



# Saint Patrick Cathedral

1118 North Mesa El Paso, TX 79902 915-533-4451

## *Celebration of Marriage: Engaged Couple's Checklist*

Congratulations on your engagement! St. Patrick Cathedral will be happy to help you prepare for your wedding. Use this step-by-step checklist as a guide to prepare for your Catholic wedding:

### **1. You MUST submit an Application for Marriage 6 months to a year before your wedding**

The first step in preparing for your wedding is to fill out an Application for Marriage to submit to the Cathedral Parish Office (915) 533-4451, Monday-Friday 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm. When the application is received by the Cathedral, the Marriage Preparation Coordinator will contact you to assist you.

### **2. Complete the Initial interview or “Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire”**

After filling out an Application for Marriage a Priest will contact you and request additional information before anything else can happen—including setting the wedding date—you will have a face-to-face interview as a couple with your pastor (or the priest or deacon who will witness your marriage).

Fees: The stipend is \$350; and a \$150 deposit is required at the initial interview and registration.

Forms and paperwork: The forms and paperwork you need to provide will vary depending on your situation and the requirements of the diocese. A list of commonly required documents can be found in the document titled “*Wedding Preparation at Cathedral 2022.*”

### **3. The Preparation Process**

Once your information is received our clergy and marriage preparation ministry team will guide you the preparation requirements. The requirements will vary depending on your situation. You must plan for at least six months in advance to prepare for your anticipated wedding date.

Set-up a time for you and your fiance to take a Pre-marriage inventory/ FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study). Each of you will need to complete a FOCCUS inventory as part of the initial marriage preparation process.

After completing your FOCCUS inventory and we receive the results you will be called in to conduct a FOCCUS review with the Pastor/Marriage Prep team. This review is designed to help engaged couples appreciate their unique relationship, learn more about themselves, and discuss topics important to their lifelong marriage with the priest/deacon/ or sponsor couple.

Now you can begin the Marriage Preparation program at Saint Patrick. The marriage preparation classes at Saint Patrick is based on the Catholic Formation Resource titled “*Marriage in the Lord.*” It is not a class or a “one and done” experience. It is a spiritual formation in which you may be asked to participate in a weekend retreat and/or sessions with other couples. During this time in the process you will be expected to provide all the required paperwork and forms and complete at least one of either of these:

1. *Engaged Encounter* weekend and/or
2. *Marriage Preparation* classes at Saint Patrick

#### **4. Finalize the details, complete the Final Interview, and schedule a rehearsal**

The Final interview: Before scheduling your wedding rehearsal—including finalizing the details of your celebration you will have a final interview as a couple with the deacon or wedding coordinator assigned by the Cathedral who will assist you with your rehearsal. The Final interview should be done at least 2 weeks before the wedding and wedding rehearsals are typically held the Thursday before the wedding after 6pm inside the church.

The details and Cathedral guidelines for decorations, flowers, photographers and videographers, or other items etc., inside or outside the church is listed in document “*Wedding Preparation at Cathedral 2022.*”

#### **5. Remember the Marriage License**

It is extremely important that a valid Texas Marriage License must be obtained and given to the parish office at least 72 hours before your scheduled wedding. Upon completion of the preparation process, a waiver for the local marriage license fee (City County Office) is available through the Marriage and Family Life Ministry Office at:

<https://www.elpasodiocese.org/marriage-license-voucher.html>.

Before providing a valid Marriage License be sure to check with the parish office first. The type of Marriage License will vary depending on your situation and the requirements of the diocese. For example, couples who are civilly married require a valid Civil Marriage license to complete the convalidation of the sacrament of marriage through the church. On the other hand, couples who are getting married for the first time require a valid marriage license within 30 days before the wedding date. Always check with the parish office first.