

Dear Pastors,

As the wedding season is always 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 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* 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. 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](http://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 by the end of January 2015. If your Pre-Cana team has not been trained yet, trainings will be available throughout the fall and spring. Please visit [insidethewalls.org/pastoral-resources](http://insidethewalls.org/pastoral-resources).
3. For anyone looking to be trained in **theology/sacramentality**, please visit [insidethewalls.org/pastoral-resources](http://insidethewalls.org/pastoral-resources).

For all your marriage preparation needs, resources and questions, please visit [www.insidethewalls.org/Family-and-Life](http://www.insidethewalls.org/Family-and-Life).

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

God Bless,

Eniola Honsberger

Director of Family Life

Roman Catholic Diocese of Paterson