A Letter from the Bishop as you enter into the Sacrament of Matrimony

Dear Engaged Couples,

I wish to congratulate you on your upcoming reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony. The time of engagement in which you are now in, is a very important part of your journey to marriage. It is a time to grow together as a couple while contemplating the lifetime commitment you are to make to one another. The Sacrament you are to receive is a sacred oath that will bind you and your future spouse as one for the rest of your lives.

Strong and healthy marriages are essential to so many things: our children, culture and even the Church. The family is the fundamental unit of society and forms the “domestic church” in which our children are raised. Blessed Pope John Paul II wrote, “[A]ware that the well-being of society and her own good are intimately tied to the good of the family, the Church perceives in a more urgent and compelling way her mission of proclaiming to all people the plan of God for marriage and the family, ensuring their full vitality and human and Christian development, and thus contributing to the renewal of society and of the People of God” (Familiaris Consortio).

To help you with your journey and to prepare you for the lifelong and fruitful commitment of marriage, the Diocese of Venice provides many resources. These include two workshops that will help you ask the tough questions, communicate in a way that helps break barriers, teach you to pray together and understand fully the Sacrament for which you are preparing. Marriage Preparation is a time to put the wedding plans aside and open your heart and mind to preparing for the rest of your lives together.

Be assured of my prayers for your upcoming marriage and family life.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
+ Frank J. Dewane
Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida

Workshop Dates

Registration:
Information to register for the Sacramentality and Life Skills Workshops can be found at:
www.dioceseofvenice.org/marriageprep

Cost: ‘75 per Workshop
Please make checks payable to Diocese of Venice.

Diocese of Venice
Attn: Marriage Preparation
1000 Pinebrook Road
Venice, FL 34285

God’s Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage

MARRIAGE PREPARATION FOR THE DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA

“God’s Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage signifies the union of Christ and the Church.”

Información para Parejas Hispánicas

St. Catherine Parish - Sebring, Florida
Contacte a: Carmen (863) 385-6762

St. Jude Parish - Sarasota, Florida
Contacte a: Frances (941) 955-3934

St. Peter the Apostle Parish - Naples, Florida
Contacte a: (239) 774-3337

If you have any questions please call Family Life at:
(941) 484-9543 or you can email: marriageprep@dioceseofvenice.org
Step 1: Schedule a meeting at your parish to meet with your priest or deacon
After you are engaged, you should contact your parish as soon as possible, and at least six months before your expected wedding day. You will meet with a priest or deacon who will determine if you and your fiance are free to marry in the Church, and also will explain to you the process of getting married in the Catholic Church.

Step 2: Take a Premarital Inventory
After meeting with a priest or deacon at your parish, you will set up a time to take a premartial inventory. Later on, you will meet with the priest or deacon to discuss the results with him. This will allow you and your future spouse to learn more about each other, both your strengths and weaknesses. This is an important time to identify any possible challenges that you as a married couple might face.

Step 3: Register for Marriage Preparation Workshops
In the Diocese of Venice, each engaged couple must attend two workshops to help prepare them for the Sacrament of Matrimony. It does not matter the order in which these workshops are taken, just that the couple attends both. All workshops are held on Saturdays, usually from 9am-4pm, and the cost for each one is $75. A calendar for upcoming workshops and instructions for registering can be found at: www.dioceseofvenice.org/marriageprep

Marriage Preparation Workshops are:
Sacramentality Workshop
Getting married in the Catholic Church necessitates that the couple fully embraces the Catholic understanding of this Sacrament, which means having a commitment to a love that is free, total, faithful, and open to children. At the Sacramentality Workshop, couples will learn the Church’s teachings on marriage and human sexuality in-depth. Couples will acquire the knowledge on how to apply these teachings in their own marriage.

Life Skills Workshop
At the Life Skills workshop, couples will learn about the skills that are essential for a successful marriage — communication, conflict resolution, finances etc. Also, couples will be given the opportunity to dialogue honestly and openly about their future lives together. If either person in the couple is a widow or has been through the annulment process, the Life Skills workshop can be replaced with a To Trust Again workshop, which deals more specifically with these situations.

All workshops are from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Step 4: Attend Natural Family Planning Instruction
Engaged couples are invited to attend a class on Natural Family Planning, a beautiful, safe and natural way to both postpone and achieve pregnancy. To sign up for a class, email nfp@dioceseofvenice.org with your name, phone number, and parish, and someone will contact you to register you for a class convenient to you.

Step 5: Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Marriage is a beautiful sacrament, but it is also a great responsibility. The couple is committing to a lifetime of self-giving love to one another. This is only possible with the Grace of God. Before entering into marriage, couples should receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation shortly before the Wedding Day. Contact your parish to determine times available for this Sacrament.

Step 6: Meet again with your priest or deacon
Four to six weeks before your wedding day, the couple should meet with the priest or deacon who is celebrating the wedding. Any details of the wedding day should be worked out with him and with the parish staff at this time.

The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life. (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1799).