



# United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth

## Parish Marriage and Family Life Inventory

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In preparation for the release of the forthcoming **National Pastoral Framework for Marriage and Family Life Ministry**, the Secretariat for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has created this **Parish Marriage and Family Life Inventory** to assist your parish in identifying resources that are currently available to couples preparing for marriage, married couples, and families. The inventory mirrors the four pillars of the Pastoral Framework: Prayer and Relationship with Christ, Formation, Accompaniment, and Advocacy.

Please use this inventory to prepare the process of implementing the Pastoral Framework by evaluating the needs in your parish that are the **most significant**. This inventory is specifically for parish staff to assess the services and resources available at the parish. If the services or ministry is diocesan-based and used by your parish, please indicate with \*D for Diocesan.

For any questions concerning this inventory, please contact your Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Director or Julia Dezelski, Assistant Director for Marriage and Family Life at USCCB: [jdezelski@usccb.org](mailto:jdezelski@usccb.org).

## I. Prayer and Relationship with Christ

Programs focused on living the vocation of marriage and family life	Y/N/D*	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Family catechesis on living the vocation of marriage/family life with topics such as prayer, virtue, the lives of the saints, etc.		
Instruction in prayerful discernment for dating couples, engaged couples, married couples, and families		
Celebratory events and days of reflection or formation for couples and families		
Opportunities to volunteer as a family in charitable works, service projects, or forms of evangelization in the community		
Organized pilgrimages for families to a local holy place or shrine		
Other resources		

Programs focused on the Domestic Church	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Days of celebration and formation such as 'Domestic Church Days;' may include prayer, catechesis, children's activities, workshops, and entertainment for the whole family		
Retreats for spouses and/or families with opportunities for confession and spiritual direction; may include an opportunity for a family consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, etc.		

Small group family seminars and rosary groups, Bible discussion, and gatherings of couples for mutual support and enrichment		
Specific preaching offered on appropriate feast days that highlight marriage and family life		
Other resources		

## II. Formation

Efforts to promote <b>HUMAN FORMATION</b>	Y/N/D	Name/Description/Comments
Opportunities to experience and support the fine arts, sciences, and cultural events as a community; activities that support the social and economic well-being of families in the local community		
Pastoral programming that promotes authentic Christian anthropology with an emphasis on the unique gifts of men and women; the healthy formation of men and women and the specific calling to parenthood as a foundational and noble vocation		
Classes, workshops, and resources on authentic human sexuality and the cultivation of chastity which allows for authentic relationships and respect for the gifts of love and life		
Referrals to qualified counselors whose work assists authentic human formation		
Other resources		

Efforts to promote <b>SPIRITUAL FORMATION</b>	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Missions		
Retreats		

Spiritual exercises		
Small groups of <i>lectio divina</i>		
Times of reflection		
Age-appropriate curricula and resources for catechesis, adult faith formation, and Catholic schools that demonstrate reasons for our faith and emphasize how a life of faith is founded on a relationship with Jesus Christ		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to promote INTELLECTUAL FORMATION</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Seminars, classes, and resources on the meaning and unique role of marriage		
Ongoing training for marriage ministers by online courses or in-service sessions		
Opportunities for Catholic young adults to grow in their understanding of the faith and to discover the depth of the Church's teaching on marriage and family		

Opportunities for parents to receive ongoing formation in the faith and God's plan for marriage, family life, and human sexuality		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to promote MISSIONARY FORMATION</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Opportunities for Christian families to participate in evangelization and outreach, including apostolates and service ministries that work with those who experience poverty or suffering		
Resources for Catholic parents to help their children live the faith as missionary disciples		
Training in leadership skills such as active listening, communication, mentoring, pedagogy, or management for ministry leaders		
Support for ecclesial movements and associations that offer forms of service, discipleship, and pastoral resources		
Other resources		

### III. Accompaniment

#### *Before Marriage*

Remote marriage preparation curricula for children and youth (0-18 years old) that includes:	In Catholic Schools (if applicable) Y/N/D	In faith formation classes Y/N/D	In youth ministry Y/N/D	In parish programs Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Christian anthropology					
The nature of authentic human sexuality					
The virtues of modesty and chastity					
The formation of healthy relationships					
The call of marriage and family life					
Age-appropriate resources on the above topics for both parents and young people					
Other resources					

<i>Proximate</i> marriage preparation (19-30 years old) programming that includes:	In faith formation classes	In young adult ministry	In parish programs	Name of Program/Description/Comments
	Y/N/D	Y/N/D	Y/N/D	
Helping young adults understand healthy and moral dating behaviors				
Comparing God's plan for marriage and family with contemporary sexual ideas and behaviors, demonstrating the negative and immoral effects of promiscuous behavior on marriage				
Addressing authentic human sexuality, the nature of marriage, and the blessing of children				
Other resources				

Are there coordinated efforts between young adult ministries and family ministries, "with the aim of ensuring a continuous and suitable accompaniment of the vocational process?" (This may include opportunities for mentorship and networks of other vocational support)	Y/N/D	Description/Comments

Immediate marriage preparation (couples preparing for marriage) that includes:	Y/N/D	Name/Description/Comments
Ongoing training and support for pastoral workers who assist with the preparation of couples for marriage (including clergy,		



seminarians, mentor couples, parish staff, and volunteers)		
Training workshops for married couples or individuals who can provide instruction in Natural Family Planning		
Outreach to engaged couples so they are connected with the local parish community, with the support of a mentor or sponsor couple, who are culturally competent		
Practical and moral support for cohabitating couples to encourage and facilitate a transition into separate housing		
Opportunities of prayer for and with engaged couples (such as the blessing of the engaged, adoration, sacrament of penance, etc.)		
Premarital inventories to identify the needs of the couple and ensure adequate time for conversations, discernment, and follow up, with appropriate referrals if needed		
Other resources		

Parish marriage preparation programs include content on:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
The nature of marriage as instituted by God		
The vocation of marriage and its responsibilities		

How to pray together as a couple		
The role of Christian spouses as witnesses to the charity that flows from Christ		
Living conjugal chastity as a virtue with particular admonition to cohabitating couples		
Responsibility of Catholic parents to have their parents baptized and raise them in the Catholic faith, building their domestic church as ministers of their home		
Natural Family Planning as a tool for respecting and living God's design for married love while discerning God's will together		
Moral teaching of the Church on reproductive technologies and ethical solutions to infertility		
Sensitive issues such as pornography use and addiction, resolving abortion trauma, sexual and domestic abuse and violence, the experience of separation and divorce as a child, etc.		
Practical skills such as communication, financial planning, etc.		
Requirements for marriage in accord with the law of the Church		
Other (please specify)		

*During Marriage*

Efforts to accompany married couples in the first few years that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Post-Cana programs with instruction on the vocation of marriage and the call to holiness as a married couple, and the gift of life, including guidance on ethical solutions to infertility, promotion of adoption and foster care options		
Mentoring programs that pair the newly married with faithful and mature couples for support and direction		
Programs where small groups of the newly married can gather for peer support and faith sharing		
First anniversary celebration or retreat hosted for new couples		
Other resources		

Efforts to promote marriage enrichment that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Like-to-like ministries that meet the ongoing needs of married couples		
Communication and conflict resolution programs		
Parenting programs		

Finance handling and planning programs		
Natural Family Planning classes		
Couples' retreats		
Couples' small groups		
Support for marriage and family focused apostolates, organizations, programs, and resources		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to support married couples in living conjugal chastity that include:</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Educating married couples to avoid and address threats to conjugal chastity such as contraception, pornography, abusive behavior, etc.		
Healing services and other opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation for Catholic married couples		
Small group discussions, workshops, or professionally facilitated sessions on the threats to conjugal chastity, especially pornography		
List of local resources or counseling referrals shared with parishes that address particular situations in accordance with Church teaching		

Other resources		
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Efforts to promote married couples in welcoming new life that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Hosting pro-life events that foster respect for life in the womb		
Collaboration with and support for services that assist difficult pregnancies such as pro-life pregnancy centers and adoption agencies		
A review of all parish programs, ministries, and policies to ensure a consistent awareness and response to the needs of families		
Flexible working arrangements for fathers and mothers who serve the Church		
Affordable daycare or babysitting services and the parish that are compliant with diocesan/eparchial child protection policies		
Family-supportive facilities and/or arrangements that assist the participation of parents with young children at Holy Mass		
Comprehensive lists of trusted: adoption and foster care services; pregnancy centers; medical professionals and counselors dedicated to assisting couples in accordance with Catholic teaching		
Other resources		

Efforts to accompany married couples in crisis include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
A network of mentor couples in the parish who can accompany married couples with prayer, friendship, and other forms of support		
Trained marriage coaches at the parish who can provide professional help to struggling couples		
Opportunities for renewal and retreats offered by apostolates or organizations dedicated to marriage ministry and renewal		
Materials and resources that provide guidance and encouragement to couples in crisis		
Comprehensive list of vetted marriage counselors in the local area		
Collaborative relationships between the parish and counselors		
Other resources		

Efforts to support couples who are separated or divorced that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/ Description/Comments
Ministries that provide pastoral care for those experiencing separation or divorce as well as for children and adult children affected by divorce and separation		
Training sessions for clergy, pastoral workers, and parish staff on how to sensitively respond to the needs of blended families		

Resources that address the various issues involved in separation or divorce, particularly its effects on mental health, children, finances, etc.		
Informational events on the applicable canonical processes		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to support couples who are separated or divorced that include:</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/ Description/Comments</b>
Ministries that provide pastoral care for those experiencing separation or divorce as well as for children and adult children affected by divorce and separation		
Training sessions for clergy, pastoral workers, and parish staff on how to sensitively respond to the needs of blended families		
Resources that address the various issues involved in separation or divorce, particularly its effects on mental health, children, finances, etc.		
Informational events on the applicable canonical processes		
Other resources		

Efforts to support couples seeking convalidation that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/ Description/Comments
Information sessions or adult faith formation classes on the theology and canonical process of convalidation		
Catholic marriage programs, ministries, and resources that support and assist civilly married couples through the convalidation process		
Other resources		



*Families at Every Stage of Life*

Efforts to assist parents as they raise and educate their children that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/ Description/Comments
Family catechesis opportunities tailored to different family sizes and ages		
Appropriate childcare and children's programming at parish events		
Financial assistance for needy families who wish to attend Catholic schools, in collaboration with parish and catholic school administrations		
Effective, engaging, and affordable catechetical programs for children, especially for those attending public schools		
Parish support for the parental choice of homeschooling by providing learning resources to assist them in their home-based education		
Other resources		

Efforts to accompany couples who are unable to conceive a child that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Instruction for couples on Church teaching about the unitive and procreative nature of sexual relations and the moral principles that guide couples to use ethical means of infertility treatments		
Faith formation on the ethics of assisted reproductive technologies, including in-vitro fertilization		

Guidance for couples to discern the many forms of marital fruitfulness such as adoption and foster care		
Pastoral outreach events for couples without children such as special liturgies, prayer events, small faith-sharing groups, and retreats; facilitation of network-building with other couples in the same situation		
List of trusted adoption and foster care services		
List of medical professionals who assist infertile couples in morally acceptable ways according to Church teaching		
List of experts who can offer spiritual direction and emotional counseling in light of Church teaching		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to accompany couples who have lost a family member, especially a child that include:</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Training for pastoral staff to assist grieving parents and family members (e.g., the process of planning the Christian funeral and burial, meals, and financial help, etc.)		
Parish educational events focused on how to cope with death and the stages of grieving		
Opportunities for grieving families to meet other families who have experienced loss for mutual support and comfort		

Comprehensive list of counselors for spiritual and emotional support		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to accompany single adults that include:</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Sponsored events for single adults to encourage fellowship		
Opportunities for vocational discernment and spiritual growth		
Programs and resources to meet the needs of single adults (financial planning, respite care for family members, etc.)		
Other resources		

<b>Efforts to support widows and widowers that include:</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Opportunities for widows and widowers in the parish to meet and gather for mutual support		
Organizations and apostolates that can provide spiritual and moral support to widows and widowers as well as tend to their physical or financial needs, especially if young children are involved		

Other resources		
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Efforts to accompany the elderly that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Opportunities to recognize and honor the elderly and/or grandparents especially by planning intergenerational gatherings where young and old can engage and encounter one another in positive, meaningful ways		
Involvement of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and other volunteers to provide for the various physical, material, and spiritual needs of the elderly		
Activities that involve the elderly and/or grandparents at Catholic schools and religious education/faith formation programs as a way for them to share their knowledge and love of the faith		
Other resources		

Efforts to accompany caregivers of family members that include:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Remembrance in prayer for all those who are caring for the sick, aging, and disabled in the parish community		
Small groups for caregivers to share their experiences and challenges, pray together, and provide mutual support		

Workshops to address caregiving from a faith perspective and its impact on family dynamics and marriage		
Information sessions and resources on Church teaching concerning end of life questions, establishing Advance Directives, and ethical concerns on forms of care		
Other resources		

*Families in Complex or Difficult Situations*

Ministry to families experiencing addictions that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Opportunities for prayer, retreats, or spiritual renewal for those suffering from addictions or their family members		
Instruction for clergy, pastoral workers, and parish staff to recognize the needs of families affected by addictions		
Assist, when possible, the family members, especially children, of those with addictions		
Awareness-raising and educational programs about addictions and how to cope with them		
List of referrals for counselors, treatment facilities, and support groups		
Other resources		

Ministry to families experiencing domestic violence and abuse that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Spiritual and material support for victims/survivors such as retreats, opportunities for prayer, spiritual direction, etc.		
Workshops that discuss Church teaching and include information about the signs of domestic Violence and guidance on how to help, as determined by mandatory reporting laws		

Easily accessible list of contacts for counselors, shelters, and local agencies (e.g., restroom sign)		
Other resources		

<b>Ministry to families with members who have disabilities or chronic illnesses that includes:</b>	<b>Y/N/D</b>	<b>Name of Program/Description/Comments</b>
Catechetical resources and classes that are tailored to the disabled or, when appropriate, the chronically ill; opportunities for prayer, spiritual guidance, and formation, as appropriate		
Opportunities for prayer, spiritual guidance, and formation, as appropriate		
Accessibility and accommodations (physical, sensory, etc.) at church and parish events (e.g., physical access, large-print resources, and sign-language interpretation, if possible)		
Resources to help parishioners be sensitive to the needs of members with disabilities and illness in the community		
List of community-based educational, transitional, medical, and respite support and services		
Other resources		

Ministry to families with members who experience same-sex attraction or sexual identity incongruence that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Workshops, seminars, and/or classes to instruct the parish community on what the Church teaches regarding questions of the dignity of persons and human sexuality		
Ongoing formation opportunities for clergy, pastoral workers, and parish staff that provide instruction and guidance on how to appropriately minister to men and women experiencing same-sex attraction and their families		
Small group workshops or seminars for families to provide practical advice on how to make decisions that may be faced regarding a family member's relationship/s such as how to discuss the distinctions between the person, inclination, and action; establish healthy boundaries; to show and communicate love without affirming behaviors or choices that are contrary to Catholic teaching (e.g., same-sex "marriage"), etc.		
Resources and support groups "noted for their adherence to Church teaching" that explain the Church's pastoral teaching with truth and charity		
List of referrals for counselors with a Catholic perspective who can assist the person experiencing same-sex attraction or the family members		
Other resources		



Ministry to families with incarcerated members that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Spiritual and moral support such as spiritual guidance and dedicated moments of prayer individually or as a parish community		
Support to families, especially children, by facilitating communication and visitation with incarcerated family members		
Opportunities for catechesis and sacramental preparation for returning citizens tailored to their specific needs or situations		
Services to families and returning citizens such as transportation, meals, employment assistance, counseling programs, language classes, and mentoring opportunities		
List of local and community resources for individuals and families affected by incarceration		
Other resources		

Ministry to single parent families that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Programs designed to alleviate the single parent's unique burdens and needs		
Childcare and financial assistance, as needed, to allow single parents to attend parish events		
Half-day or evening retreats tailored to the single parent's needs with childcare provided		
Other resources		

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Ministry to mixed and interreligious marriages and families that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Educational and social events for non-Catholic spouses to learn about the faith		
Ecumenical prayer services and retreats for spouses for the participation of both Catholic and non-Catholic Christian spouses		
Opportunities to meet and support other spouses in similar circumstances in the parish community		
Other resources		

Ministry to intercultural families includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Events like an intercultural celebration or that highlight the many cultures represented in the parish community		
Small circles of families with similar cultural and ethnic backgrounds to encourage friendship and build support		
Incorporation of permissible cultural customs and traditions at liturgical celebrations and parish events		
Other resources		

Ministry to migrant, refugee, and immigrant families that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Introductory sessions for immigrant and refugee families to integrate them into the life of the parish and tend to their sacramental needs		
Catechesis for migrant, refugee, and immigrant engaged and married couples and their families, especially preparation for the reception of the sacraments and to address particular needs		
Material, spiritual, and moral support and resources, such as language tutoring, legal assistance, housing, work opportunities, and schooling for their children		
Other resources		

Ministry to military families that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
Opportunities for catechesis and ongoing faith formation to returning veterans and their families, especially sacramental preparation for children		
Material, spiritual, and moral support and resources for families who have a family member who is deployed as well as for veterans returning to civilian life, their spouses, and their families during the delicate time of transition		
Prayer services or other liturgical moments for veterans who may be dealing with the challenges		

of visible injuries or invisible injuries, such as post-traumatic stress or moral injury		
List of community-based professionals and services for veterans and information about the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA		
Other resources		

## IV. Advocacy

Advancing faithful and sound advocacy for marriage and family life that includes:	Y/N/D	Name of Program/Description/Comments
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 that instruct how to advocate for issues (e.g., how to write secular articles, how to engage in the public square, how to lobby government officials, how to support legislation, etc.)		
Collaboration with state Catholic conferences to offer the above		
Other resources		

## What additional Marriage and Family Resources may still be needed in the parish?

In looking at current resources and outreach to married couples and families, what **gaps** have been identified?

In looking at current resources and outreach to married couples and families, what **opportunities** have been identified for expanding resources/approaches?

Are there identified gaps that the **parish** may be able to fill or opportunities for the parish to expand upon? Should some or most of these gaps be filled by parishes?

Who are the local partners that could help address those gaps or opportunities? (Ministries, organizations, lay ecclesial movements, etc.)

## OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Sharing the information gathered in this inventory will help your diocese better assist you. Please fill out the information below and return this completed form to your Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Director.

### **Parish and Personal Information**

#### **General and Contact Information**

Full Name:
Position Title at the Parish:
Supervisor Name and Title: (If the supervisor is another parish staff person)
Other parish office staff such as NFP Coordinator or Marriage Preparation Coordinator (Full Name and Title):
(Arch)Diocese/Eparchy:
Parish Street Address:
City:
State/Zip:
Office Phone/Fax:
Work Email Address:

Parish/Diocesan website and relevant webpages for MFL ministry:

Is your parish a parish member of the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers (NACFLM)? Yes/No/Unsure

How long have you served in your current position? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

\_\_\_ Less than high school degree

\_\_\_ High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)

\_\_\_ Some college but no degree

\_\_\_ Associate degree

\_\_\_ Bachelor's degree

\_\_\_ Graduate degree (Master's)\*

\_\_\_ Doctorate degree\*

\*Please specify specialization \_\_\_\_\_



What is the total operating budget for marriage and family ministry for your parish? (An estimate should include salaries, stipends, postage, materials, etc.)

\_\_\_ less than \$1,000

\_\_\_ \$1,000 - 4,999

\_\_\_ \$5,000 - 9,999

\_\_\_ \$10,000 - 29,999

\_\_\_ \$30,000 - 49,999

\_\_\_ \$50,000 - 69,999

\_\_\_ \$70,000 +

How much additional program funding is normally generated by all the marriage and family activities (e.g., retreats and program fees, class fees, seminars, materials, etc.)?

\_\_\_ \$0

\_\_\_ \$1 - 999

\_\_\_ \$1,000 - 4,999

\_\_\_ \$5,000 - 9,999

\_\_\_ \$10,000 +