

Natural Family Planning

The Diocese of Biloxi requires all engaged couples to attend Natural Family Planning training as part of their overall marriage preparation program. Training occurs in 2 phases orchestrated by the Priest or Deacon conducting marriage preparation. See Figure 2. Note: It is optimal that the man accompany the woman for all sessions.

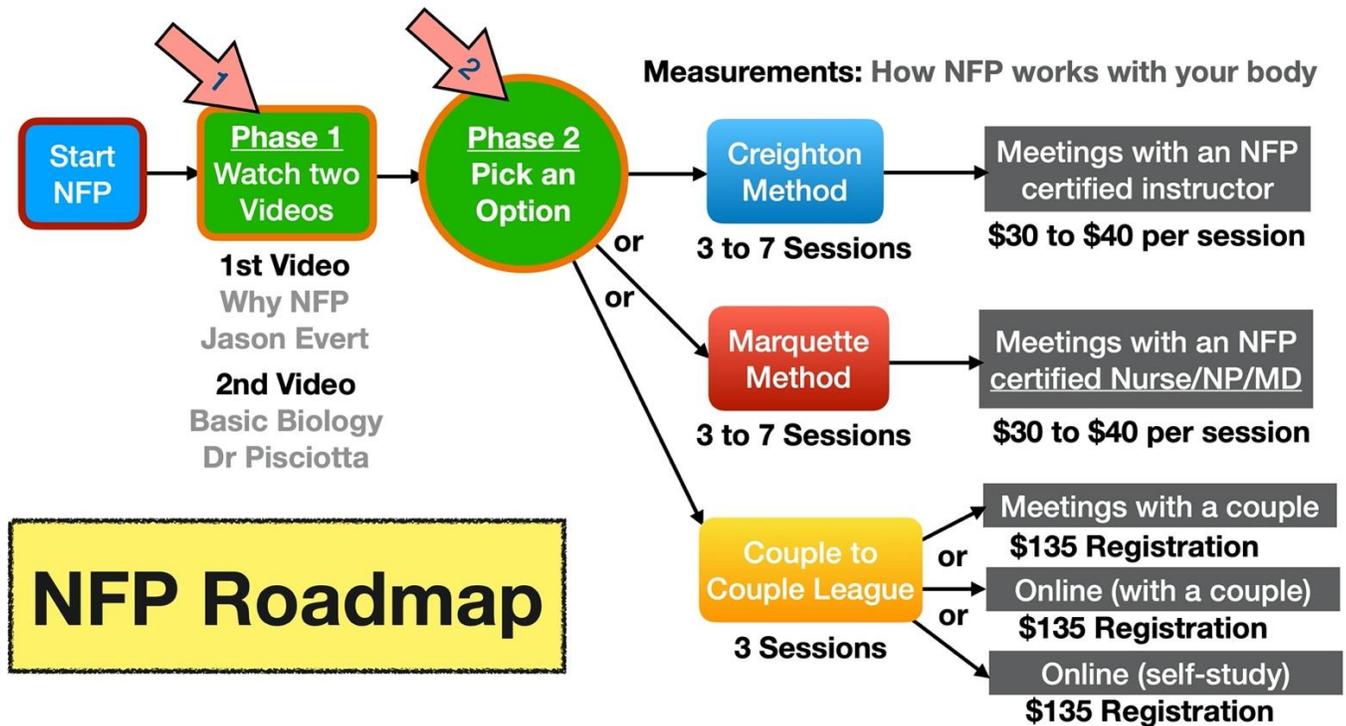


Figure 2

Watch 2 NFP Videos

Phase 1 consists of watching 2 videos (1. Why NFP by Jason Evert and 2. An Overview of Basic Reproductive Biology and NFP Techniques by Dr. Michele Pisciotta). Both videos are available on the diocesan web site under Ministries/Marriage and Family Life/Marriage Preparation/For Engaged Couples

Choose an Option

For Phase 2 the **Priest or Deacon will sign the couple up** for an NFP course where the couple will learn the fundamental reproductive mechanics of the body (what is her menstrual cycle, how to measure the signs of fertility (basal body temperature, cervical mucus viscosity and urine hormone levels)). During the training these signs will be charted daily for 2 to 3 months to establish the fertility window and acquire increased fertility awareness. For accurate establishment of cycles and signs the woman **must be off of birth control** for 2 to 3 months prior because birth control alters fertility signs.

Our diocese provides **3 options** for NFP Training. These 3 options are all approved by the USCCB. They are the Creighton Method; the Marquette Method; and Couple to Couple League. See **Figure 2** for some basics about the options. The priest or deacon will help the couple choose an option. To assist the priest or deacon in helping a couple choose between these 3 NFP options a brief description of each is given below.

The options are:

1.) The **Creighton Method** (Creighton Model Fertility Care™ System) is an *ovulation method*. The ovulation method observes and records the patterns and changes of cervical mucus. It uses standardized teaching and procedures to chart, follow up and evaluate fertility. The estimated time of classes is 3 to 6 months and can be up to one year depending on the regularity of the woman's cycle and their diligence in charting. The following signs of fertility can be charted: cervical mucus, and other minor signs of fertility as determined.

Classes: The first meeting is an introduction and overview. Then there are 2 meetings two weeks apart to review the couple's charting to gain confidence in using the method. The next 2 follow ups are also two weeks apart to review charting results and answer questions. Subsequent meetings are 3 months apart.

The cost for this method is \$50 for materials and approximately \$40-\$45 for each followup meeting.

2.) The **Marquette Method** is a *hormonal monitoring method* that can also incorporate *sympto-thermal methods*. Hormonal monitoring (HM) uses a monitor to test for urinary female hormones. Sympto-thermal method (STM) combines daily waking temperature, changes in cervical fluid, cycle length and other minor

signs of fertility. The combined information from HM and STM are used to determine the stages of fertility. Classes: The estimated time of classes is 3 to 6 months depending on the regularity of the woman's cycle and their diligence in charting. The following signs of fertility can be charted: urine hormone levels; cervical mucus; basal body temperature; cycle length and other minor signs of fertility.

The cost of this method is approximately \$35 per session depending on the trainer and location plus the cost of a Clearblue Fertility Monitor (cost range \$45 to \$250) and Clearblue monitoring strips (~\$39 for 30 strips which is about a 2 month supply).

3.) Couple to Couple League (CCL) focuses on the *sympto-thermal method* (STM) and combines daily waking temperature, changes in cervical fluid, cycle length and other minor signs of fertility to determine the stages of fertility. This is taught by a couple to a couple.

Classes: Classes can be one on one meetings with a trained couple; online with a trained couple; or online self-study. The estimated time of classes is 3 to 6 months depending on the regularity of the woman's cycle and diligence in charting. The following signs of fertility can be charted: cervical mucus, waking temperature, internal cervical exam and menstrual cycle length.

The cost of this method is \$135 total for all classes. Typically this consists of 3 classes spaced 2 weeks apart. Special circumstances may require additional classes.

Sign the couple up with an NFP Trainer

After discussing the NFP options with the couple, the Priest or Deacon then enrolls the couple with an instructor for the chosen option.

Contact Information for NFP Instructors

Please click the link at the bottom of the screen titled:

“Download NFP Instructor Contact Information”

Pastoral Comment on the Grave Nature of using artificial birth control

The Catholic Church guards the sanctity of life from conception until natural death and teaches natural family planning as the method to plan for the timing and growth of your family. The Church does not approve of the use of artificial birth control or contraceptives.

It is desired and encouraged that all couples complete both phase 1 and phase 2 of NFP. In discussions with Bishop Kihneman he spoke of the grave nature of using contraceptives. In response to our "Contraceptive Culture" Bishop Kihneman said that we must help couples form their consciences. We need to show them how to cooperate with God's plan. One day we will all stand before God for the decisions we make. Using Contraceptives is a mortal sin (except in the rare circumstances noted by the USCCB). This point needs to be clearly made at the first session of Phase 2 NFP.