

Marriage Preparation

Information for Engaged Couples

Diocese of Allentown



Office of Marriage and Natural Family Planning
Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization
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www.allentowndiocese.org/marriageprep

Overview of the Process

- ✓ The couple informs the parish of their plans to wed and makes an appointment with the priest or deacon who will prepare them for the sacrament.
- ✓ The priest or deacon has an initial meeting with the couple to become acquainted and determine what needs to be completed to be married in the Church.
- ✓ The couple visits the diocesan website (www.allentowndiocese.org/marriageprep) to register for a diocesan-approved marriage preparation program (One in Christ[®]). Programs are offered monthly - see website for schedule.
- ✓ A FOCCUS[®] Inventory Online Session is created by the Office of Marriage and Family Life Formation when registration is received. The couple has 90 days in which to complete the FOCCUS questionnaire before it expires and should be taken at least six months prior to the wedding date to allow time for proper catechesis and formation.

NOTE: A \$10 fee will be charged by FOCCUS to reactivate an expired questionnaire.

- ✓ The couple takes the FOCCUS[®] Inventory online preferably within two weeks of receiving an email with their login ID and password.
- ✓ The FOCCUS[®] results are emailed to the priest or deacon. At this point, the priest or deacon may deem it necessary to meet with the couple again before they attend the marriage preparation program, and should do so if it would be of value.
- ✓ The couple attends the One in Christ[®] Program.
- ✓ The priest or deacon meets with the couple to discuss FOCCUS[®], to further catechize them, and to administer the Pre-nuptial Inventory.

- ✓ The priest or deacon meets with the couple to plan the wedding liturgy.

Documentation Needed

1. Recently issued annotated baptismal certificate

NOTE: For non-Catholics, if documentary proof is not available, affidavits of parents or trustworthy persons are acceptable.

2. If there has been a prior marriage, a Death Certificate of spouse or a Decree of Nullity of marriage
3. Testimony that party is free to marry
If under 18, any parental objections to the marriage must be disclosed to the priest
4. Certificate of Attendance at a diocesan-approved marriage preparation program (One in Christ[®] or Catholic Engaged Encounter[®] – see website for registration information)

5. Marriage License

If the marriage license is issued in Pennsylvania, applicants can be married anywhere in the state. The license shall not be issued by a licensing officer sooner than seventy-two hours (3 days) after application is made. Once granted, the license is valid for 60 days.

A marriage license shall not be issued to a minor under the age of eighteen unless the parents or legal guardians of the minor accompany the minor to the courthouse.

When applying for a marriage license at the courthouse, both parties must go together with the following items:

- Identification (*birth certificate or driver's license*)
- Social Security card
- Cash (*check with courthouse for amount of fee*)
- Divorce decree or death certificate (*if previously married*)
- Green card or passport (*if not a U.S. citizen*)
- Interpreter, if needed (*one applicant cannot interpret for the other*)

Call the county courthouse for additional information.

Family Planning Resources

The **Couple to Couple League** teaches the art of Natural Family Planning, which is based on an awareness of a woman's fertility through the interpretation of signs in a woman's body that indicate her fertile and infertile times. Couples chart observations to track fertility.

Contact: Joshua and Christine Schulz
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The **Creighton Model FertilityCare™ System** is a system of monitoring gynecologic and reproductive health. Recent scientific advances have shown it to be of assistance in identifying and treating disorders such as subfertility states, ovarian cysts, hormone disorders, endometriosis, miscarriage and PMS. This new science is called Natural Procreative (NaPro) Technology.

Creighton Model FertilityCare™ service providers educate couples about their fertility through a network of specialists in Natural Family Planning/FertilityCare™ education.

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Web Resources

Diocese of Allentown

www.allentowndiocese.org

Catholic Engaged Encounter

www.engagedencounter.org

USCCB Resources

www.foryourmarriage.org

www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/national-pastoral-intititative-for-marriage.cfm

www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/love-and-life/index.cfm

www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/wedding-ceremony

www.marriageuniqueforareason.org

Natural Family Planning Resources

www.naprotechnology.com

www.ccli.org

Pastoral Resources

www.maritalhealing.com

www.integrityrestored.com

www.familylifecenter.net

www.domestic-church.com

www.familyland.org

General Audiences of John Paul II

www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/jp2tbind.htm