

# PREPARER'S CHECKLIST

## GUIDE FOR CLERGY IN THE FORMATION OF COUPLES FOR HOLY MATRIMONY

*These are the 3 opportunities clergy can teach and share the faith with the engaged couple in a personal way.*

### **SESSION ONE (INITIAL MEETING) (8-12 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING)**

- Welcome couple to the parish, get them registered, gather important details about their relationship.
- Explain marriage paperwork
- Provide an overview of the Preparation for Holy Matrimony from the brochure for couples.
  - Couple's Inventory- Schedule & Explain
  - Explain Mentor Couple process following Witness to Love Guidelines
  - Marriage Formation Retreat- Explain
  - Natural Family Planning- Explain
- Present an introduction to the Nature of Marriage and the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony
- Discuss Marital Consent
- Explain guidelines for setting wedding date (preferably not until mentor couple has been selected and approved).

### **SESSION TWO (THEOLOGY DISCUSSION NIGHT: MEAL WITH MENTOR & ENGAGED COUPLES) (4-6 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING, AFTER THE COUPLE ATTENDS RETREAT)**

- Discuss progress of preparation (mentor couple discussions, retreat experience)
- Confirm NFP course has begun and will be completed before the wedding
- Collect records (baptismal records, etc.)
- Discuss the Theology of Marriage in more depth, have the couple share what they have learned about the sacramentality of marriage, opportunity for engaged couples AND mentor couples to ask questions. Engaged couple will bring 5 questions and 5 comments from the retreat to this meeting.

### **SESSION THREE (FINAL MEETING) (6-8 WEEKS BEFORE THE WEDDING)**

- Collect certificate of completion for:
  - ✓ Marriage Formation Retreat
  - ✓ NFP Course
  - ✓ Witness to Love Mentor Couple Meetings
- Plan Liturgy
- Plan Rehearsal and schedule opportunity for Confession
- Discussion of Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, Consent, etc. Opportunity to see how their understanding has changed since the first meeting.

*"The formation and continuing support we give to couples entering into matrimony is perhaps the most important project we undertake."*

– Bishop Joseph Strickland