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The Alliance of Catholic Marriage Organisations exists out of a shared desire to be united around our service to the Church and our commitment to offer clearer, more joined-up pathways of support for couples. The Alliance recognises that this commitment is best achieved through the deepening of our relationships not formal structures but with the hope that a more visible display of our unity will be a blessing to the Church and the couples we serve. For more information visit the website SmartLoving is recognised internationally as one of the most comprehensive range of materials for Catholic marriage formation and has the Imprimatur. It may be done face-to-face or as an online Catholic marriage preparation course for engaged couples. The online option means a couple can progress through the course at their own time and pace and will receive a certificate of completion and feedback at the end. There is also an option to be supported throughout the course by a married sponsor couple from within the diocese. Register for the online course here and see the diocesan leaflet. Grounded in the Theology of the Body, SmartLoving honours the unique strengths of men and women called to love and to be loved. Created with multimedia support, the course makes use of a comprehensive and powerful experience which draws from a wealth of research, theology and creativity to provide a compelling and focused approach to building marriages and families that thrive in faith and in love. For more information on all courses: Since 2004, we have helped thousands of couples worldwide prepare for marriage. We offer on-demand, mentor-led online Catholic Marriage Prep courses specifically designed for engaged couples like you. How Our Catholic Marriage Prep Course Works Our online course provides a flexible and comprehensive way to fulfill your Pre-Cana requirement. With personalized mentor guidance, you and your partner can prepare for a holy and lasting marriage. Watch this informative video to learn more about our course. Since we began our mission in 2004, we have helped thousands of couples worldwide. We offer online, on-demand, mentor-led Catholic Marriage Prep courses for engaged couples. How does our Catholic Marriage Prep course work? Timing Standard: A self-paced experience over three months. Urgent Care: For couples with less than four weeks (but at least ten business days) to prepare. Course content remains the same. Selection Whatever your needs, we have a course that fits Newly engaged couples Couples needing convalidation Couples separated by distance Military couples English, Spanish, and French options Bilingual courses Certification The Church requires a Pre-Cana course before marriage. Upon completion, you'll receive a certificate accepted by parishes and dioceses worldwide. We are also listed with the USCCB. The feedback from our instructors was amazing. David and Anna We have nothing but great things to say about this program. Ryan and Gabrielle This course opened our eyes to many things we had not considered before our wedding day. We are so happy we chose catholicmarriageprep.com. Kevin and Sabrina Separated by distance? Challenging schedules? Regular speed or fast-paced? Our course is exactly the same either way, except for the time you wait for feedback from our trained mentor couples to review your completed assignments. As a matter of fact, our convenient courses are available online 24/7 anywhere you have internet access. And, they're approved by dioceses and parishes world-wide. So, what are you waiting for? The Department of Family Apostolate of our Eparchy is conducting Marriage preparation course for those who are getting married. It will be a 3-day residential course. Certificate will be issued at the end of the course to those who are attending in full. Please bring a passport size photo and a copy of the photo page of your passport as well as an introducing letter from the Syro Malabar priest in charge of your parish/mission/proposed mission in the UK. Venue: Savio House, Ingersley Road Ellington SK10 5RW. To reach the place : Nearest Airport: Manchester. Take train to Macclesfield via Manchester Piccadilly station. By Rail: The nearest Railway Station is Macclesfield and Savio House is reachable by taxi (around 15). Or take the bus from the railway station and get down at Bollington near the Cotton Tree Pub and walk around five minutes. Parking is available for those reaching by car. Cost: The expense including accommodation (type: Dormitory) food and study are 250 per person. Booking shall be done by sending 50 online via your bank to our NatWest account number 74503669 Sort code 01-67-14 account name CSMEGB (Catholic Syro Malabar Eparchy of Great Britain) and inform Sr. Noel CMC, the course Secretary by email renaugust19@gmail.com. The balance amount is to be paid on arrival. Arrival : 10.30 am on the first day and Departure at 3.30 pm on the third day. Scheduled dates for 2025 June 30 Monday July 2 Wednesday August 11 Monday 13 Wednesday October 6 Monday 8 Wednesday November 10 Monday 12 Wednesday December 8 Monday 10 Wednesday For enquiries, Sr. Noel CMC Email ID : renaugust19@gmail.com Mobile Number :07780 857120 Following are the dates and venues for the official Southwark diocesan marriage preparation courses being held during 2025. They comply fully with diocesan guidelines. A certificate confirming completion of the course is provided at the end of the course and is recognized worldwide. Courses fill up very quickly so early booking is advisable and reservations can be made by contacting the relevant pastoral area coordinators as listed below. Make sure to quote your full home address, your parish and when and where you are getting married. A fee is payable. Note that, if you cancel less than 10 days before the date of your course, your fee may be forfeit. Before Booking a Marriage Preparation Course... As soon as possible, a Catholic intending to get married must contact the priest or deacon in the parish where they live. That applies whether you attend Mass in that parish or not and regardless of whether the wedding will take place in that parish or elsewhere or abroad. The diocesan policy on marriage states that "at least six months notice of marriage is normally required". But if you are getting married outside the United Kingdom it is advisable to give more notice, ideally nine months. This is to allow preparation to be undertaken by the couple and the required paperwork to be completed. It is the responsibility of the relevant priest or deacon to ensure that all the necessary documentation is in hand and to see that the documents are sent to the place of marriage. To avoid possible complications, no wedding date should be fixed until after the first meeting with the priest or deacon. This is to ensure that you have a full understanding of all of the requirements necessary for celebrating your wedding in the Catholic Church and to prevent you from losing non-refundable costs if the wedding date needs to be changed. This initial visit will determine if both of you are free to marry in the Church and allow the priest or deacon time to guide you through the marriage preparation process. If your wedding is to take place outside the UK it is essential that you contact your local parish priest or deacon before any arrangements are made with a priest or deacon in the other country. This is to allow time for essential documentation to be completed and sent in advance of the wedding. Marriage papers for weddings taking place in other countries travel via the Chancery Office at Archbishop's House in Southwark Diocese to the office of the relevant overseas bishop, before finally being sent to the place of marriage. Hence the need for additional notice, ideally 9-12 months. Dates and Venues 2025 When booking make sure to give your names, address and the date & venue for your wedding July 19 (9/16/18) Dulwich (SE London) September 19/20 Online/Ashford (Kent) October 18 Purley (SW London) November 22 Online (SW London) November 29 (19/26/28) Welling (SE London) Courses in the Kent Pastoral Area include an online session on the Friday evening as well as a face-to-face session all day Saturday. Courses in the SE London Pastoral Area are all held face to face and include sessions on the preceding Wednesday and Friday evenings as well as all day Saturday. Contacts Powerpoint Presentations (used on South West London pastoral area courses) Further Reading Active Listening Attitudes to money 1 of 2 Attitudes to money 2 of 2 Children - our love made flesh Choice in marriage How not to communicate Inter-church marriages Managing money Natural family planning Please just listen to me Responsible parenthood What if love dies... Your need for intimacy Following are the dates and venues for the official Southwark diocesan marriage preparation courses being held during 2025. They comply fully with diocesan guidelines. A certificate confirming completion of the course is provided at the end of the course and is recognized worldwide. Courses fill up very quickly so early booking is advisable and reservations can be made by contacting the relevant pastoral area coordinators as listed below. Make sure to quote your full home address, your parish and when and where you are getting married. A fee is payable. Note that, if you cancel less than 10 days before the date of your course, your fee may be forfeit. Before Booking a Marriage Preparation Course... As soon as possible, a Catholic intending to get married must contact the priest or deacon in the parish where they live. 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Over the course of five weeks we look at: how to recognise and appreciate your differences, the art of communication, making each other feel loved, keeping intimacy alive, shared values and expectations, managing conflict and the wedding ceremony itself. Run online over zoom, a couple from the church lead each session & there is plenty of time for you to discuss things as a couple dont worry, you dont need to share anything with anyone else if you dont want to! There is also time for questions at the end of the session. The course is open to everyone & usually about half the couples who attend dont normally come to church. The course takes place over two days: a Friday evening (7:00pm-9:00pm) and Saturday (10:30am-3:30pm). For dates marked Online only, both Friday and Saturday sessions will take place on Zoom. For dates marked Online/Gillis, the Friday evening session takes place on Zoom and the Saturday session at the Gillis Centre, 100 Strathearn Road, Edinburgh, EH9 1BB). To register for a course, please use the Eventbrite booking page online our course the Eventbrite booking page - in-person courses. If you have any questions about the booking process, please contact chancery.marriage@stanned.org.uk \*Please make sure that you speak to your parish priest here in the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh to discuss your situation before registering for a course. Please also give at least six months notice to your parish priest. Course dates 2/3 May 2025 Marriage Preparation, Online/Gillis Centre 23/24 May 2025 Marriage Preparation, Online/Gillis Centre 19/20 September 2025 Marriage Preparation, Online only 24/25 October 2025 Marriage Preparation, Online/Gillis Centre The Course A marriage preparation course is a requirement for those wishing to be married in the Catholic Church. This course seeks to lead couples to a greater understanding of Gods plan for marriage and his call to live this beautiful vocation as fully, freely and fruitfully as possible. Couples are invited also to reflect on some important aspects of growing and sustaining their relationship including sacraments, prayer, good communication and managing conflict. It also presents the Marriage Rite, emphasising the importance and significance of the vows made in the church, before God, family and friends. Sessions are led by Fr Benedict Iwatt, Vicar Episcopal for Marriage & Families, and presented by clergy and married couples. If you have any issues, please contact Fr Benedict Iwatt at vemarriage@stanned.org.uk Q: We live in the UK but will be getting married in a Church in Italy. Will the certificate and course report be recognised by the Catholic Church overseas? A: Yes. You will get a course report and certificate that should be accepted by your local priest/deacon (where you live) and then you can share that same report and certificate with the priest/deacon who will be your celebrant overseas. Extra information: Usually it will be your local priest/deacon who is responsible for preparing you (supervising you) as you prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage. We call them your "supervisor" and it will be important to have their full name and email address on file because we will ask you to input it when you complete your Final Assessment. The course report and certificate will be sent to them (and to you) via email. We recommend that your supervisor priest/deacon meets with you after you have completed the 9 lessons, to go through your course report and certificate. After that stage you can email the celebrant priest (who is marrying you overseas) letting them know that you have completed your marriage formation. SmartLoving Suggestion: We would suggest that you email both your local parish priest, as well as the priest who will be your celebrant overseas before you start the course and let them know that you will be enrolling in the SmartLoving Engaged online course to prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage. If they want more information about the course, you can send them this link: suggest you email both priests because that way everyone will be on the same page and you should not have any problems. Here is a template email that you can adapt and use: Dear [insert the name of your local parish priest/deacon where you live], My fianc (insert first name, last name) and I (insert your full name), will be getting married overseas in [insert country of wedding] on [insert date, month, year]. We will be leaving [insert name of country where you live] on [insert day, month] to travel for the wedding. We wish to prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage by using the SmartLoving Engaged Online formation course which has ecclesiastical approval and is used by thousands of couples in Australia, USA, UK, and Asia. We would like to ask if you could do us our supervisor, which means that you would be required to meet with us at the end of the course to go through our course report and certificate. If you would like more information about what is involved, please visit this link: you agree to being our supervisor we need your name, email, and phone number to share with SmartLoving. Thank you for considering supporting us as we prepare for marriage, and we look forward to your response. Kind regards, [insert your name and your fiances name]. Should you need to contact us our details are below: [insert your name, email address, phone number]. [insert your fiances name, email address, and phone number. SmartLoving Suggestion: We would also suggest that you send an email to the overseas celebrant priest. Dear [insert name of the parish priest overseas], Thank you for being our wedding celebrant! We are being prepared for the Sacrament of Marriage locally under the supervision of [insert name of parish priest/deacon] who ministers at [insert local parish name, suburb, country] and who we have copied into this email. We are preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage by completing the SmartLoving Engaged Online formation course which has ecclesiastical approval and is used by thousands of couples in Australia, USA, UK and Asia. If you would like more information about the course visit: we have completed the course, we will send you (via email) our course report and certificate which will prove our participation in the marriage preparation course. We look forward to you being our celebrant on [insert wedding day, month, year] in your parish [insert overseas parish name, suburb, country]. Kind regards, [insert your name and your fiances name]. Should you need to contact us our details are below: [insert your name, email address, phone number]. [insert your fiances name, email address, and phone number. Need an approved Catholic course? Need flexibility? In a long-distance relationship or a shift worker? Want an experience to take your relationships to the next level? Engaged Online gives you the best Catholic marriage preparation course on the market. Presented by trained married couples, the course is made up of 6 modules, delivered face-to-face at home or in parish groups. Each session includes private couple sharing and innovative tools to help form good relationship habits. Includes participant workbooks with activities, insightful articles and stories from other couples. For parish information on face-to-face and group courses in the UK, and to purchase workbooks and marketing materials, search here for contact details of our UK coordinators who will be able to give you additional information. Why do we have to do marriage preparation? Marriage is a significant step in life and it is not something to be entered into lightly. Unfortunately, in our overly materialistic culture, the pressure in the engagement period is more about planning an elaborate (and expensive) party rather than taking the time to prepare yourselves for being married to someone for the rest of your life. In addition, Catholic marriage (or Matrimony) comes with additional obligations. Its important that you understand these before you commit to them. Marriage preparation is a process to help you and your fianc prepare for married life. Just like having a healthy diet helps prevent you getting sick, and recover more quickly when you do, Marriage Prep is the same for your relationship. Studies have shown that couples who do good quality marriage preparation have a lower rate of divorce and better relationship resilience when hard times inevitably come. SmartLoving Engaged has been working with engaged couples for over a decade and we have refined all our insights to bring you a comprehensive course that gives you and your fianc a safe space to ask the important questions and put your love on a solid foundation. Will we get a certificate? Yes. Your final documentation includes a certificate and a feedback report for your celebrant (or the person supervising your preparation if you are marrying overseas). Will my priest/deacon accept this course? SmartLoving Engaged has been approved for use in dioceses around the world for over 10 years including throughout Australia, New Zealand, UK, parts of the USA and Asia and others. We are also in the process of obtaining an Imprimatur for the course. If your celebrant has concerns about the quality or efficacy of SmartLoving Engaged, please give us his contact details and we will personally reassure him. My fianc is not Catholic - is this a problem? The course includes powerful insights and frameworks from the field of relationship science that apply to any couple regardless of their religious background or practice. The course is also designed to prepare you for Catholic marriage so the course includes Catholic theology and Sacramental preparation. The wisdom of Pope John Paul II and his Theology of the Body is frequently referenced throughout the course and the theology is up to date and highly relevant to contemporary couples. Many non-catholic participants have reported that they found the course extremely valuable and did not feel pressured or excluded in any way by the Catholic material. Most affirm that they value having the insight into their fiancés faith background, and some express interest in exploring the Catholic faith further. We've been living together for some time - is this course necessary? Absolutely! Were sure you know couples married for many years whose relationship has broken down. While the reasons are generally complex, one thing is certain: living together does not mean that a couple has everything worked out! When a couple marries in the Catholic church, a course is mandated for several significant reasons: The first is to provide the sacramental and spiritual formation to prepare you for the important church ritual in which you are about to participate. The second is to inform you fully of the commitment you are undertaking so that you can make an informed decision to participate without reservation. Thirdly, as Catholic marriage is considered permanent and unbreakable before God, the course is designed to equip you with insights and skills to help you be successful in your marriage. It would be completely negligent of us to let you make a commitment in a Catholic wedding service without fully informing you of the requirements and training you to fulfill them. While we understand that many engaged couples find the preparation course onerous, we also know that looking back, you will appreciate its benefits and be grateful for the time you spent with us. Whats the difference between the face-to-face and online course? Both formats cover the same content. The advantage of the face-to-face mentoring format is that you get a dedicated married couple who are focused on you and your fianc over the duration of the course. They welcome you into their home and go through the course with you, using discussion points along the way. It brings the reality of marriage out in front of you through the mentor couple and their family. Face-to-face group courses give you exposure to other engaged couples in your area. Having others to do the course alongside you can be an encouragement to participate more fully, and assists in building community networks. The online course allows you to work at your own pace and on your own schedule. It offers two tracks: celebrant supervised (self-directed) and parish mentor (where a married couple accompanies you through the course). The main difference between face-to-face mentoring and parish mentoring with the online course, is that parish mentors are usually doing the course for the first time themselves. Is there any group sharing? We want to assure you that your privacy is always respected regardless of the course format you choose. All activities are designed as individual reflections or couple sharings. While some formats provide opportunities for group discussion, no one is ever obliged to share personal information about their relationship unless they so desire. Any discussion that takes place between mentors and engaged are considered confidential. What if we fail the course? Dont worry! You cant fail the course and our goal is to equip you for success in your marriage so were committed to seeing you flourish. Provided that you attend all the sessions and make a reasonable effort to participate in the activities, you will get a certificate at the end of the course for your celebrant. Since 2004, weve helped thousands of couples worldwide prepare for marriage. We offer on-demand, mentor-led online Catholic Marriage Prep courses specifically designed for engaged couples like you. How Our Catholic Marriage Prep Course Works Our online course provides a flexible and comprehensive way to fulfill your Pre-Cana requirement. With personalized mentor guidance, you and your partner can prepare for a holy and lasting marriage. Watch this informative video to learn more about our course. Since we began our mission in 2004, we have helped thousands of couples worldwide. We offer online, on-demand, mentor-led Catholic Marriage Prep courses for engaged couples. How does our Catholic Marriage Prep course work? Timing Standard: A self-paced experience over three months. Urgent Care: For couples with less than four weeks (but at least ten business days) to prepare. Course content remains the same. Selection Whatever your needs, we have a course that fits Newly engaged couples Couples needing convalidation Couples separated by distance Military couples English, Spanish, and French options Bilingual courses Certification The Church requires a Pre-Cana course before marriage. 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Search for courses and book your place here if you plan to get married within a Catholic Church, we can provide the certificate of attendance that you will need in order to show that you have taken the time and effort to attend marriage preparation. Our Preparing Together course is designed to complement the preparation and accompaniment you will receive within your local parish. In addition to the material we share with you about building and sustaining relationships, we'll also explore with you the importance and significance of the vows you make in Church, before God, your family and friends, in terms of your religious and public commitment to each other. You may find A Guide to Getting Married within the Catholic Church helpful (produced in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Cardiff) and the version produced in collaboration with Wrexham Diocese A Guide to Getting Married within the Catholic Church as well as these resources from the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. If you would prefer to have a tailored marriage preparation course for your unique relationship or undertake your preparation outside of a group setting, we can recommend FOCUS and would highly recommend undertaking both marriage preparation courses to benefit from each approach. Guidance for couples marrying within the Catholic Church It is worth bearing in mind that Canon Law normally requires a minimum of six months notification for marriage, though some dioceses will require longer. This guidance is designed to provide a brief overview of the process and to avoid problems further down the line. Firstly, go and see the priest where you live before you make any arrangements for the wedding reception. He will explain what you have to do, the paperwork that needs to be completed and agree the marriage preparation resource (i.e. Marriage Care). Secondly, your priest will ask you to obtain a copy of your baptismal certificate that is not more than 6 months old and a copy of your confirmation certificate. He will want the same from your other half if he/she is a baptised Christian. In addition, many dioceses now require evidence of freedom to marry in the form of a Statutory Declaration of Freedom (the form is usually supplied by the priest). You and your partner will also have to go to the register office to get a certificate to allow you to get married. You need to complete the Marriage Schedule. It is a couples responsibility to obtain the form from the local Register Office where they are to marry and give it to the priest (Authorised Person), to enable him to marry them both religiously and civilly. The priest completes it and returns it to the Register Office post-marriage and the Register Office now provide the marriage certificate. Marrying overseas: If the wedding is to take place outside the United Kingdom it is best to contact your local parish priest here in the UK before any arrangements are made with a priest in the other country. This is to allow time for the Church documentation to be completed and sent in advance of the wedding. Marriage papers for weddings taking place in another country travel via the chancery office in each diocese, then on to the office of the overseas bishop, before finally being sent to the place of marriage. You should allow at least three months for this. From completion of marriage preparation and all documentation, but the Church in some countries will require longer. We are very pleased to have received an imprimatur from Cardinal Vincent Nichols for our Preparing Together/Preparing Together Anywhere for couples marrying in the Catholic Church course. Our marriage preparation day, Preparing Together, is a one-day workshop for groups of up to 12 couples. It is normally held on Saturdays (or over a series of evenings), organised by our local centres across England and Wales. Alternatively the course is also held over a series of events via zoom. Enjoyable, revealing and rewarding, you'll be encouraged to consider things you may not even be aware you need to think about. All in a safe, supportive environment, where no one is forced to share anything they are uncomfortable with. During the day, you will learn how your relationship grows when you deal with important issues in a constructive and loving way. We cover a lot of ground, including: the importance of talking and listening how to negotiate and solve problems what you expect from your relationshipp the way your family and childhood influence how you interact with each other. All to help you cultivate a fulfilling life-long relationship. Who runs the day? The day is led by facilitators selected and trained by Marriage Care to the highest standards. They have a wealth of experience in working with couples and receive regular ongoing training and support. Find out more here Who can attend? Any couple marrying in the Catholic Church can attend. What do couples say about the day? You dont know you need it until you have attended! Incredibly useful. I will take a lot from this day into our future life together. Everybody participated but there was never any pressure. It was relaxed, informal and fun. Made me think more deeply about our relationship, the commitment we are making, how we can cope with issues that might test our relationship and how getting married in a Catholic church will make our special day even more special. I am more aware now of what marriage actually is and how important good communication is. Also helped me see where God is placed in my relationship. It gave me an insight into how I deal with conflict and I learned that I can change how I react. Every couple should attend one of these courses it was surprisingly helpful. Is there a fee? Marriage Care is a registered charity and all our services are delivered by trained volunteers. We charge a fixed fee for our Preparing Together course that contributes to the costs of the day, the resources you are given and the behind the scenes facilitator training and preparation. The price you will need to pay is indicated as part of the online booking process. If you are facing financial difficulties and might struggle to pay the fee proposed you can email us at appointments@marriagecare.org.uk to explore alternative arrangements. Were here to support you. My partner isnt keen on doing the day. What can I say to persuade him/her to come along? Find the answer to this and other frequently asked questions on our Marriage preparation FAQs page.

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