

As the wedding season is well underway, there have been changes to the process in which engaged couples prepare for marriage in the Diocese of Paterson. As most of you are aware, Bishop Serratelli promulgated an update to the marriage preparation policy or Pre-Cana in September 2013 that will take effect September 1, 2014.

What does this mean for you?

1. This means, as you advise couples on their marriage preparation journey, the Office of Family Life asks you to inform them that in the Diocese of Paterson, in order for couples (regardless of date of engagement) to meet their Pre-Cana requirements, they are required to take two courses either at the local or diocesan level: a life skills course that focuses on communication, conflict resolution, family of origin, finances, etc., as well as a theology course called *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage* that focuses on the sacrament of marriage, validity of marriage, natural family planning, sexual morality, etc. Both programs produce a well-rounded and comprehensive program for our engaged couples preparing for life-long commitments to one another. A premarital inventory i.e. FOCCUS is still required.
 - a. To help make this process clear to engaged couples, the Office of Family Life has created an easy-to-follow **Guide to Marriage Preparation**. These guides are available for you to print out and have on hand as you meet with engaged couples.
 - b. To further aid in helping engaged couples, *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage* sessions will now be offered in all three counties: Sussex, Passaic and Morris. Registration for this program will now be done online at www.insidethewalls.org under Marriage Preparation.
2. We also ask that all Pre-Cana teams running the life skills program in their parishes be trained in the new life skills program the Diocese is offering by the end of January 2015. Trainings will be available in the Fall on 9/6, 10/25 and 11/18. For more information and to register please visit www.insidethewalls.org/guide-to-marriage-preparation under pastoral resources. To see if your Pre-Cana team has been trained, click [here](#) for parish status.
3. If you would like your Pre-Cana leaders to also get trained in God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage, the training is September 8th and 9th from 6-9pm. The cost for this training is \$35.00 excluding materials. Visit <http://www.insidethewalls.org/marriage-prep> for more details.

For all your Pre-Cana, Post-Cana needs and questions, please visit www.insidethewalls.org/guide-to-marriage-preparation under pastoral resources.

Thank you for your continued support and your role in ministering to engaged couples on the beauty of the Sacrament of Marriage.

God Bless,
Eniola Honsberger
Director of Family Life
Diocese of Paterson