



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



Family Ministry

50 E. Robinson St., Orlando, FL 32801 | 407-246-4882 | 407-246-4930



Marriage Preparation Guidelines

Congratulations on your decision to get married in the Catholic Church! The marriage preparation process is designed to guide engaged 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 pastoral minister to begin the wedding planning and preparation for married life. This should take place between six to twelve months prior the anticipated wedding date and before any arrangements are made or a wedding date is set. During this interview, the pastoral minister will provide an explanation of the Pastoral Guidelines for Marriage Preparation.

B. Assessment for Determining Readiness

The pastoral minister 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 pastoral minister will outline the sacramental preparation required (Pre Cana, Pre Cana Weekend Retreat, Remarriage, Convalidation, interviews with the priest, etc.)

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 concerns or questions regarding marriage preparation, call the Family Ministry Office at 407-246-4882 or email fm@orlandodiocese.org.

Marriage Preparation Calendar

Our programs fill up quickly, so hurry and REGISTER ONLINE

<http://www.orlandodiocese.org/ministries-offices/marriage-preparation-welcome/marriage-preparation-classes/>

PLEASE NOTE: ALL THESE CLASSES WILL BE OFFERED IN ENGLISH ONLY

Pre Cana—One Day

Recommended for couples entering marriage for the first time or if a former marriage was of a very brief duration and no children are involved. Also, for couples civilly married less than 2 years but are looking to convalidate their marriage in the Roman Catholic Church.

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|---------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
| January 14, 2017: | Our Lady of Hope, Port Orange | (Volusia) |
| January 28, 2017: | Our Savior, Cocoa Beach | (Brevard) |
| February 11, 2017: | Nativity, Longwood | (Seminole) |
| March 18, 2017: | St. John Vianney, Orlando | (Orange) |
| March 25, 2017: | Church of the Resurrection, Lakeland | (Polk) |
| April 22, 2017: | St. John Vianney, Orlando | (Orange) |
| April 29, 2017: | Our Savior, Cocoa Beach | (Brevard) |
| May 6, 2017: | Our Lady of Hope, Port Orange | (Volusia) |
| May 20, 2017: | St. John Vianney, Orlando | (Orange) |
| August 5, 2017: | Nativity, Longwood | (Seminole) |
| August 19, 2017: | Church of the Resurrection, Lakeland | (Polk) |
| September 16, 2017: | Our Lady of Hope, Port Orange | (Volusia) |
| September 23, 2017: | Our Savior, Cocoa Beach | (Brevard) |
| October 7, 2017: | Holy Redeemer, Kissimmee | (Osceola) |
| October 21, 2017: | Church of the Resurrection, Lakeland | (Polk) |
| November | (TBD) | |

FOR THE FOLLOWING PRE CANA WORKSHOPS, PLEASE CALL THE NUMBER LISTED BELOW TO REGISTER:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Marion County Pre Cana: | Blessed Trinity Catholic Church | 5 SE 17th St., Ocala | 352-629-8092 |
| Vietnamese Engaged Encounters: | St. Philip Phan Van Minh | 15 West Par St., Orlando | 407-896-4210 |

Pre Cana—Overnight

Recommended for engaged couples with no previous marriage and no children. The Pre Cana Weekend overnight retreat program provides an intimate setting for personal, uninterrupted attention to your marriage preparation. This program is held at **SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL CENTER** in Winter Park.

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| January 6-7, 2017 | June 2-3, 2017 | September 8-9, 2017 |
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Remarriage

Recommended for couples where one or both have been previously married, either in a civil or church ceremony (even if annulment has occurred).

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| February 11, 2017: | Nativity, Longwood | (Seminole) |
| May 20, 2017: | St. John Vianney, Orlando | (Orange) |
| August 5, 2017: | Nativity, Longwood | (Seminole) |
| November: | (TBD) | |

Convalidation Workshop

For couples who have been civilly married for more than 2 years but are looking to convalidate their marriage in the Roman Catholic Church. This workshop is held at **SAINTS PETER & PAUL CHURCH** in Winter Park.

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|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|
| January 28, 2017 | May 6, 2017 | August 26, 2017 | October 21, 2017 |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|

Checklist

As you prepare for Marriage in the Church, be sure your priorities are in proper order.
Your wedding is only one day; your marriage is a lifetime.

A) INITIAL CONTACT 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, provide your priest or deacon the following: name and address of the parish where the wedding will take place, celebrant's name, and wedding date.

B) PRE-MARITAL INVENTORY

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

C) MARRIAGE PREPARATION CLASS

- Attend a Marriage Preparation Class (either diocesan or parish communities) such as Pre Cana, Parish Based, Weekend Retreat, Convalidation or Remarriage. To register, go to <http://www.orlandodiocese.org/ministries-offices/marriage-preparation-welcome/marriage-preparation-classes/>

D) NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING (OPTIONAL)

- Learn the facts about Natural Family Planning (NFP) and attend a class to learn how to use it. Details available on the website: <http://www.orlandodiocese.org/ministries-offices/family-ministry-welcome/natural-family-planning/>

E) DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE PRE-NUPTIAL FILE (PRIOR TO THE WEDDING)

- Certificate of Baptism for each Catholic party, dated within six months. (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) for bride and groom. (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 class. (Couple will receive it at the class).
- Marriage License from the County Clerk of Court (the license is good for 60 days; do not obtain one earlier than necessary). Visit your county's web site for more information.

F) PLANNING YOUR WEDDING LITURGY / FOLLOW UP MEETING

- Meet with your priest, deacon or wedding coordinator to plan your wedding.
- Using the *Together for Life* book, 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*