

Pre-Marital Preparation

Before one enters into the Sacrament of Matrimony, the Church advises instruction be given to the couple. The Code of Canon Law states that there should be "*personal preparation for entering marriage, so that the spouses are disposed to the holiness and the obligations of their new state*" (CIC can. 1063, 2).

The parish of St. John the Evangelist requires the following steps be taken in marital preparation:

1. The optimum period of time for preparation before the Sacrament of Matrimony is 6 months. This period of time allows the couple to accommodate marital preparation as well as allow for the banns of marriage to be published by the parish.
2. The couple meets initially with the minister of the marriage (priest or deacon). During this initial meeting, the couple may be asked to:
 - a. Fill out the pre-nuptial investigation form (establishing freedom to marry)
 - b. Take the FOCCUS standardized test to assess compatibility.
 - c. Discuss the liturgy and look over guidelines for the Rite of Matrimony.
3. The couple will have further formation in one of the following venues:
 - a. Sessions on Catholic marriage from a "lead couple" in the parish.
 - b. A retreat or weekend intensive concerning marriage given by the Diocese or a Church approved institution
 - c. A personal meeting with a "lead couple" to discuss Catholic marriage

The couple must have the minister of the Sacrament arrange any of the above. Couples are not to enter any of the above without consulting with the minister of the Sacrament.

Fees

There are no fees for couples who are to be married at St. John's and who are prepared through the parish. The cost of materials and travel, however, is the responsibility of the couple. A gift or donation to the "lead couple" is always appreciated but not expected. For couples who are not marrying at St. John's or who are not members of the parish but using the parish resources and/or site as the marrying parish will be assessed a fee of \$150.00. Added materials, travel, lodging, and other incidentals are the responsibility of the couple.