

Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel

CEDAR KNOLLS, NJ

Wedding Preparation Guidelines

It is important that a couple begin their marriage preparation as soon as possible; there is a lot you will need to do to prepare for your future vocation. This includes the following:

1.) To file the **application** to the diocese, individuals will be asked to provide documents when applicable, showing their religious background and sacraments received. The priest or deacon will advise you accordingly. For example, Romans Catholics will be asked to provide the following documents:

- A recently dated **BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE**.
- A **CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATE** or photocopy of the original.

2.) **Marriage Preparation** Programs (at your earliest convenience, please register for the following programs):

A. FOCCUS INVENTORY: The FOCCUS© Pre-Marriage Inventory is a comprehensive, user-friendly tool for use by couples who are preparing for marriage. The FOCCUS© Inventory is designed to help engaged couples appreciate their unique relationship, learn more about themselves, and discuss topics important to their lifelong marriage. Please contact Deacon Vic and Nancy Lupi to begin the process: 973-538-4642.

B. The Pre Cana Program:

The Diocese of Paterson uses a marriage preparation program called *A Joy Filled Marriage*. The *Joy-Filled Marriage* program advocates for the ingredients needed for a successful marriage. It consists of two parts: *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage*, which discusses the sacramentality of marriage, and *Living a Joy-Filled Marriage*, which approaches "life-skills" through an emphasis on virtue. Either part can be taken first.

1. **"GOD'S PLAN FOR A JOY-FILLED MARRIAGE"**: Held at St. Paul Inside the Walls in Madison, NJ (the Diocesan Evangelization Center), this is a series of talks and discussions based on the "Theology of the Body" that offers an understanding of God's plan for marriage and human sexuality. You will learn about the beauty of marriage and the gifts that husbands and wives are meant to be for one another. You may register for a session at the following website:

<http://www.insidethewalls.org/guide-to-marriagepreparation>

2. **"LIVING A JOY-FILLED MARRIAGE"**: Held at select parishes within the diocese such as Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel. Notre Dame offers this program twice a year, in the Spring and the Fall. The next program will be offered on Saturday, May 13th from 9:30am – 4:40pm.

Living a Joy-Filled Marriage is a virtue-based, life-skills marriage preparation program designed to help engaged couples set patterns of thought and behavior that will ensure a lifelong, joy-filled marriage. This program incorporates a three-stage approach:

- **Learning Stage:** First, couples learn sound principles and a fresh, virtue-based approach to life skills through the narrative of a live presentation.
- **Discuss & Discover Stage:** Through a variety of focused activities, couples discuss their relationships, learn about themselves, and begin applying what they have learned.
- **Plan & Build Stage:** The final stage helps couples to recognize topics they may need to discuss at a later date, to identify shared goals, and to set concrete plans to build a joy-filled marriage. All of this is captured in one planning document, The Marriage Action Plan (MAP).

Register online at your earliest convenience:

- Go to www.ndcarmel.com,
- click on “Ministries”
- select “Pre-Cana.”

For additional information, contact Deacon Ron Forino or his wife Linda at 973-887-2963 or via e-mail at RonForino@aol.com.

- 3.) MUSIC:** Please contact Jim Keefe, our Music Minister (973-538-1358, ext. 109). See attached sheet for details.
- 4.) Obtain your MARRIAGE LICENSE** within 3 weeks prior to the wedding. Apply at the Municipal building where the bride resides. You will need a witness, but no blood test. Please bring your license to the wedding rehearsal.
- 5.) Your REHEARSAL DATE** will be arranged with the presider (it is typically the evening before the wedding).
- 6.) Your wedding presider will help you plan your MASS AND CEREMONY.**
NOTE: Diocesan policy prohibits aisle runners, rice, birdseed and blowing of bubbles.
- 7.) VIDEOGRAPHER/PHOTOGRAPHER/DECORATIONS:** These are arranged by the couple.
- 8.) FEES:** Organist: \$175; Cantor: \$175; Additional musical instrument(s): \$150. each. There is no set fee for our Church. A donation is optional and a personal choice.