

Marriage Preparation

7 Steps to Receive the Sacrament of Marriage in the Archdiocese of Miami

If you've already completed these steps and are looking to register for a Marriage Prep Course, visit www.miamifamilylife.org

Step 1: Contact your parish and arrange to meet with your Priest

When: BEFORE you set a wedding date or begin any other steps

When you become engaged, your first point of contact should be your parish, your home of faith. They are the ones who will guide you through the entire marriage preparation process from start to finish, whether or not you are being married at your home parish. At that time, you will schedule a time to meet and begin walking together on this joyous journey and receive the guidance and assistance you need to complete steps 2-7, keeping in mind they may even have specific recommendations as to which courses or tools listed below are best for the couple to follow. You may also want to take a moment to plan out a timeline for completion of these steps and other wedding arrangements.

Step 2: Take a Premarital Inventory and Evaluation

A Premarital Inventory is a powerful tool to help you get to know each other even more deeply, and reveal relationship strengths so you may capitalize and grow in them while proactively helping identify areas that may need attention before they turn into issues later.

This step is completed through your parish. Therefore, ***be sure you've completed step 1 before you move to this step.***

Your parish will then oversee the process then use the results to help guide your preparation process.

This is a sampling of marriage inventory tools currently approved for use in the Archdiocese of Miami. Keeping in mind that some of the tools are intended for special circumstances, and always with prior parish approval:

1. **Fully Engaged**

This is the golden standard of premarital inventories, and first in the priority list. To complete this inventory, the parish provides the forms needed for the couple to take their questionnaires and once scored, a facilitating couple (or Priest, or Deacon, or Wedding Coordinator) would go over the results with you. (If you are a parish reading this and need to have your facilitators trained on this new enriched inventory, please contact the office of Marriage and Family Life for training assistance and information at famlife@theadom.org.)

2. **The Catholic Couple Checkup**

This inventory is meant for special circumstances where a parish doesn't yet have access to trained Fully Engaged trained facilitators, or decides they will use this inventory in lieu of Fully Engaged when a couple has been approved to receive their marriage preparation classes online due to circumstances that genuinely impede their ability to complete a live marriage preparation course. Once completed, results are automatically scored and a detailed report is produced for the couple to print and bring to their Priest, Deacon, facilitating couple or wedding coordinator for further discussion and mentoring. When using this method, be sure to enter an email address to your Priest or parish so they may receive your results prior to the meeting.

3. **FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Caring Communication Understanding and Study):** This is the old Premarital Inventory in process of being replaced by Fully Engaged. Since Fully Engaged is relatively new, some parishes may still be using FOCCUS as they transition to the new tool, and that would be acceptable. In that case you would also receive the FOCCUS package and mentoring via your parish.

Step 3: Register and Take your Marriage Preparation Course

From live to online, a variety of programs to prepare couples for the Sacrament of Marriage are offered throughout the Archdiocese of Miami in English and Spanish, keeping in mind that the parish may have specific recommendations as to which courses may suit a couple best and should be looked to for advise whenever applicable. Links to dates, locations and registration forms for these courses, in English and Spanish, are available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.miamifamilylife.org. You may also view these events along with more detailed descriptions in the Community Calendar at www.miamiarch.org under the category of “Marriage Preparation”.

Step 4: Natural Family Planning Instruction

Part of a good marriage preparation process is receiving the gift of learning about what some have said may be one of the best kept secret treasures around, Natural Family Planning (NFP). NFP uses great science to plan our families while doing so in accord with God’s plan, and 100% naturally! There is live instruction and local support to answer your questions offered throughout the Archdiocese, as well on demand virtual classes plus plentiful resources on the subject. Couples may access links to a wealth of information from class registration to local support contacts basics on the various NFP methods and much more via our website, www.miamifamilylife.org , by clicking on the “Natural Family Planning” Icon on the upper left hand corner.

Step 5: Sacrament of Reconciliation

Give yourselves the blessing of coming into your special day prepared spiritually by receiving the gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the wellspring of grace it provides. But why wait until just before the wedding when it is there for you always? The Office of Marriage and Family Life will be happy to share resources about this beautiful Sacrament and other marriage topics if desired.

Step 6: Final Meeting(s) with your Priest

As you continue to keep in touch with your parish and working together to prepare your special day, you should meet with the Priest who will be celebrating your wedding 4-6 weeks before the wedding. If you are getting married at a different parish, do keep in close touch with your home parish and embrace any opportunities they may offer for you to receive spiritual guidance and final wedding tips there as well. They are your family of faith!

Step 7: Keep Connected!

Your journey is just beginning, and there are plentiful resources and opportunities available to continue enriching your lives and marriage. By keeping connected and involved, first with your parish and second with any of the other great groups and ministries in the Archdiocese, you tap into one of the greatest resources of all: a family of faith with whom to walk and find mutual inspiration, encouragement, support, while making great new friends in the process! Last but not least, count on our Office of Marriage and Family Life as another support source. We are here to serve you!

We wish you a lifetime of love, happiness, and blessings!

Your Friends in the Office of Family Life

For additional information:

Archdiocese of Miami Office of Marriage and Family Life
famlife@theadom.org // 305-762-1140

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