Correlation of *Catholic Engaged Encounter* with

Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation



Brief Synopsis of Program:

Catholic Engaged Encounter is an in-depth, private, personal, marriage preparation experience within the context of Catholic faith and values. Catholic Engaged Encounter is a weekend retreat away with other engaged couples with plenty of time alone together to dialogue honestly and intensively about their prospective lives together-- their strengths and weaknesses, desires, ambitions, goals, their attitudes about money, sex, children, family, their role in the church and society--in a face to face way. The weekend is open to any engaged couple wanting to prepare for a deeper, more meaningful life together in a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church according to its Church law.

Engaged Encounter has been our main service provided to our archdiocesan community for marriage preparation since this office was created. Every year we serve with this ministry more than 400 couples in our archdiocese. This weekend is designed to provide our engaged couples the necessary tools to remain in Christ’s presence as couple and when the children come, as a family.

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| Catechetical Framework | Family Life Office |
| MA 1.1.3  The vocation of the Christian faithful gives witness to relationship with Jesus.  MA 5.2.10  The human family, originally “one,” is restored and reconciled in Christ.  MA 5.3.2  The home is the first school of Christian life and parents, by word and example, are the first heralds of faith to their children. | A family begins with a couple getting into a permanent commitment in marriage. As a result of their love, we get children forming a family. One of the key elements in a family is how parents are an example for their children. We could say many things to form our children but they will follow our example. We need to model in our lives what we believe, if we do it right, then our children will do it too. In Engaged Encounter they receive the main aspects to become a Christ centered marriage. |
| MA 2.2.46  The Sacrament of Matrimony is based on the consent of the spouses, which must be an act of the will, free of coercion or external threats. The spousal promise of faithful, unconditional love fosters openness to the fruits that flow from marriage: charity, the common work of caring for creation, self-sacrifice, hospitality, patience, forgiveness, tenderness, and the temporal, moral, and spiritual formation of children.  MA 3.3.43  Sanctifying grace is the gratuitous gift of his life that God makes to all people through Jesus Christ; it is infused by the Holy Spirit into the soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it.  MA 5.3.5  The Church offers married men and women assurances that, with the help of God’s grace, it is possible to live their vocation to serve one another and the world. | We recognize that every couple, when they marry in the Catholic Church, receive especial Grace, which is God’s real presence in their life, and make a commitment to stay together for life. “A wedding is a day, a marriage is a lifetime” |
| MA 3.7.16  Responsible parenthood calls a married man and woman to harmonize their sincere intentions with morally objective criteria in family planning, to respect the total meaning of their mutual self-giving and human procreation in the context of marital love.  MA 5.3.6  While the Christian family is called to be a community of faith, hope and love, filial duty and responsibility calls children to respect, show gratitude, just obedience, and assistance to their parents and those God has vested with authority. Filial respect fosters harmony in all of family life. | When a couple attends Engaged Encounter, they recognize God’s gift of being fruitful an open to life and the responsibility to educate their children when they come. Children education begins many years before they are born, begins with parent’s education. |
| MA 5.3.8  The family is the original cell of social life. It is the natural society in which a man and woman are called in marriage to give themselves in love and in the gift of life. | At Engaged Encounter, emphasis is placed on family as the original cell of our society, if we do not preserve it, the whole society is going to suffer. Marriage preparation is the family’s foundation. |
| MA 5.2.7 & 5.2.8  God created man and woman, both with one and the same dignity from God their Creator, and willed each for the other. Each discovers the other as another I, in which they share a common humanity.  God created man and woman to serve as companions for each other through a complementarity of their masculine and feminine selves. This partnership of man and woman constitutes the first form of communion between persons.  MA 5.3.12  Families are communities of love called to help one another to grow in faith and to serve those in need, not only for their own satisfaction, but for the strength of society and the good of the whole Church. | Engaged Encounter teaches couples of the essential role in Communication and dialogue as a couple. Communication is one of the main aspects in which if do not know how to do it appropriately then the couple will have problems for sure and this affects the whole society from which we are an integral part. They learn the key elements of a good communication. Good families enhance our communities. |
| MA 5.3.13  The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish a partnership for the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children. | Marriage in the Catholic Church is a commitment for life. It is a covenant and not a contract as we see in nowadays in this society and how to portrait that marriage is disposable. As Catholic Church we collaborate with civil authorities to support marriage. Every couple who participate in Engaged Encounter receives a certificate to get a $60 discount valid for the Texas government in the project “Twogether inTexas”, when they get their marriage license. They have to receive at least 8 hours of training in communication and conflict resolution to get that discount. Engaged Encounter provides about 20 hours of training which is much more than that. Our Family Life ministry office is the number one user of this benefit in the state of Texas since 2008. This is a way to provide a message of how serious is our Catholic Church sin teaching marriage as a covenant. |