Program Dates for 2017

Engaged Encounter weekends:
January 13-15       February 17-19       March 3-5
April 28-30        May 19-21          September 22-24
October 27-29      November 10-12

God’s Plan programs on Saturdays from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.:

St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Bonneauville
2/18, 5/20, 10/14

St. Patrick Parish, Marsh Drive, Carlisle
4/29, 8/5, 11/11

St. Joseph Parish, Danville
2/18, 5/6, 9/23

Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg
1/21, 3/4, 4/29, 7/8, 8/5, 10/7, 12/2

Webber Center, St. Leo the Great Parish, Lancaster
1/7, 3/18, 9/9

There is also the Weekday, Two-Evening God’s Plan Program at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg (6-9 p.m.):
3/7 & 3/14 (Tuesdays) 6/1 & 6/8  (Thursdays)
9/5 & 9/12 (Tuesdays)  11/2 & 11/9  (Thursdays)

Preparing for Marriage in the Diocese of Harrisburg 2017

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

familyministries@hbgdiocese.org
www.hbgdiocese.org/mppr
Congratulations on your engagement!

This is an exciting and busy time for both of you as you plan for your wedding day and make decisions about your life together. For many years the Catholic Church has recognized the need for marriage preparation that prepares couples for a lifetime, not just for a day. The Church has wonderful teachings on marriage and family that have stood the test of time and will help you both to love each other unconditionally as Christ loves us. We know that as two individuals you bring to your relationship two different views of marriage, and it is important for you both to first identify your differences and then discuss how you will combine them into your life together.

The Marriage Preparation Process in the Diocese of Harrisburg consists of the following steps (some steps may be combined):

1. **Canonical Process** — Initial interview with a priest or deacon where the required canonical forms are completed.
2. **Pre-marital Inventory** — e.g. FOCCUS, PREPARE, etc.
3. **Formation** — Meet several times with a mentor couple, a priest or deacon, or another parish-appointed leader for marriage preparation (this may include going over the results of the pre-marital inventory).
4. **Conference** — Attend either *God’s Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage* or an *Engaged Encounter* weekend per your priest’s instruction.
5. **Concluding assessment** — Meet a final time with a priest or deacon for final assessment (as needed).
6. **Wedding (Liturgical) Planning.**

Please note that all of these steps must be completed unless otherwise noted by your priest. Some steps may be combined.

---

**FOCCUS**

The FOCCUS Instrument is an online survey taken by both partners. Its primary purpose is to allow you as a couple to discern and discuss your mutual beliefs, hopes and dreams about your future. The mentor couple, priest or deacon may use this as a discussion starter when they meet with you to discuss your marriage. FOCCUS is purely for discussion purposes—there is no passing or failing grade, and the FOCCUS report is destroyed after your preparation process is complete.

---

The Parish-Based Mentoring Process begins early in the 9 month preparation time, when you are assigned a trained mentor couple to assist you. You will begin the mentoring process by completing the FOCCUS inventory online and discussing it with your mentor couple. In the remaining sessions, each lasting about two hours, you will continue to discuss topics that have surfaced from the FOCCUS as well as other topics related to communication, spirituality, sexuality and finances.

Couples getting prepared by a mentor couple also attend *God’s Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage*. This one-day program consists of presentations on: God’s Plan for Marriage; the Basics of Marriage in the Church; Marital Sexuality; and Natural Family Planning. Dates, times and locations for *God’s Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage*, as well as registration instructions, can be found inside this brochure.

Alternatively, some couples may be instructed to attend *Engaged Encounter*, a residential weekend program that is offered eight times a year. Couples who attend Engaged Encounter do not need to attend the *God’s Plan* program, however some form of mentoring should take place through the parish. A more detailed description of EE is inside this brochure along with registration information.

After you complete these programs, you will return to your priest or deacon and continue the next step in the process with him.
Engaged Encounter is a group experience designed to give couples private time to plan their future together. The weekend gives couples who are planning marriage 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.

The weekend begins Friday evening and ends late 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, and then discuss them privately with their partner. This is an intense but worthwhile weekend that allows the couple to concentrate on building their relationship with each other and with God. Although there are other couples on the weekend, the Engaged Encounter is meant to be a couple experience.

The Weekend is designed for couples preparing for marriage through the Catholic Church. Although Engaged Encounter is Catholic in origin and orientation, interfaith couples are also welcome and will find the weekend helpful for giving their marriage the best possible beginning. Couples from other faith traditions are welcome to attend on a space-available basis.

The weekend costs $375 per couple. The fee includes overnight lodging, meals and materials. Weekends are limited to 20 couples. The registration fee is transferable but not refundable. The fee for the weekend is subject to change without notice. Please note that all sleeping rooms are pre-assigned by the Family Ministries Staff—two people of the same gender are in each room.

No couple should let financial concerns prevent them from making an Engaged Encounter weekend. Payment arrangements can be made on an individual basis if the couple or their parish cannot afford the expense.

Engaged Encounter weekends are held at Hampton Inn in Mechanicsburg, PA. The Hampton Inn is accessible to wheelchairs and specialized sleeping rooms are also available.

Weekends begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday and conclude at 4:00 p.m. Sunday. Arrival by 7:00 p.m. is important to allow time to register and unpack.

The registration form for Engaged Encounter is on the back cover of this brochure. You may register by mail or online. You may register up to two weeks before an Engaged Encounter weekend, however some weekends fill up much earlier so anyone registering within two weeks of the weekend is encouraged to contact the Family Life Office before attempting to register. Registrations are not guaranteed until you hear from the Family Life Office. You must be at least 18 to attend Engaged Encounter.

If you require special accommodations for either the God’s Plan or Engaged Encounter programs (sign language interpreters, etc.), please contact us in advance so that we can make arrangements.

Questions? Call Family Ministries at 717-657-4804, ext. 317 or email familyministries@hbgdiocese.org
Engaged Encounter Registration Form

Bride’s Name: __________________________ Name for Badge: ______________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________
Home Phone: ______________________ Cell Phone: __________________________
Email: ____________________________________________________ Age: _______
Education: __________________________ Level: __________________________
Religious: __________________________ Denomination: ____________________
Occupation: ____________________________________________________________

Groom’s Name: __________________________ Name for Badge: ______________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________
Home Phone: ______________________ Cell Phone: __________________________
Email: ____________________________________________________ Age: _______
Education: __________________________ Level: __________________________
Religious: __________________________ Denomination: ____________________
Occupation: ____________________________________________________________

Parish where you are receiving Marriage Prep: _____________________________

Date and church of Wedding: _____________________________

Were either of you married before? ____ If so, who? Bride _____ Groom _______

Dietary Restrictions for meals/snacks: ________________________________

Desired Weekend: ________________________________

Second Choice: ________________________________

***Registration Deadline: 2 weeks before seminar, but may fill earlier. ***

Cost: $375 ($50 deposit with registration)
Please make checks payable to Diocese of Harrisburg and send to:
Marriage and Family Ministries Office
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710

Prefer to register online or use a credit card?
Go to www.hbgdiocese.org/mppr

God’s Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage Registration Form

Bride’s Name: __________________________ Name for Badge: ______________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________
Home Phone: ______________________ Cell Phone: __________________________
Email: ____________________________________________________ Age: _______
Education: __________________________ Level: __________________________
Religious: __________________________ Denomination: ____________________
Occupation: ____________________________________________________________

Groom’s Name: __________________________ Name for Badge: ______________

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________
Home Phone: ______________________ Cell Phone: __________________________
Email: ____________________________________________________ Age: _______
Education: __________________________ Level: __________________________
Religious: __________________________ Denomination: ____________________
Occupation: ____________________________________________________________

Parish where you are receiving Marriage Prep: _____________________________

Date and church of Wedding: _____________________________

Were either of you married before? ____ If so, who? Bride _____ Groom _______

Dietary Restrictions for lunch/snacks: ________________________________

Desired Seminar: Date: ______________ Location: _________________________

***Registration Deadline: 2 weeks before seminar, but may fill earlier. ***

Cost: $100

Please make checks payable to Diocese of Harrisburg and send to:
Marriage and Family Ministries Office
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710

Prefer to register online or use a credit card?
Go to www.hbgdiocese.org/mppr