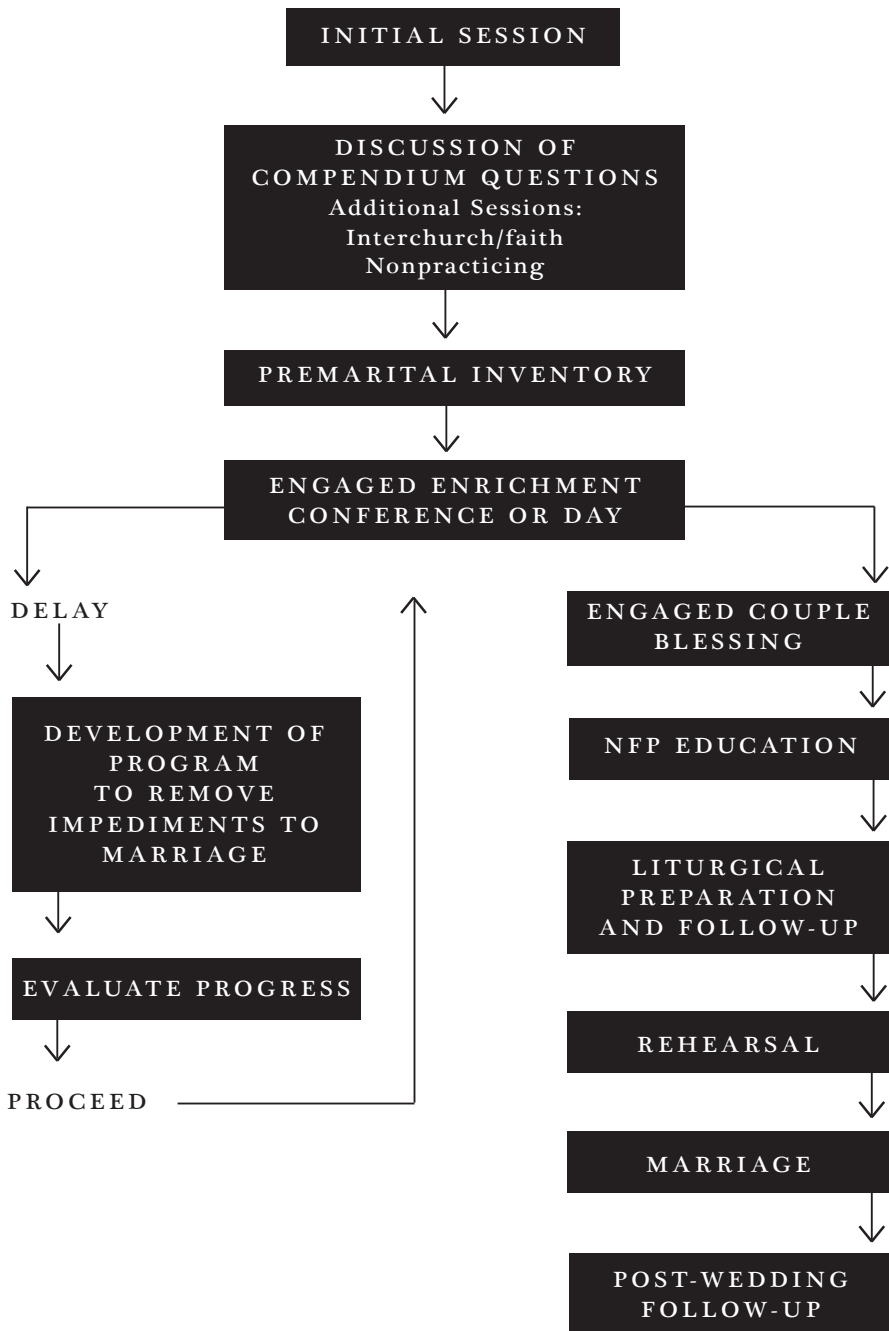


THE MARRIAGE process



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THE FOLLOWING PROCESS IS RECOMMENDED FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION
WITH OPTIMUM CONDITIONS AND NO SPECIAL NEEDS.

① CONTACT I INITIAL SESSION

This meeting is a time to go over the entire marriage preparation experience and to begin the process of completing the necessary forms.

② CONTACT II DISCUSSION OF COMPENDIUM QUESTIONS

Couple meets with priest/deacon/parish director/pastoral minister to discuss theology of marriage and compendium questions.

③ CONTACT III ADMINISTRATION OF PREMARITAL INVENTORY

Additionally, the parish staff/member or marriage preparation team/trained pre-marriage inventory facilitator is the person(s) responsible for arranging an inventory session. A premarital inventory is not a test or an instrument designed to measure the readiness of a couple for marriage. It is a means for allowing the couple, with the assistance of the marriage preparation minister(s), to explore and strengthen their relationship with each other before marriage.

④ CONTACT IV PREMARITAL INVENTORY (FOLLOW-UP)

At this later meeting, the parish member or marriage preparation team member is the responsible party. This meeting is a follow-up session with the engaged couple and the minister(s) in which they focus on the key areas for discussion. In most cases, this requires only one meeting. However when several differences in critical areas are evident, it is appropriate to schedule more follow-up sessions.

⑤ CONTACT V ATTENDANCE AT A MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM

Preparation programs, whether a diocesan conference or parish-based day, enable couples to concentrate more intensely on the many facets of married life so they may be more aware of all the dimensions of marriage. The program helps engaged couples explore and determine the strengths and weaknesses of their relationship in terms of their future life together.

CONTACT VI CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY/ NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATION

This contact is for the purpose of catechizing the couple on the Church's teaching regarding conjugal love and responsible parenting. **All couples receive a general introduction to Married Sexuality and Natural Family Planning in their marriage preparation program.** Further instruction in a particular method should include a course from an NFP provider that is approved by the USCCB.

CONTACT VII LITURGICAL PLANNING AND FOLLOW-UP WITH THE PRIEST/DEACON/PARISH DIRECTOR/PASTORAL MINISTER

The priest/deacon/parish director/pastoral minister is the responsible person for this session and should review the areas already covered by the couple during their preparation. The minister can discuss with the couple any aspects covered by the couple during their preparation. If not already completed, a minister will also spend time taking care of the necessary canonical papers which have been explained in the initial meeting. These papers invite a discussion on the Church's view of marriage. Finally, the minister and couple can devote time to more specific planning of the wedding liturgy.

CONTACT VIII REHEARSAL

The priest/deacon/parish director/pastoral minister or church volunteer will lead this session.

CONTACT IX WEDDING

The priest/deacon is responsible for the wedding ceremony.

CONTACT X POST-WEDDING FOLLOW-UP

A diocesan priest/deacon/parish director/pastoral minister or parish mentor couple, or a facilitator of the diocesan newly-married follow-up program, leads this post-wedding follow-up session – which should be in the first year of marriage, preferably around six months – and deals with expectations, adjustments and building strengths.