

ST. ANN MARRIAGE PREP SCHEDULE

MARRIAGE PREPARATION INCLUDES FOUR INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS WITH A PRIEST, DEACON, OR PASTORAL MINISTER AND ONE PRE-CANA EXPERIENCE WITH OTHER COUPLES PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE



SESSION ONE — Building the Relationship

This session introduces the engaged couple to idea of a sacramental marriage, marriage as a call to holiness, the purpose and value of marriage preparation, viewing engagement as a unique time to build a strong foundation for a marriage. It is a time to get to know the couple, to share ones hopes and dreams of marriage, what brings them to request marriage at this point in their relationship, particularly marriage in the Church. Upon leaving, the couple is asked to complete the FOCCUS Inventory online (at home) before the next meeting—this is sent directly to the couple in an electronic format. FOCCUS is aimed at facilitating open and honest communication around issues that are important to building a strong foundation for marriage.

SESSION TWO — FOCCUS: Facilitating Open Couple Communication

This session guides the couple through their responses to the FOCCUS Inventory.

PRE-CANA (or ENGAGED ENCOUNTER) EXPERIENCE

This session is a unique experience that brings together other couples in preparation. The Church of Saint Ann offers Pre-Cana at the parish—see registration flyer. Local parishes also offer Pre-Cana. A different option that meets requirements is Engaged Encounter Weekend. This is sponsored by the Diocese of Trenton, and is offered several times a year in Elberon, N.J. Dates and times for Engaged Encounter and Pre-Cana programs throughout the diocese can be found by going to www.drvc.org/faithformation. Attending one of the following Pre-Cana programs satisfies the requirement to get married in the Church:

- * Parish Pre-Cana Conference (at Saint Ann or other parish)
- * Engaged Encounter Weekend, or Diocesan Pre-Cana, *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage*
- * To Trust Again Remarriage Workshop (for all couples in which one or both parties has a prior marriage)

SESSSION THREE — Continuing Your Journey Toward Marriage

This session reflects on the Pre-Cana experience, looks at the family system that has formed the couple and how that system can impact their new union (couples are asked to read and reflect together on the book, *Growing Yourself Up* by Jenny Brown, MSW, which takes a family systems approach to relationships), and identifies strengths and potential challenges of the couple. It is also a time to make sure that couples have all necessary documentation and/or dispensations needed to marry in the Church.

SESSION FOUR — Planning the Wedding

The focus of this session, completed with the priest or deacon who will be officiating the wedding, is the Wedding Liturgy. It brings together the expectations of the couple and the Catholic rite of marriage. Couples can use the parish resources to guide them—"Wedding Music Planner" with CD, "Getting Married in the Church of St. Ann" (our marriage policy which can be found on the parish website), and *United in Christ: Preparing the Liturgy of the Word at Catholic Weddings*. We suggest scheduling this session no later than one month prior to your wedding date.