests.

Popular today are “destination” weddings and ceremonies outside the walls of a Church. To preserve the sacredness and sacramentality of your union, a Catholic ceremony ordinarily must take place within a Catholic Church or chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is regularly reserved.

The sacredness of your union is manifested in other ways as well, one of which is in the clothing you wear. At any time, but especially at this moment in your life, clothing reveals and protects chaste love. In our secular culture, it can be a challenge for brides and bridesmaids to find modest clothing and accessories. Nevertheless, wedding garments should be selected that are modest, respectful of the sacred space of the Church, and reflect the beauty and goodness of the marital union, as well as the solemn and joyous nature of the occasion. Please let the attire for both men and women respect the presence of those around you, and in particular the presence of Christ in the Church.



For Further Reflection...

- “Why Can’t We Get Married in a Park, God Created Nature Didn’t He?”, a short video by Fr. Andrew Dickinson

View video online at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife



CONTACT INFORMATION

Our Priest preparing us for marriage:

Name: _____

Parish: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Our Natural Family Planning instructor(s):

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Our Marriage Sponsor Couple:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Dear Engaged Couples,

Many are inspired by the wisdom of Pope Saint John Paul II, who believed that the dignity and balance of human life depends at every moment of history, and in every place on the globe, upon who man will be for woman, and who woman will be for man. To be who Christ calls us to be for one another takes much prayer, discernment and self-sacrifice. We speak from experience.

But who you are to your spouse, how you love your spouse, establishes the foundation of love and life in your family and beyond. If you are gifted with children, they naturally mimic the love they see between their parents, and share it with others. Christ's love, shining through your marriage and family, can therefore move out of your family and touch the lives of countless people around you.

And our society desperately needs to see and experience true love, fidelity, and charity in marriage and family life, to witness spouses and siblings sacrificing for one another out of love, to be drawn into the joy and hope that abound from these acts of living out God's plan for marriage and family.

We rejoice that you are presenting yourselves for marriage preparation in the Church and offer prayerful assistance in both your preparation for this Sacrament and for the ongoing vitality of your marriage and family life. Please visit the OMFRL website at www.sfcatholic.org/RespectLife for a variety of marriage preparation and enrichment resources, including articles, this guide, a series of inspirational videos on a variety of marriage and family topics, and more. Like us on Facebook for short updates and links to articles and other resources.

Most importantly, please do not hesitate to contact us for any reason. May God's blessings abound as you continue on your journey.

In Christ's Love,
Travis & Kelly Benson
Directors of the Office of Marriage, Family & Respect Life



OFFICE OF MARRIAGE, FAMILY & RESPECT LIFE

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