NORMS FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Marriage preparation in the Diocese of Harrisburg shall take place over a minimum of nine months and consist of the following components:

1. Canonical Process - Initial interview with the priest or deacon where the required canonical forms are completed.

2. Pre-marital Inventory (e.g. FOCCUS, PREPARE, etc.).

3. Formation - Meet at least four (4) times with a mentor couple, a priest or deacon, or another parish-appointed leader for marriage preparation. At least one of these meetings must be with a priest or deacon for an instructional session on the nature of Catholic marriage.

4. Retreat – Attend a diocesan marriage preparation retreat per the preparing clergy's instructions. Note that these Retreats fulfill the diocesan requirement to attend a short introductory talk on Natural Family Planning as well as a talk on the sacramentality of marriage.

5. Concluding Assessment – Meet with the priest or deacon for a final assessment before marriage (done as needed).

6. Liturgical Planning – Meet with the priest or deacon (and any other liturgical ministers) to plan a prayerful and reverent ceremony.

CATHOLIC engaged encounter

A Wedding is a Day... *A Marriage is a Lifetime*®

2027 Marriage Preparation

Diocese of Harrisburg
Laity & Family Office
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710
(717) 657-4804 ext. 317

www.hbgdiocese.org/cee

What is an Engaged Encounter Weekend?

Engaged Encounter is a group experience designed to give couples private time to plan their future together. The weekend gives couples who are planning to marry the opportunity to communicate with each other—individually, honestly, and intensively—about their prospective lives together: their strengths and weaknesses; desires, ambitions, and goals; their attitudes about money, sex, children, and family; and their roles in the Church and in society.

What happens during the weekend?

The weekend begins Friday evening and ends Sunday afternoon. A trained team of married couples present talks to the group on important aspects of married life. After each presentation, the engaged couples are given the time to write about their thoughts and feelings, then discuss them privately with their partner. This is an intense but highly worthwhile weekend that allows the couple to concentrate on building their relationship with each other and with God. Although there are other people on the weekend, *Engaged Encounter* is meant to be a *couple's experience.*

Where are Engaged Encounters held?

Weekends are held at a retreat site (specific details follow after registration). Reservations are limited to approximately 15 couples. Please note that all sleeping rooms are pre-assigned by the Laity & Family staff—two people of the same gender are in each room.

What is the cost of the weekend?

The weekend cost is ***$200 per couple due at registration***. The fee includes overnight lodging, meals, and materials. The registration fee is transferable but non-refundable.

Where can I register?

Registration may be done online, and you may register up to two weeks before a weekend. If you are registering **within two weeks** of a weekend, please note that some weekends fill up much earlier and anyone registering within two weeks is encouraged to contact the Laity & Family Office **before** attempting to register. Registrations are **not** guaranteed until you hear from the Laity & Family Office.

Questions?
Call the Laity & Family Office at
717-657-4804, ext. 317
or email CLEV@hbgdiocese.org

Program Dates for 2027

Engaged Encounter

Jan 15-17, 2027
May 28-30, 2027
Aug 27-29, 2027