ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT
This document includes the five options the engaged couple has to meet the requirements for Component II – Instruction and Communal Experience. The responsible clergy and/or the MPF can utilize this resource to help the couple decide which of the following option’s programs would best serve the engaged couple in their marriage preparation.

OPTION 1
PARISH-BASED MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

It is the pastor’s decision whether or not to use an existing parish-based program to fulfill this marriage preparation component. The following programs are recommended and the most commonly used parish-based programs. Parishes are responsible for everything that their implementation may entail.

JOINED BY GRACE
Description: Engaging, realistic marriage preparation materials based on Church teaching to help engaged couples build strong, life-giving, and lasting unions by inspiring them to welcome God into their marriages more completely. This program emphasizes the connection between marriage and the other six sacraments.

How it works: With a DVD, the leader’s book, and the couple’s book, this program provides parish leaders, mentor couples, and engaged couples a comprehensive, innovative, and up-to-date marriage preparation program.

Recommended for: Newly engaged couples getting married for the first time

Length: Six sessions of about an hour and forty-five minutes each or a weekend retreat format

Language: English and Spanish (books in Spanish, videos with subtitles)

Cost: Starter pack: $75.00 (and sold separately)

More information: www.avemariapress.com/series/joined-by-grace

YOUR MARRIAGE / TU MATRIMONIO
Description: Everything from effective communication to family budgeting, this program opens the couples’ hearts to the meaning and purpose of marriage while teaching them the skills they will need to live as one. Each topic is presented by experts in Catholic marriage and family life.

How it works: The DVD features testimonials from real couples who are passionate about their marriages and eager to share their wisdom with engaged couples. The Chapter Guides connect the video segments and list the key points and activities from the workbook, along with notes, quotes, and prayers.

Recommended for: Any couple preparing for marriage, including couples in special circumstances such as cohabitation, convalidation, military couples, and interfaith marriages

Length: It is adjustable: four to six sessions of two to three hours each, two half-a-day sessions, or a weekend retreat.

Language: English and Spanish

Cost: Starter pack: $94.99

More information: https://www.liguori.org/marriage
OPTION 1 (continued)

PARISH-BASED MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

**BETTER TOGETHER**

*Description:* This is a marriage preparation program that meets couples where they are and equips them with the tools they need to build lasting, happy, and faith-filled marriages.

*How it works:* Engaged couples may complete it online on their own as a couple, one-on-one with a sponsor couple, or in a small group of couples led by a facilitator. It may also be completed in a retreat format led by several couples and clergy. The sessions are highly adaptable to fit within the available time frame of the engaged couple to maximize their experience.

*Recommended for:* Newly engaged couples getting married for the first time

*Length:* Each of the 12 sessions is designed with 60 minutes of content including a short story that shares the insight of real-life experiences pertaining to the topic and a short video sharing wisdom from various presenters. Each session ends with an exercise to be completed by the couple.

*Language:* Videos in English only; guides in English and Spanish.

*Cost:* Fully available for FREE online (leader’s guide, couple’s guide, and videos) with guides available for download on the bottom of the page after each video


**BELOVED/AMADO**

*Description:* From the producers of the renowned SYMBOLON series, this program explores the spiritual and eternal reality behind “I Do.” Beautifully filmed and featuring acclaimed marriage experts, it speaks to the very heart of every future husband and wife, bringing sacramental truth and God-infused love into the everyday challenges of married life.

*How it works:* With the help of the leader’s and participant’s guides, the couple explores and records their progress.

*Recommended for:* Newly engaged couples getting married for the first time

*Length:* It includes six inspiring and informative sessions.

*Language:* English and Spanish

*Cost:* There is no cost for the full program if the parish is subscribed to Formed.org. Otherwise, the cost is $120 for the DVDs, $30 for the leader’s guide, and $20 for the couple’s workbook.

*More information:* [formed.org](http://formed.org) and [https://catholic.market/programs/beloved](https://catholic.market/programs/beloved)
OPTION 2
CATHOLIC ENGAGED ENCOUNTER

Description: The Catholic Engaged Encounter is an experience with other engaged couples where an atmosphere is created in which each couple can concentrate exclusively on one another, free of the tensions, pressures and interruptions of the world. It is designed to give engaged couples the opportunity to discuss their future lives together honestly face-to-face. Engaged Encounter is designed to deepen and enrich the couple's relationship with each other.

Recommended for: Primarily young engaged couples, including interfaith couples and those entering a second marriage. It is probably not the best option for an older couple, and definitely not for troubled couples.

Language: English and Spanish

   English
   » Modality: In-person and virtual
   » More information and registration: https://engagedencounter.com/

   Spanish
   » Modality: In-person and Virtual
   » More information and registration: www.losangelessp.engagedencounter.com/#reservations

OPTION 3
DIOCESAN PRE-CANA CONFERENCE

Description: This is an in-person, one-day experience. Through a series of talks and activities on a variety of topics, engaged couples acquire understanding of the sacrament of marriage and practical tools that will help them strengthen their future relationship and life together.

Recommended for: all engaged couples, particularly for those with very tight schedules.

Length: A Saturday, 9am to 4:30pm

Cost: $50 per couple

Language: English

More information and registration: www.diojeffcity.org/marriage-preparation/pre-cana-registration
OPTION 4
ONLINE MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

These diocesan approved programs cover topics and provide exercises that help engaged couples build strong, life-giving, and lasting unions. These programs vary in modality and length. They are live-streamed or recorded videos, self-directed or directed by a couple/group, with a time limit for completion or at the couple’s own pace. See a few recommendations below:

AGAPE CATHOLIC MARRIAGE PREP PROGRAMS

Description: This program helps couples pass from an intellectual understanding of the faith to actually experiencing God’s love and presence in their daily lives. It makes them to understand that Marriage is a vocation, it is the path they choose to answer to God’s call to help each other become the people God created them to be. The program helps couples enter deeply into the Sacrament of Matrimony and integrate St. John Paul II’s Theology of the Body into their whole life and discover the dignity of each person.

Agape Catholic Marriage Prep offers a variety of online marriage preparation programs that respond to the different needs of each couple.

» Pre-Cana: This a one-on-one program with a certified instructor couple that allows the engaged couple work at their own pace but must completed within 3 months. Online worksheets foster conversation between the couple, and are followed up with personalized feedback from their instructors. Cost is $194 per couple. Available in English, Spanish, and Bilingual.

» Urgent Care Pre-Cana: This is for couples who have less than 4 weeks but at least 10 days to prepare for marriage. The course is the same as the one above and it is dependent on instructors’ availability. The cost is $245 per couple. Available in English and Spanish

» Convalidation Pre-Cana: This program is for couples seeking to validate their marriage in the Catholic Church. The couple will learn about the obligations and benefits and the goods and requirements of the Sacrament of Matrimony while taking time to reflect and discuss how Christ will be at the center of their marriage. The course is a good opportunity for them to revive and rekindle their relationship. A certified instructor couple mentors the couple via the Internet throughout the entire process. It is self-paced, costs $194 per couple, and available in English only.

» Military Pre-Cana: The program is designed with military and deployed personnel in mind. A military certified instructor couple mentors the engaged couple via the Internet throughout the entire process. I tis self-paced, costs is $194 per couple, and available in English only.

Every Agape Catholic Marriage Prep Program provides the couple with a certificate of completion.

More information and registration:
English programs: www.catholicmarriageprep.com/course-info/courses-info
Spanish programs: www.catholicmarriageprep.com/espanol
OPTION 4 (continued)

ONLINE MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

JOY-FILLED MARRIAGE
Description: This program offers a comprehensive approach to marriage preparation that covers the sacramentality and theology of marriage, and the practical life skills necessary to live out the rich Catholic vision of marriage.
This program could also be done as a parish-based program. Leader’s Guides available online.
Recommended for: Newly engaged couples getting married for the first time who have challenging schedules, and/or are separated by distance; for example, military couples
How it works & length: Joy-Filled Marriage is available in three different ways for the convenience and preference of each couple. It is self-paced and the couples receive a certificate of completion.
  » **Online Course:** The couple will watch all session videos, demonstrate an understanding of the material, and complete the online activities required for the completion of the course. Available in English. Cost: $45.95.
  » **Online Course + Couple’s Set:** In addition to the requirements of the online course, the couple’s set will provide additional thought-provoking questions, activities, inspiring quotes, and helpful commentaries that the couple will be able to keep and review. Cost: $54.95.
  » **Online Course + Live Guided Discussion:** In addition to the requirements of the online course, the couple will attend an online 2-hour, group setting live discussion guided by an Ascension-trained married Catholic couple. Engaged couples are provided with careful and attentive guidance through the entire program in English and Spanish. Cost: $199.95.

More information and registration:
English version: [www.ascensionpress.com/collections/joy-filled-marriage](http://www.ascensionpress.com/collections/joy-filled-marriage)

PRE-CANA: LIVING OUR FAITH IN LOVE
Description: This online Catholic marriage preparation program includes newly produced videos featuring a great variety of relatable individuals and couples, filmed at modern, contemporary sets. The presenters encourage the engaged couples to pause the videos throughout, taking some time to have meaningful discussions about their relationship and upcoming married life. The couples receive a certificate of completion when finished.
Recommended for: Newly engaged couples getting married for the first time who have challenging schedules, are separated by distance, and/or with limited alternatives; for example, military couples
Length: Self-directed program covering eight topics that can be completed in 8 hours or at their own pace with no time limit for completion
Cost: $195 per couple
Language: English, Spanish, and with captions in English and Spanish

More information and registration:
English version: [www.themarriagegroup.com/courses/pre-cana](http://www.themarriagegroup.com/courses/pre-cana)
OPTION 5
RETREAT EXPERIENCE

These experiences will provide space for reflection, prayer, and meditation. It is a time spent away from one’s normal life for the purpose of reconnecting and strengthening one’s faith and relationship with God, which at the same time, will positively impact the way the person treats others, particularly those who are close to him/her.

Recommended for: Particularly for older couples, for couples with grown up children, or for couples in any other special situations. The pastor will ultimately decide for which couples this will be the best and most constructive option. The pastor should approve the type of retreat the couple will attend, either together or separately.

CURSILLOS
» English: www.diojeffcity.org/cursillo
» Spanish: www.diojeffcity.org/cursillos-de-cristiandad

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR
» Spanish: www.diojeffcity.org/renovacion-carismatica

WHITE HOUSE JESUIT RETREAT (English and Spanish): www.whitehouseretreat.org

KING’ S HOUSE RETREAT AND RENEWAL CENTER (English): www.kingsretreatcenter.org/

IL RITIRO FRANCISCAN RETREAT CENTER (English): http://www.ilritiro.org/Home

ACTS (English): www.mqpwg.org/ACTS


ANY OTHER RETREAT APPROVED BY THE PASTOR
OTHER RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS/RESOURCES

TOGETHER IN GOD’S LOVE
Program Description: This program uniquely combines cultural perspectives, modern psychology, and Catholic theology as couples prepare to become one in Christ through matrimony.
Modality: DVDs with printed workbook, facilitator guide, & mentoring couple guide
Languages: English and Spanish
Spanish version: https://www.comcenter.com/program/35/Unidos-en-el-Amor-De-Dios/

I DO/SÍ, QUIERO
Program Description: With an original approach and attractive images, this video series show the experiences and advice of over 30 experts from around the globe who bring together the skills of Psychiatry, Psychology, Gynecology, Theology, Canon Law and Matrimonial Ethics. It is supported by the Pontifical Council for the Family for its interest and pastoral value.
Modality: Online
Languages: English and Spanish