



*“Living together is an art, a patient, beautiful, fascinating journey. It does not end once you have won each other’s love... Rather, it is precisely there where it begins! This journey of every day has a few rules that can be summed up in three phrases which you already said, phrases which I have already repeated many times to families, and which you have already learned to use among yourselves: “May I; thank you, and I’m sorry.”*

– Pope Francis, Address to Engaged Couples Preparing for Marriage

## MARRIAGE IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Catholics believe that marriage comes as a gift from the hand of God. The Catholic vision of marriage is rooted in Sacred Scripture and is expressed in the teachings and practices of the Church. It has these main elements:

- ◆ Marriage unites a couple in faithful and mutual love.
- ◆ Marriage opens a couple to giving life.
- ◆ Marriage is a way to respond to God’s call to holiness.
- ◆ Marriage calls the couple to be a sign of Christ’s love in the world.

Marriage is a serious and sacred commitment. This union of a man and woman is the basic unit of human society and of the Church. In this unique relationship, two persons make a solemn commitment to be totally for the other as a sacramental sign of God’s love.

### Contact Us

DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE  
PREPARATION PROGRAM

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## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH



# SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM





***"Those who celebrate the sacrament say, "I promise to be true to you, in joy and in sadness, in sickness and in health; I will love you and honour you all the days of my life". At that moment, the couple does not know what will happen, nor what joys and pains await them. They are setting out, like Abraham, on a journey together. And that is what marriage is! Setting out and walking together, hand in hand, putting yourselves in the Lord's powerful hands. Hand in hand, always and for the rest of your lives."***

**- Pope Francis**

## PROGRAM GOAL

The goal of the Diocese of Peterborough's Sacrament of Marriage Preparation Program is to support engaged couples to discern their call to the sacrament of marriage within the Catholic Church by providing information about the ways this sacrament unites a couple in faithful and mutual love; opens a couple to giving life; supports them in responding to God's call to holiness; and calls the couple to be a sign of Christ's love in the world.

## TOPICS

In a Roman Catholic faith-based, welcoming and confidential group setting, couples will have the opportunity to discuss and explore issues such as:

- ◆ Sacrament of Marriage, Spiritual Traditions, Prayer, and Living Faith
- ◆ Spousal Love, Sexuality, Family, Natural Family Planning, Children, and Parenting
- ◆ Communication Skills, Conflict Resolution, Financial and Legal Management, and Development of Resiliency through Challenging Issues.

## PREPARE ENRICH

Couples will be registered to complete an online survey to assess their strengths and growth areas. A trained facilitator will then preview their results and provide feedback to discuss and help the couple understand their results.



Symbols of the Sacrament of Marriage

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Sacrament of Marriage Preparation Program is offered throughout the Diocese of Peterborough. Locations include Peterborough, Bracebridge, Cobourg, Bowmanville and Courtice. Sessions are usually offered on weekends with times and dates to be confirmed upon registration.

To plan for a good Sacrament of Marriage Preparation weekend together, here are some tips:

- Select a weekend date that is free from other commitments on your schedules and think of this as a time of retreat together.
- Pray for God to bless your time of Sacrament of Marriage Preparation and ask for the intercession of St. Mary or other favourite saints.
- Dress comfortably for the weekend.
- Consider bringing a water bottle, your bible, reflections you would like to share with your fiancé(e) or other items to support a good weekend for both of you.
- Come to learn something new; bring a "faith-filled marriage" idea to share, and take time to be still and know God who calls you to the Sacrament of Marriage.

### Cost:

\$250 per couple payable upon submission of registration. Cancellations are subject to a \$25 processing fee. Fee includes supporting program materials; 2 lunches and 2 breaks. If finances pose a concern, please contact the program coordinator.

**For more information**, please email a message with a phone number where you can be reached to:

**Fr. Paul Massel**, Coordinator,  
frpaulmassel@peterboroughdiocese.org; or

**Deirdre Thomas**,  
DeirdreThomas@peterboroughdiocese.org