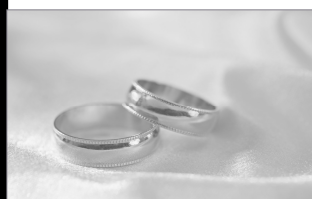


## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

### PRE-CANA DAY



Family Life Office  
Diocese of Little Rock

**The Christian marriage relationship is a sacrament, a sign of Christ's love for his Church, lived and experienced by a couple and shared with family, church, and society. Because Christian marriage is understood as something beyond the human reality, the Church has established norms, guidelines and procedures to help the engaged couple see their marriage as part of God's plan for them.**

A wedding is a day; a marriage is a lifetime, a lifetime of change, growth, and working at the development of love between two people. From the experience of family life and association with others, one is aware of the forces that touch the lives of married couples. Today, half of all marriages celebrated will end in divorce. The Church is greatly concerned that each couple has the opportunity to grow in the love they pledge on their wedding day.

Sacramental preparation is not a new concept for the Catholic Church. Celebration of First Communion, Confirmation, and Adult Baptism have always been preceded by months of preparation that we might have a fuller understanding of God's working in us through them. So, it does not come as a surprise that the Church would ask for a time to offer preparation for marriage, a sacrament that will have such a profound effect on every aspect of a couple's life.

The goal of the marriage preparation program is to help engaged couples achieve a solid Christian marriage by understanding the Sacrament of Matrimony, its covenant nature, and realize that marriage is a lifelong commitment requiring serious preparation. The Diocese of Little Rock assists engaged couples in assessing their readiness for the Sacrament of Marriage and helps them prepare for the lifetime commitment in Christian marriage through pastoral consultation and an instructional program.

Marriage Preparation Instructional Programs will:

- Include the topics of Sacrament of Marriage, Communication, Finances, Family of Origins, Love & Sexuality, Natural Family Planning, Responsible Parenting, and Goals in Marriage.
- Concentrate on the spiritual aspects of these topics, bring out the practical aspects, and encourage couples to identify attainable goals that will help them achieve a good solid Christian Marriage.



## PRE-CANA DAY

The Pre-Cana Educational Program of the Diocese of Little Rock contains the following presentations and offers couples an opportunity to reflect on their up-coming marriage, individually and as a couple, in a one-day format.

- **Sacrament of Marriage Presentation:** The purpose of this talk is to enable couples to discover and evaluate their marriage as a continued sacrament of life, love, and strength through their relationship with one another. It will help them realize that Christian marriage is a living commitment to one another and to Christ. It will also examine the realities of inner-faith marriages.
- **Communication Presentation:** The purpose of this talk is to show how communication can bring couples to a greater understanding of themselves and one another by learning about the definition and importance of communication, the use of verbal and non-verbal communication, the importance of feelings, conflict resolution, listening skills, and developing communication with God - your partner in marriage.
- **Finance Presentation:** The purpose of this talk is to help the couples come to grips with one of the major causes of marital conflict, to help them become aware of the importance of keeping a budget, and become aware of their values, attitudes, and goals in money matters. It also emphasizes tithing and good stewardship.
- **Love and Sexuality Presentation:** The purpose of this talk is to bring the couples to an appreciation of the beauty of sex in marriage, to help them examine the importance of attitudes about sex, and to bring them to an awareness of the difference between sex as an activity and sex as communication.
- **Responsible Parenthood Presentation:** The purpose of this talk is to present the importance of parenting skills, help couples recognize their personal perceptions of parenting, develop a shared plan for raising their family, and understand the Church's position on responsible parenthood.
- **Goals Presentation:** The purpose of this talk is to stress the importance of making your marriage a priority and beginning a couple-evaluation process to be used now and into the future.

*Classes are currently available in Little Rock, Fort Smith, and Pine Bluff, Arkansas.*

*Couples should discuss the results of their FOCCUS with the priest/deacon preparing them prior to attending a Pre-Cana Day.*

*Seminars are held on Saturdays. Classes fill up quickly, so please make your reservation as early as possible.*

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**Registration and Information  
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