

Called to the Joy of Love:
National Pastoral Framework for Marriage and Family Life Ministry

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Reworked for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Paterson by the
Office of Family Life

Section 1. Prayer and Relationship with Christ

The goal in section one is to foster among the Catholic faithful, in their marriages and families, a living relationship with Jesus Christ by instilling in them a deep appreciation for prayer and the sacramental life.

One way to guide Christian families toward an understanding of their calling in God’s Plan is to help them develop a clear idea of what it means to share together in the prophetic, priestly, and kingly mission of Jesus Christ as a domestic church.

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Youth	Experience the faith as a source of warmth that unites and attracts	Family catechesis on prayer, virtue, lives of the saints, etc.	Family Catechesis Family Catechesis Catechism Class Family Catechesis Prayer App with Youth Content
Young Adult	Acquire the skills needed for the intimate relationships within marriage and family life	Instruction in prayerful discernment for dating	Ignatian Discernment Podcast The Examen Prayer by Fr. Timothy Gallagher Pray, Decide, Don't Worry by Jackie & Bobby Angel Hallow Catholic Prayer & Meditation App Loyola Jesuit Center (Retreat and Spirituality Center) St. Mary's Abbey Discernment Program Spiritual Direction Catholic Prayers Resource 7 Rules for Successful Online Dating Catholic Dating Podcast 4 Tips for Dating in College (As a Catholic) Visio Divina
Engaged	Discern and pray together about how to witness to Christ through their family lives	Scheduled visit to parish families with home blessing.	Book on Couple Prayer How to Pray the Daily Examen for Couples How to Pray Together
Married	Couples to deepen relationship with Christ and each other through prayer	Retreats for spouses/families with confession, spiritual direction, and family consecration Small group family seminars, rosary groups, bible discussion, and couple groups	Book on Couple Prayer How to Pray the Daily Examen for Couples How to Pray Together Spiritual Direction

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Parents	<p>Understand and live the beauty of marriage</p> <p>Develop a spiritual life as a couple and family through individual, couple and family prayer</p>	<p>“Domestic Church Days” with prayer, catechesis, children’s activities, workshops, and family entertainment</p>	<p>What is the Domestic Church?</p> <p>What is the Liturgy of the Domestic Church?</p> <p>Tools for Building a Domestic Church (USCCB)</p> <p>Sacred Rules for the Domestic Church</p> <p>Domestic Church Retreats</p> <p>Catholic Kids Media</p> <p>Help Your Kids Encounter God in Nature (Teaching Catholic Kids Website)</p> <p>Family Prayer Ideas</p> <p>Prayer: Adoration (Grade School)</p> <p>Prayer: Adoration (Teen)</p>

Section 2. Human Formation

To lay a solid foundation for the commitments of marriage, formation may aim to develop character; affective maturity; self-discipline, self-respect, respect for life and respect for others; solidarity and the common good; healthy interdependence; interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills, etc.

Human formation is enhanced by all that is good, true, and beautiful. Anything that contributes to the well-being of the human body and spirit is formative

The family is the primary context for the healthy formation of children, with the father and mother as their primary educators.

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Youth	<p>Educate:</p> <p>On the distinctive gifts and complementarity of masculinity and femininity</p> <p>The dignity of the human person is dependent on one’s creation in the image of God, not external qualities</p>	<p>Offer:</p> <p>Age-appropriate classes, workshops, and resources on the Christian vision of love and human sexuality</p> <p>Age-appropriate curricula for catechesis and Catholic schools that demonstrate reasons for our faith and how a life of faith is founded on a relationship with Christ</p>	<p>Theology of the Body K-5 Program</p> <p>Theology of the Body K-8 Program</p> <p>Theology of the Body K-8 Program</p> <p>Theology of the Body Program for Teens</p> <p>Theology of the Body Book for Teens</p>

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Young Adult	<p>Educate:</p> <p>Christian anthropology (emphasis on gifts of men and women, healthy formation of men and women, and calling to motherhood and fatherhood as foundational and noble)</p>	<p>Offer:</p> <p>Classes, lectures, and online classes for faith formation at all ages, especially for adults</p>	<p>RCIA</p> <p>Catholic Online Content Site: Movies, Programs, Audio, and Books</p> <p>Franciscan University Catechetical Institute Online</p> <p>Catholic Distance University</p> <p>The Bible In A Year Podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz</p> <p>St. Paul Center Blog</p> <p>Emmaus Institute for Biblical Studies</p> <p>Divine Likeness</p> <p>Adult Formation (USCCB)</p> <p>Ascension Press Adult Formation</p> <p>Word on Fire Study Programs</p> <p>Man and Woman He Created Them: Theology of the Body</p> <p>Male and Female He Created Them by Christopher West</p> <p>Gender Fluidity or Complementarity by Dr. Greg Bottaro</p> <p>Masculinity and Femininity Blog</p> <p>Theology of the Body Program</p> <p>Diocese of Paterson Campus Ministry</p> <p>Book on Insights from Love & Responsibility</p>
Engaged	<p>Educate:</p> <p>On the beauty and truth of marriage as a natural institution</p> <p>Sacramentality of Christian marriage</p> <p>Discover the depth of teaching on marriage, family life, and human sexuality with an emphasis on TOB</p>	<p>Offer:</p> <p>Seminars, classes, and resources on the meaning and unique role of marriage and family</p>	<p>Mentor Training for Engaged Couples</p> <p>Diocese of Paterson Life Skills Leader Training</p> <p>Diocesan Marriage Preparation Guide</p> <p>Engaged Encounter Marriage Preparation Retreats</p> <p>Couple Prayer</p> <p>How to Pray the Daily Examen for Couples</p> <p>Jason Evert: Cohabitation - Why is it Bad? What is Oxytocin? Can Porn affect Marriage?</p> <p>Bishop Barron on the Sacrament of Marriage</p> <p>What is the Liturgy of the Domestic Church?</p> <p>Dynamic Catholic Engaged Couple Videos (Multiple Topics)</p> <p>Jackie & Bobby Angel Relationship Videos</p> <p>Relationship Coaching</p> <p>Diocesan Marriage Preparation Guide</p> <p>Marriage: Unique for a Reason</p>

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Married	<p>Educate:</p> <p>Couples to live the mission of marriage in life and love in their domestic church for society, the Church, and the glory of God</p>	<p>Offer:</p> <p>Evangelization and outreach opportunities, including ministries and apostolates who work with those in poverty or suffering</p>	<p>Book on the First Five Years of Marriage</p> <p>Marriage Encounter Marriage Enrichment Retreats</p> <p>Online Married Date Night Series</p> <p>Jackie & Bobby Angel Relationship Videos</p> <p>Marriage Formation Online Course</p> <p>Catholic Couple Checkup</p> <p>Diocese of Paterson One Way Discipleship Formation</p>
Parents	<p>Educate:</p> <p>Christian/Catholic families to understand the nature of the evangelization and service they are called to by conforming their actions to the principles of Catholic social teaching</p>	<p>Offer:</p> <p>Parish Missions</p> <p>Retreats</p> <p>Resources for Catholic parents to help their children live the faith as missionary disciples</p>	<p>Missionary Disciple Formation Book</p> <p>Missionary Disciple Formation Program</p> <p>Catholic Missionary Disciples</p> <p>Living as Missionary Disciples</p> <p>Diocese of Paterson Catholic Charities Volunteer</p> <p>Catholic Social Teaching (Catholic Charities Page)</p> <p>Catholic Social Ethics: The Antidote to Ideology</p> <p>New Jersey Catholic Conference</p> <p>New Jersey Right to Life</p> <p>USCCB Newsroom</p> <p>Catholic Charities USA Advocacy and Social Policy Initiatives</p>

Section 3. Accompanying in Marriage Preparation

To develop pastoral strategies that identify and respond to the realities of married couples, families, and those discerning marriage. Accompaniment can take the form of personal presence, care, and compassion. It may also mean providing support, practical resources, and referrals for professional assistance.

It is primarily through his or her experience of family that a young person absorbs a blueprint regarding interpersonal relationships, love, marriage, and family life. Extended family, friends, parishes, schools, the local community, media, and society all contribute, in varying degrees, to remote preparation for marriage.

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Youth	Educate:	Offer:	Theology of the Body K-5 Program
	On the appreciation/respect the human person Imago Dei, as male/female, and the human body as temple of the Holy Spirit	Robust/age-appropriate curricula in Catholic schools, faith formation classes, and in youth ministry on the following:	Theology of the Body K-8 Program
	On the meaning of love (wanting and doing the good for another in sacrifice as modeled by Jesus)	Christian anthropology Nature of authentic human sexuality Cardinal Virtues Virtues: modesty, chastity Formation of healthy relationships Call to marriage and family life	The Body Matters: A Pre-K -8th TOB
	Lust vs. love Chastity based on state in life Fertility awareness Dignity of same-sex attracted people while explaining disorder of homosexual acts Dignity of those with gender dysphoria while explaining why hormonal/surgical interventions are harmful	Offer age-appropriate resources on above topics for both parents and young people	Theology of the Body for Middle School
	Address pornography and inappropriate sexual behavior	Engage lay associations, ecclesial movements, ministries, and apostolates that advance sound formation of children and youth	"YOU" (Theology of the Body for Teens)
	Address other forms of disrespect for the dignity of the human person		Theology of the Body Book for Teens Matrimony, An Invitation to Live in Love - Teens Marriage: Unique for a Reason

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Young Adult	Educate:	Offer:	Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body Male and Female He Created Them by Christopher West Gender Fluidity or Complementarity Masculinity and Femininity Blog Theology of the Body Program Jason Evert: Lust is Boring Diocese of Paterson Campus Ministry 4 Tips for Dating in College (As a Catholic) 7 "Rules" for Successful Online Dating Dating Well Course Catholic Dating Podcast Book on Insights from Love & Responsibility Catholic Gentlemen Website Blog Marriage: Unique for a Reason
	Young adults to recognize the beauty of God’s Plan for human sexuality	Young Adult and Family Life Ministries coordinate and integrate efforts to:	
	Honor & uphold the institution of marriage as a natural good for society	Ensure continues/suitable accompaniment of the vocational process Possibly include opportunities for mentorship Possibly include opportunities for networks of other vocational support	
	Honor & uphold the institution of marriage for Christians as raised to the dignity of a sacrament	Programs in parishes and Catholic institutions of higher education that:	
	Educate:	Help young adults understand/discern healthy and moral dating behaviors	
	Catechists, teachers in Catholic institutions of higher education, parishes, and campus ministry programs should aim to offer instruction that clearly presents the reasons for the Church’s teaching on human sexuality:	Compare/contrast God’s plan for marriage and family with false contemporary ideas Have curricula in faith formation classes, young adult ministry programs, and Catholic institutions of higher education that address: Human sexuality Nature of marriage Blessing of children	
	Marriage Moral regulation of birth Respect for life		
	Thoroughly address contemporary questions and challenges about the above with loving challenges	Present Church teaching of these topics with biological, psychological, and sociological data	

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Engaged	<p>Educate:</p> <p>Engaged couples on the seriousness of marriage as a covenant of the whole of life</p> <p>A covenant ordered to the good of the spouses and procreation and education of children</p> <p>Educate clergy, pastoral leaders, and mentor/sponsor couples on the art of accompaniment</p>	<p>Offer:</p> <p>Ongoing training/formation for pastoral leaders who assist with marriage preparation: clergy, seminarians, mentor couples, parish staff, and volunteers</p> <p>Natural Family Planning instruction for teacher training</p> <p>Instruction for couple/client education</p> <p>Provide parishes with a diocesan approved list of NFP education options</p> <p>Robust marriage preparation programs that include:</p> <p>Formation principles outlined in Pillar II</p> <p>Nature of marriage as instituted by God</p> <p>Vocation of marriage and its responsibilities</p> <p>How to pray together as a couple</p> <p>Christian spouses as witnesses to the charity that flows from Christ</p> <p>Conjugal chastity as a virtue with an admonition to cohabiting couples</p> <p>Catholic parental responsibility to have their children baptized and raised in the Catholic faith</p> <p>Catholic parental responsibility to build the domestic church as ministers of their home</p> <p>NFP as a tool for respecting/living God’s design for married love while discerning His will for family size</p> <p>Church teaching on reproductive technologies and ethical solutions for infertility</p>	<p>Diocese of Paterson Life Skills Leader Training</p> <p>Diocese of Paterson Marriage Preparation Guide</p> <p>Diocese of Paterson Natural Family Planning</p> <p>Find An NFP Class (USCCB)</p> <p>Accompanying Engaged Couples</p> <p>Abortion Healing Retreats</p> <p>Sisters of Life: Healing After Abortion</p> <p>Catholic Reproduction and Fertility Support</p> <p>Catholic Reproduction and Fertility Support</p> <p>Catholic Financial Management Site</p> <p>Catholic Financial Management Book</p> <p>Liturgy of Domestic Church Life</p> <p>Dynamic Catholic Engaged Couple Videos</p>

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Married	Provide Post-Cana Education for Newly Married Couples on:	Offer Post-Cana programs that include instruction in:	Book on the First Five Years of Marriage
	Vocation of marriage & the call to holiness	Theology of the vocation of marriage	Marriage Enrichment Retreats
	Establishing family prayer	Call to holiness as a married couple	A Marriage Renewal Date Night Series for Couples
	Rituals and traditions in the home	Mentoring programs that pair the newly married with faithful/mature couples	Jackie & Bobby Angel Relationship Videos
	Marital communication skills		Marriage Formation Online Course
	Work-home balance		Married Couple “Check-Up”
	Natural Family Planning	Parish/diocesan small groups for newly married support/faith sharing	Marriage Support
	Train mentor couples with guidance on newly married accompaniment	First anniversary celebrations or retreats for new couples in the parish/diocese	Relationship Coaching
			Marriage Enrichment
			Diocese of Paterson Marriage Enrichment Training

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
Engaged	Educate:	Offer:	Diocese of Paterson Life Skills Leader Training
	Engaged couples on the seriousness of marriage as a covenant of the whole of life	Ongoing training/formation for pastoral leaders who assist with marriage preparation: clergy, seminarians, mentor couples, parish staff, and volunteers	Diocese of Paterson Marriage Preparation Guide
	A covenant ordered to the good of the spouses and procreation and education of children	Natural Family Planning instruction for teacher training	Diocese of Paterson Natural Family Planning
	Educate clergy, pastoral leaders, and mentor/sponsor couples on the art of accompaniment	Instruction for couple/client education	Find An NFP Class (USCCB)
		Provide parishes with a diocesan approved list of NFP education options	Accompanying Engaged Couples
		Robust marriage preparation programs that include:	Abortion Healing Retreats
		Formation principles outlined in Pillar II	Sisters of Life: Healing After Abortion
		Nature of marriage as instituted by God	Catholic Reproduction and Fertility Support
		Vocation of marriage and its responsibilities	Catholic Reproduction and Fertility Support
		How to pray together as a couple	Catholic Financial Management Site
		Christian spouses as witnesses to the charity that flows from Christ	Catholic Financial Management Book
		Conjugal chastity as a virtue with an admonition to cohabiting couples	Liturgy of Domestic Church Life
		Catholic parental responsibility to have their children baptized and raised in the Catholic faith	Dynamic Catholic Engaged Couple Videos

Engaged Cont.	Catholic parental responsibility to build the domestic church as ministers of their home NFP as a tool for respecting/living God’s design for married love while discerning His will for family size Church teaching on reproductive technologies and ethical solutions for infertility
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Section 5. Advocacy

To advance the truths of the human person, marriage, and the family, through advocacy in the public square.

Group	Mission	Support	Resources
All	Educate: The parish community about how the Church’s teaching on marriage and family and the inherent dignity of man and woman--based in natural law--can and ought to inform government policies and laws Families and all the faithful on the Theology of the Body, chastity, and respect for the gift of human sexuality in contrast to false gender theories The education in TOB should include strategies on how to oppose these false theories in public life, schools, media, and the entertainment industry Families, the parish community, and the faithful in the principles of Catholic social teaching on issues that impact the well-being of families, such as poverty, family wages, paid family leave, healthcare, housing, and restorative justice	Offer: Opportunities for education on specific issues coming before local, state, or national governments that impact the Church and individuals with respect to human identity, sexuality, and family life Workshops and trainings for local leaders and the parish community, possibly in collaboration with state Catholic conferences that instruct how to advocate for issues (write secular articles, engage in the public square, lobby government officials, support legislation, etc.)	Catholic Social Teaching Catholic Social Ethics: The Antidote to Ideology The Beacon (Diocese of Paterson Newspaper) New Jersey Catholic Conference New Jersey Right to Life USCCB Newsroom Catholic Charities USA Advocacy and Social Policy Initiatives Action Center: National Council of the US Society of St. Vincent de Paul USCCB: Justice for Immigrants