

Prepared for Marriage?

Whenever we hear of someone becoming engaged, there is a certain excitement as we talk with them. All of the usual questions are asked: When? To whom? Where are you going to live? Are you having a big wedding? Have you ordered your gown, or your tux? What about the flowers, the attendants? There is definitely enthusiasm emanated whenever the bride or groom speak of their forthcoming event.

Engagement should be looked upon as a special vocational state — that time in which the couple is preparing to be married. One of the questions we should also ask the engaged couple is: What type of a preparation program will you be participating in? Just as we prepare and train for our career, which may change several times during our working years, so should we prepare for marriage, the beginning of a vocation which is permanent, lifelong.

The Church wants the couple to be as well prepared for Christian marriage as possible. This is why there's a marriage preparation ministry. Marriage preparation is important. So important, many parishes are developing their own ministry to the engaged under the direction of the Family Life Office. Marriage preparation is designed to assist engaged couples in discovering their attitudes and values as they prepare for marriage in the light of the Gospel Message. The

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Church requires marriage preparation out of love and concern for the couple.

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of their continuous growth which will eventually culminate in marriage. It is advisable that couples experience their preparation approximately six months in advance of their wedding. This allows time to internalize what they have discovered about themselves and their intended well in advance of the hectic final weeks before their wedding.

Engaged Couple Encounter

A weekend away with other engaged couples with plenty of time alone together to plan the marriage. It is designed to give couples planning marriage the opportunity to dialogue honestly and intensively about their prospective lives together. Dates: Feb. 12-14;

March 12-14, 19-21; April 16-18; May 14-16, 28-30; June 11-13, 18-20. The cost is \$70 per couple. A Pre-Cana Certificate is received. For information and reservations contact Linda and Lee Arbegast, (716) 381-8238, or Sandy and Ken Nau, (716) 436-9420.



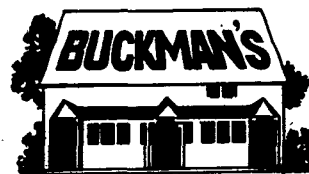
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