
Getting Married in the Catholic Church

MARRIAGE PREPARATION IN THE DIOCESE OF BROWNSVILLE

STEPS TO THE ALTAR

Step I: A Time for Welcome

Contact your parish and inform yourself about the procedure that your parish follows to celebrate a marriage.

The engaged couple meets with pastor or deacon of their parish 6 to 12 months before desired wedding date to: *(Contact your parish)*

- * Ensure they are eligible to marry according to Civil law and Church law.
- * Arrange for all necessary documents (ex. Baptismal Certificate)
- * Answer FOCCUS Pre-marital questionnaire
- * Obtain information on SPONSOR COUPLE PROGRAM and MARRIAGE PREPARATION RETREATS (ex. Catholic Engaged Encounter, Retiro Pre-Matrimonial, For Better and Forever Retreat, New Life Remarriage Retreat, Convalidation Conference).

Step II: A Parish Wide Ministry

* The engaged couple is assigned to a marriage Sponsor Couple who will meet with them several times (approx. 4 - 10 times) to facilitate their discussion over marriage topics by giving witness through their married life experiences. (Ex. communication, faith, religion, values, finances, etc.)

* The engaged couple will attend the Diocesan Marriage Preparation Retreat recommended by the pastor or deacon.

Step III: Final Meeting with the Pastor

* During this meeting the pastor will have an opportunity to talk with the couple about what they have gained from the marriage preparation process as well as to ensure that all documents have been obtained and all paper work is complete.

* The pastor, deacon, or other marriage preparation minister will help couple plan the liturgy for their wedding.

May the Lord guide you during this time of preparation for a Sacramental Marriage. Our hope and prayer is that the marriage preparation you receive will be a blessing and a guide for you to develop a life long marriage which reflects
"the love and union of Christ and the Church"(CCC 1661).