



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
*Diocese*  

---

*of*  
*Dallas*

A PASTORAL DIRECTIVE AND  
INSTRUCTION ON MARRIAGE  
PREPARATION

P. O. BOX 190507, DALLAS, TX 75219

JANUARY, 2003

REVISED AUGUST 2007

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
	A. Instruction on Marriage Preparation .....	1
	B. Marriage.....	1
	C. Sacredness of Marriage.....	1
	D. Right to Marry.....	1
	E. Six Month Time Frame.....	2
<b>II.</b>	<b>TO GET MARRIED.....</b>	<b>4</b>
	A. Whose Pastor?.....	4
	B. Freedom to Marry .....	4
	C. Marriage Preparation .....	5
	D. Impediments (natural & divine) to Marriage.....	5
	E. Confirmation.....	7
	F. Wedding Arrangements .....	7
	G. Delay of the Celebration of a Marriage or Denial to Witness the Marriage .....	8
	H. Due Process.....	9
<b>III.</b>	<b>SITUATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.....</b>	<b>10</b>
	A. Interchurch and Interfaith Marriages .....	10
	B. Pregnancy.....	10
	C. Youthfulness .....	11
	D. Cohabitation.....	11
	E. Convalidation.....	11
	F. Prenuptial Agreements.....	12
	G. Second Marriage(s).....	13
<b>IV.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Instruction on Marriage Preparation**

The task for members of the Catholic Church, whether they are seeking to enter into marriage or are assisting those who wish to marry, is to come to a better understanding of marriage.

*Catholic understanding of marriage*

### **B. Marriage**

Often engaged couples are more interested in making plans for their wedding than in working on changing or improving their relationship.

Because the Church upholds the sanctity of marriage as a permanent life-long commitment of fidelity and the core of the family, the ministers of the Church cannot neglect their duty of making careful inquiries to ensure an engaged couple respects and appreciates the commitment they are considering. They must take into account the long-range dimensions of marriage and not focus solely on the limited event of the actual ceremony. Otherwise, the minister also may see the wedding as the only aspect of marriage.

### **C. Sacredness of Marriage**

Marriage is sacred by divine institution. Marriage also is sacred because of the uniqueness of each spouse as God's creation (*Gaudium et spes*, 10 and 13). Each marriage is as unique as each person who enters marriage is unique.

*Marriage as sacrament*

In the case of the marriage between two baptized Christians, the marriage is a sacrament. If only one of the spouses is baptized, holiness still is imparted to both spouses and their children (1 Cor. 7:14).

### **D. Right to Marry**

The 1983 *Code of Canon Law* and the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*<sup>1</sup> hold that all persons can marry who are not prohibited from doing so by law. However, the law does not

*Readiness for marriage*

<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* will be designated 83 CIC and the *Code of Canon Law for Oriental Churches* will be designated CCEO.

presume a readiness for marriage on the part of all who request it. Even if there is no legal obstruction to a couple's right to marry, they need to be assisted in assessing realistically their readiness to marry each other and the demands and potential difficulties that lie ahead.<sup>2</sup>

The immediate responsibility for determining that nothing prohibits a person from marrying is the individual's proper pastor. That would be the pastor of the Catholic party or the pastor of one of the Catholic parties. If the couple receives permission from the proper pastor for another priest or deacon to witness the marriage, the preparation and paperwork can be supervised by that priest or deacon.

The priest, deacon or lay minister who is helping the couple prepare for marriage must meet, in person, with the couple to help in their catechesis for marriage and to discuss the results of their instructional program.

To begin with, the presumption is in favor of a couple being capable of marriage, until the contrary becomes evident. Couples ought to be refused marriage only when they explicitly and formally reject what the Church intends to do in marriage. The Church expects the pastor to be "morally certain" the prospective spouses are capable of a valid marriage and intend such.

Instead of merely being dismissed, couples who clearly are not ready to enter marriage are to be given every assistance and support in order to enter marriage later in a fruitful way. If an impediment necessitates refusal or delay because it cannot be dispensed, this problem must be met head-on and immediately. The couple needs honesty about the situation and the realistic prospect of its resolution.

#### **E. Six Month Time Frame**

A couple should approach the parish at least six months before the anticipated wedding date. This time frame is to accommodate the time needed to complete all the aspects of preparing for marriage. It is not a canonically mandated time frame.

Persons who approach the parish for marriage are to be treated with respect, openness and warmth. This is true whether or not

<sup>2</sup> USCCB, "Norms for Marriage Preparation," 1°. Future reference will be USCCB "Norms".

*Pastor's responsibility*

*Presumption is in favor*

*Caring for couples not ready for marriage*

*Necessity of preparation*

*Not a legal time frame*

*Couples to be treated with respect, openness and warmth*

they are registered in the parish and regardless of their faith development.

The purposes of the initial interview are: to establish rapport with the couple and begin to know them; to explain the marriage preparation process; and to determine freedom to marry according to civil and Church law.

At this first session, an arrangement for the couple's completion of a marriage assessment instrument (FOCCUS in the Diocese of Dallas) should be made. The number of sessions with the priest, deacon or lay minister preparing a couple for marriage will vary from parish to parish.

At some point, a review of the assessment instrument (FOCCUS) is needed. A priest, deacon or lay minister can meet with the couple to review this instrument. When the assessment instrument indicates unresolved issues, special care must be exercised in order to motivate the couple to consider more seriously their readiness to marry at this time or to open them to further assistance in dealing with the problem area.

*Caring for couples not  
ready for marriage*

## II. TO GET MARRIED

### A. Whose Pastor?

The proper pastor of a Catholic party is the pastor of the territorial parish in which that Catholic resides (83CIC cc. 102-107).<sup>3</sup> If the Catholic party belongs to a personal parish (usually an ethnic, ritual or military designation; 83CIC c. 518), the Catholic party can approach his or her personal pastor (83CIC c. 1110) or the pastor in the parish in which he or she resides. In the case of two Catholics who reside in different parishes, the parties can approach either pastor (83CIC c. 1115).

*Pastor of the territorial or personal parish*

Residence in a parish is determined by dwelling within the boundaries of the parish or by belonging to a personal parish. This residence need be for ***only one month before the pastor of that parish is responsible for the couple's marriage*** (83CIC c. 1115). ***Therefore, registration and/or financial contributions may not be used as a prerequisite for approaching the parish for the purpose of arranging a marriage or beginning other sacramental preparation.***<sup>4</sup>

*Parish residence*

If the couple does not live within the parish boundaries, there is no firm obligation for the pastor to allow the wedding in that parish church unless at least one of the parties is registered in the parish.

When a couple resides in a local parish but will be married in another diocese, the preparation usually will take place locally and under the guidance of the Catholic party's pastor. It is possible a couple might be able to complete their preparation for marriage in another diocese under the guidance of the priest or deacon who is to witness the wedding.

*Weddings in a different diocese*

### B. Freedom to Marry

A fundamental law regarding marriage is that each of the parties must be free to marry.<sup>5</sup> An investigation is made to protect both parties and the faith community.

*Protection of both parties and the faith community*

<sup>3</sup> A marriage involving an Eastern Rite Catholic may call for a different arrangement. The Tribunal will assist in determining what authorizations might be needed (CCEO c. 830, §1).

<sup>4</sup> Only in the case of true vagi (the homeless or vagrant) does the diocesan bishop or other local ordinary have responsibility in determining the celebration of a wedding (cc.1071, 1<sup>o</sup> and 1109) and even then it would occur in the parish in which they are physically located (c. 1115)

<sup>5</sup> The couple must be in compliance with appropriate civil laws. USCCB, "Norms," 8<sup>o</sup>.

Each party is asked to produce certain documentation:

- Baptized Catholics should present recently issued annotated baptismal certificates from their churches of baptism.
- Other baptized persons should present baptismal certificates or other official baptismal records from their churches of baptism.
- Both baptized Catholics and other baptized persons should present affidavits from parents or others (older siblings or other relatives) attesting to their freedom to marry.
- Unbaptized persons need furnish only affidavits from parents or others (older siblings or other relatives) attesting to their freedom to marry.

*Documentation*

Thus, from the Church's perspective, the actual preparation and assessment comprise the majority of time and energy before a wedding.

### **C. Marriage Preparation**

A diocesan program is probably the best and simplest means through which the couple can fulfill the requirement to participate in a structured marriage preparation process (e.g. Engaged Encounter, Sponsor Couple, etc.). Some parishes have sufficient resources so they can offer a program parallel to the diocesan programs. The parties also can attend similar programs in other dioceses to which they have access.

*Marriage Preparation  
programs  
(see resources – ii.)*

Couples must participate in some premarital preparation program.

Instruction in Natural Family Planning is available through diocesan-wide programs and at regional training sessions.

*Natural Family  
Planning  
(see resources – iii.)*

### **D. Impediments (natural and divine) to Marriage**

Impediments prohibit the contracting of marriage. If a marriage should be contracted without a dispensation from an impediment, it is invalid.

In those cases in which the impediment is from natural or divine law, the impediment is considered absolute and outside the Church's authority to dispense or remove. In those cases in which the basis of the impediment is from the Church's discipline, a dispensation may be possible. In the case of each dispensation from an impediment, the discretion lies with the diocesan bishop or the Holy See.

The following impediments are outside the Church's power to dispense:

- Previous bond of a valid marriage (ligamen) (83CIC c. 1085, §1; CCEO c. 802, §1)
- Perpetual physical or psychic impotence (83CIC c. 1084, §1; CCEO c. 801, §1)
- Consanguinity among progenitors and siblings (83CIC c. 1091, §§1-2; CCEO c. 808, §§1-2)
- Parent or Sibling by Legal Adoption (83CIC c. 1094; CCEO c. 812)
- Public propriety (parent or sibling of common law or concubinage) (83CIC c. 1093; CCEO c. 810)

The following impediments can be dispensed only by the Apostolic See (the Holy Father)<sup>6</sup>:

- Holy Orders (83CIC c. 1087; CCEO c. 804)
- Public Perpetual vow of chastity (83CIC c. 1088; CCEO c. 805)
- Crime arising from the intentional killing of a spouse (83CIC c. 1090; CCEO c. 807)

The diocesan bishop of Dallas can dispense the following impediment:

- Cousins by blood (First for 83CIC c. 1091, §§2-3; and Second for CCEO c. 808, §3)

The diocesan bishop of Dallas and those whom he has duly authorized can dispense the following impediments:

- Non-baptism of a spouse (disparity of worship) (83CIC c. 1086, §1; CCEO c. 803, §1)

*Impediments outside the local church authority's power to dispense*

*Impediments dispensed only by the Pope*

<sup>6</sup> Canon 1078.

- Spiritual relationship arising from Baptism (CCEO c. 811, §1)
- Age (14 for baptized girl and 16 for baptized boy) (83CIC c. 1083, §1; CCEO c. 800, §1)<sup>7</sup>
- Abduction of the bride (83CIC c. 1089; CCEO c. 806)<sup>8</sup>

All requests for a dispensation are addressed to the diocesan bishop of the Catholic party or to either bishop if both are Catholics. Even in those situations in which a Catholic party is celebrating the wedding in another diocese, a dispensation from an impediment would be granted by his or her own diocesan bishop. In the Diocese of Dallas, the pastor is authorized to dispense from the impediment of non-baptism if the marriage is to occur in the Diocese of Dallas. If the marriage is to occur outside the Diocese of Dallas, all requests for a dispensation from any impediment are sent to the Tribunal.

*Pastor's authority to dispense*

#### **E. Confirmation**

The sacraments of baptism, Eucharist and confirmation are the initiation sacraments. A Catholic might seek the sacrament of matrimony without having received the sacrament of confirmation. The Church encourages such a Catholic to receive the sacrament of confirmation before getting married. Failure to do so, however, is not a cause for denying or delaying a wedding. With the faculty of pastors in the Diocese of Dallas to confirm adults who have not received confirmation, the opportunity for reception of confirmation is enhanced.

#### **F. Wedding Arrangements**

Weddings may be celebrated on any day of the week. However, the Church's calendar does not allow for the celebration of a marriage, even if there will be no Mass, on Ash Wednesday.

*Date*

<sup>7</sup> "Given the high failure rate in marriages of the very young, and given the possibility that even at ages of sixteen and fourteen the parties may not have sufficient discretion of judgment for valid consent, a dispensation from this impediment should be given very rarely and then only for the most serious of reasons," Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, *The Canon Law: Letter and Spirit* (1995), p. 598. Thus, the policy of the Diocese of Dallas and the Ecclesiastical Province of San Antonio does not grant dispensations from this particular impediment.

<sup>8</sup> "Although the local ordinary can dispense from this impediment, since it is not reserved [to the Holy See], it is not easy to see what circumstances would justify him in doing so." *Ibid.*, p. 606.

In this diocese, Catholic weddings are to take place in churches, chapels or regular places of worship. The general norms for liturgical celebrations are to be followed at a wedding liturgy. Consequently, certain days of the year and some liturgical seasons may restrict the selection of readings at a Nuptial Mass (for instance, the Season of Lent). The liturgical books specify whenever there is a restriction.

The wedding of two Catholics should occur during a Mass. However, for a reasonable cause the wedding can be celebrated without Mass. When a Catholic and a person of another faith expression marry, care should be taken to emphasize unity and to minimize division. For this reason the normal practice is for the wedding to be celebrated without a Mass.

*Mass or no Mass*

Any Catholic wedding can be celebrated by a priest or deacon who has authority to do so by law or by delegation (83CIC c.1108 and CCEO c. 828). While a minister from the tradition of each party may be present at the wedding, only one of the ministers can be designated to receive the vows of both parties (83CIC c. 1127, §3 and CCEO c. 839 ).

*Minister receiving the  
vows*

It is possible for the wedding to take place in a church other than a Catholic Church, synagogue, temple, or other place of worship. A Catholic priest or deacon can receive the vows.<sup>9</sup> However, such arrangements/locations require the approval of the diocesan bishop.

*Cultural adaptations*

The Church allows cultural adaptations within the liturgy as long as the adaptations are in keeping with the nature and spirit of the liturgy.

### **G. Delay of the Celebration of a Marriage or Denial to Witness the Marriage**

A wedding can only be delayed or denied for a just and probable cause. If an impediment exists that cannot be dispensed, there is nothing that can be done until the impediment no longer exists. A wedding date cannot be set until the impediment ceases.

*Delay or denial of  
wedding*

If the pastor judges the pending wedding as imprudent and ill-advised due to the probability of invalidity for non-impediment reasons, gentle persuasion is to be used to dissuade a couple from

*Temporary prohibition  
to marry*

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., #157

marrying. Pastoral advice to the couple includes letting them know the reasons for the caution and, if appropriate, assisting them to approach marriage at a later time.

The imposition of a temporary prohibition to marry is not an unjust infringement on the rights of the prospective spouses if it is done under the proper conditions and with the overall welfare of the spouses and the community in mind. Church law obliges pastors to respect the engaged couple, even if that means declining to witness their marriage.

#### **H. Due Process**

When a priest or deacon cannot in good conscience witness a marriage, after consultation with the pastor and other members of the marriage preparation team and after talking personally with the engaged couple, he is to inform the couple of his intention to delay the marriage ceremony.

Because the right to marry derives from the natural law, a process of appeal does exist in order to safeguard the right of a couple to marry and to protect the priest or deacon's right either to delay or to refuse to witness the marriage. An informal resolution is preferable.

Recourse to the Tribunal can be made if all else fails.

*Process of appeal*

### III. SITUATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

If the couple is dealing with religious differences, premarital pregnancy or possible addiction, they deserve more individual attention.

In some cases the Church requires a dispensation or permission from the diocesan bishop through the Tribunal.

*Special circumstances*

#### A. Interchurch and Interfaith Marriages

Interchurch marriages are those between a baptized Catholic and a baptized Christian of another tradition. Interfaith marriages involve a baptized Catholic and someone who never has been baptized in any other faith.

*Marriage between individuals with different faith backgrounds*

The priest, deacon or lay minister must help the engaged couple to respect each other's traditions and faith experiences.

If a Catholic is going to marry an unbaptized person, a dispensation from disparity of worship must be granted (83CIC c. 1086, §2 and CCEO 803). Otherwise, the marriage is invalid. If a Catholic is going to marry a baptized Christian from another church, permission is needed (83CIC c.1124 and CCEO c.813).

Dispensations or permissions are never given without the Catholic party's making promises regarding his or her own practice of the Catholic faith and regarding sharing that Catholic faith with all the children born from this union (83CIC c.1125 and CEO 814). Under the current law, the party who is not a Catholic need make no agreement or sign any promises. However, he or she must be made aware that the Catholic party must do so.

*Promises made by Catholic party*

#### B. Pregnancy

A pregnancy is one of the most difficult situations to address in the context of marriage preparation. The motivation for marriage can become confused because of the sense of urgency. In spite of the press of time and other pressures on the couple and the minister, it is important to slow down the process so the best possible decisions can be made. For this reason, the guidelines for the San Antonio Province and the Diocese of Dallas require a priest, deacon or lay minister to obtain the permission of the diocesan

*Need for special permission to marry*

bishop through the Tribunal before proceeding with a wedding under such circumstances.

In the case of a couple who never intended or planned to marry prior to the pregnancy, marriage most likely is not an appropriate solution to the immediate situation.

If a couple already has set a wedding date or is engaged prior to the pregnancy, marriage is possible. The critical measure is the discernment of the couple's readiness for marriage. The marriage preparation process and the use of the evaluation instrument assist the pastor in determining whether request for permission for the wedding to occur is submitted to the Tribunal.

*Engaged prior to pregnancy*

### **C. Youthfulness**

Special care and concern must be taken with any couple in which one or both parties are under the age of 18 since the Diocese of Dallas rarely grants permission for such marriages.

*Teenagers*

The pastor is not merely to suggest minors postpone their wedding but is to urge that they do so (83CIC c.1072). If the couple rejects the pastor's admonitions, the diocesan bishop through the Tribunal will make the final decision.

### **D. Cohabitation**

Cohabiting couples cannot be refused marriage, but their consciousness should be raised.

### **E. Convalidation**

Couples attempt marriage for all sorts of reasons. However, the Church is not obliged to convalidate each of those marriages without critical review.

Each couple needs to be treated on a case-by-case basis. The reason for the marriage outside the Church likely will suggest which preparation and precautions need to be taken in an individual case.

As far as preparing a couple for convalidation of their civil or common law union, they should be treated as any other couple who wishes to marry in the Church.

As sometimes happens, a couple may not be able to enter fully into the convalidation of their marriage. This situation can arise because one of the spouses (Catholic or not) is not inclined to make the effort required to celebrate a convalidation. At other times, one or both of the parties are unable to appreciate that their marriage is invalid or that they have to make a new act of consent. In such situations, the pastor should approach the Tribunal for guidance.

It is very important for couples in search of regularization of their invalid marriages to spend time in reflection and preparation before entering into marriage in the Church.

The recommended process consists of participation in *Living Your Marriage as a Sacrament* or *Viviendo Su Matrimonio Como Sacramento*, a one day workshop sponsored by the diocesan Office of Marriage Ministries. Incorporated into these two workshops is the use of **REFOCCUS**,<sup>10</sup> an excellent resource tool for marriage enrichment.

In the event a couple is unable to attend the above mentioned workshop, it is the responsibility of the pastor, other priest, deacon, lay minister or sponsor couple to facilitate the **REFOCCUS** process as part of a parish-based convalidation program.

It is particularly important for the pastor, other priest, deacon or lay minister to assist the couple in identifying unresolved issues which may be present in the couple's marriage. If such issues are identified, professional counseling and assistance may be recommended.

#### **F. Prenuptial Agreements**

The legal community has created prenuptial agreements with the primary purpose of protecting or preserving an individual's material wealth.

<sup>10</sup> (Relationship Enrichment Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study)

An engaged couple involved in a prenuptial agreement must submit it to the Tribunal for consideration of its potential effect on the validity of their proposed marriage.<sup>11</sup>

*Must be approved*

### **G. Second Marriage(s)**

Unless a person is bound to a valid marriage, he or she (Catholic or not) is free to marry another who is equally free (Catholic or not). One of the reasons for establishing the freedom of a person to marry is to establish that he or she is not already bound to another in marriage. Therefore, a person who is Catholic or a person who is wishing to marry a Catholic must provide proof no earlier marriage binds or applies to him or her. This proof would come in the following manner:

*Proof that no other marriage binds*

- An affidavit of never having been married previously.
- A certified death certificate of the previous spouse.
- A declaration of invalidity by a court of the Catholic Church, which has been duly ratified or confirmed by a second instance court and for which all stipulations placed by either court have been fulfilled.
- A decree allowing the use of the Pauline Privilege.
- An Apostolic rescript for a Petrine Privilege.
- An Apostolic dispensation from an unconsummated marriage.

***No wedding can be set when there is an unresolved prior bond.***

<sup>11</sup> Joseph B. McGrath, "The Effect of Pre-Nuptial Agreements on the Validity of Marriage," *The Jurist* 53 (1993):385.

---

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Marriage presupposes a special kind of commitment by spouses to each other and to the community. In addition, the marriage of a baptized man and a baptized woman constitutes a sacrament as well and provides the grace that flows from Christ's death and resurrection. Therefore, the couple's preparation for marriage is significant.

The prenuptial investigation must be made with dispatch, but without undue haste, because no firm wedding date can be set without proof of the parties' freedom to enter into marriage.

*Preparation is significant*

---

**V. APPENDIX**

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in accord with the prescriptions of 83CIC c. 1067 and with due regard for 83CIC c. 1068, adopted eight norms to be observed in the preparation of a couple for marriage. These norms became effective for all Latin rite dioceses in the United States on December 1, 2000.

*Norms*

1. The couple should receive appropriate education and pastoral preparation through participation in a marriage preparation program approved by the diocesan bishop;
2. Parties should be questioned as to their freedom to marry;
3. Baptized Catholics should present a recently issued annotated baptismal certificate;
4. Additional documentation (such as affidavits of parents, older siblings and other older relatives) attesting to a Catholic party's freedom to marry should be presented;
5. Baptized non-Catholics should present satisfactory proof of baptism and freedom to marry;
6. Unbaptized persons should present satisfactory proof of freedom to marry;
7. Preparation for marriage should be in conformity with the prescriptions of 83CIC c. 1063 (regarding what must precede marriage) and 83CIC cc. 1064, 1071, 1072, 1086, §2, and 1125, which entrust certain situations to the special care of local ordinaries;
8. Preparation for marriage should be in compliance with appropriate civil laws.

---

## **VI. RESOURCES**

To further assist the preparation process, the following resources are available:

- i.** FOCCUS
- ii.** Marriage Preparation Programs
- iii.** Natural Family Planning

Information regarding Marriage Preparation Programs may be obtained by calling the Office of Marriage Ministries at 214-528-2360 or by visiting web site:

[www.cathdal.org/marriage\\_ministries.htm](http://www.cathdal.org/marriage_ministries.htm)

## **FOCCUS**

### **(Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study**

**FOCCUS** is a self-diagnostic inventory designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. It is not a test or predictor of success or failure in marriage. It is a tool to help couples identify and work through issues before marriage.

**FOCCUS** provides individualized couple feedback on where each party stands regarding topics important to marriage. The results of the inventory point to issues that may need to be addressed.

**FOCCUS** is designed to be used at three levels.

The first level of **FOCCUS** occurs when the individuals read and respond to the **FOCCUS** statements.

The second level of **FOCCUS** occurs with the help of a facilitator. Using the couple report, the facilitator works with the couple to look at patterns in their responses, discuss issues and solve problems.

The third level of **FOCCUS** involves referrals of two kinds. The first referral, specialized assistance, is not needed by every couple. The second referral, to educational or skills-training programs and processes, builds in the awareness couples have after completing the first two levels of **FOCCUS**. These educational and formation processes can be recommended as appropriate.

The **FOCCUS** content covers the range of aspects and elements necessary for a successful marriage. Additional content for special needs is included for dual career, interfaith and cohabiting couples.

**FOCCUS** reflects the values and ideals of marriage as sacred. It is easy to use for both engaged couples and those helping to prepare them for marriage.

It is strongly recommended that all engaged couples complete the **FOCCUS** process, preferably prior to participating in any marriage preparation process.

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROCESSES

***Engaged Encounter Weekend*** – a weekend workshop for couples preparing for or discerning marriage. It is designed to give couples an opportunity to dialogue honestly and intensely about their future life together.

***Encuentro Para Comprometidos*** – Spanish workshop equivalent to above.

***Living Your Marriage as a Sacrament*** – a one day preparation process for couples seeking to validate civil marriages, those that occurred outside the auspices of the Catholic Church and common-law marriages.

***Viviendo Su Matrimonio Como Sacramento*** – Spanish workshop equivalent to above.

***In Faithful Love*** – Parish based couple-to-couple process. This preparation process consists of series of sessions/meetings with trained married couple and engaged or discerning couple that provides a personal approach.

***FOCCUS y Fieles En El Amor*** – Spanish equivalent to above process.

***FOCCUS*** – See information provided on page

***FOCCUS For the Future*** – A summary and planning form for use at the completion of the marriage preparation process.

***FOCCUS Enfoque para el Futuro*** – Inventario y planificación para utilizar después de completar la preparación matrimonial

***REFOCCUS*** – an instrument for marriage enrichment. Especially helpful for couples seeking convalidation.

***REFOCCUS*** – Un Instrumento Para Enriquecer El Matrimonio

For more information regarding the above processes, contact the Office of Marriage Ministries, 214.379-2881 or visit [www.cathdal.org/marriage\\_ministries](http://www.cathdal.org/marriage_ministries)

## NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING CLASSES

*The Couple to Couple League* – [www.dfwnfp.org](http://www.dfwnfp.org). Bill and Mary Kouba 817.370.9193,  
John and Ashley Anderson 214.956.7427

*La Liga de Pareja a Pareja* – [www.dfwnfp.org](http://www.dfwnfp.org). See names above.

*Creighton Model Fertility Care Services* – Holly Baril, FCP. Fertility Care Practitioner.  
Dallascreighton.earthlink.net 469.774.6559

\*\*\*\*\*

### NFP-only PHYSICIANS – DFW Area

Kelly Felty, MD  
Family Practice  
Ellis County Diagnostic Clinic  
411 N. 8<sup>th</sup>. Street  
Midlothian, TX 76065  
972.723.1474

Mary Beth Felty, MD  
Family Practice  
Hope Clinic (indigent clinic)  
411 E. Jefferson  
Waxahachie, TX 75165  
972.923.2440

Matthew and Jill Glick, DO  
Family Practice  
874 Hwy. 243, Suite 108  
Kaufman, TX 75142  
972.932.5522

Daniel P. Mc Donald, MD  
323 N. Bonnie Brae  
Denton, TX 76201  
and  
305 Cimarron Trail, Suite 180  
Irving, TX 75063  
940.484.7100