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## ***Topics, continued.***

focus on your learning to communicate effectively with each other. The better you learn to communicate with each other, the better you will be able to weather the challenges and difficulties that will arise in your married lives together.

### ***Planning Family Finances:***

One of the greatest satisfactions in life is having a sense of control over your finances. Through careful planning and use of money management techniques, you can feel more confident about your ability to live within your means, reduce your debts, handle emergencies and plan for the future. Understanding how to manage money and developing the discipline to do it can make a big difference in your married life! This session will provide you with some initial tips, guidelines, and ideas for managing your financial resources.

### ***Christian Marriage as a Sacrament***

The sacrament of marriage is one of the ways in which people come to union with Christ and live a life of holiness. In this talk you will be given a general introduction to the nature of sacraments, and the sacramental life of the Church. You will come to realize that sacraments are real events (human and sacred) that have power to change your life! Once this realization is achieved, you will begin to see why the sacrament of marriage is unique and why 'sacramental' marriage is *different* from a civil or natural marriage. In this session, you are invited to embrace the grace that is offered to you in this beautiful sacrament. Achieving a sacramental understanding of marriage will help you to realize and embrace the grace and power that Christ will give

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to you to help you grow together in holiness.

### ***Basic Schedule -***

#### **Program Schedule:**

Two consecutive Saturdays 9AM to 5PM. Participants are encouraged to arrive approximately 15 minutes early to check in and pick up program materials.

### ***Upcoming Programs -***

**September 17 and 24, 2016**

**February 11 and 18, 2017**

**April 1 and 8, 2017**

### ***Fees -***

Fee is \$245 per couple (*subject to change*) . Includes program materials, snacks and beverages, and a hot lunch. Certificates of Completion are issued to each couple at the conclusion of the program.

### ***Registration -***

All engaged couples are required to speak to their pastor and/or the priest or deacon who will preside at their marriage ceremony **prior to registration**.

**To register, contact the St. John Neumann**

**Religious Formation Office at**

**301-977-7990**

**or**

**[mjoseph@saintjohnneumann.org](mailto:mjoseph@saintjohnneumann.org)**



## ***St. John Neumann Catholic Church***

## ***Love Endures All Things***

*Marriage Preparation  
Program*



**Street Address:** 9000 Warfield Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20882

**Mailing Address:** 8900 Lochaven Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20882

**Office:** 301-977-7990

**Fax:** 301-330-3235

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# Why Marriage Preparation?



Marriage is for life.

St. John Neumann's "Love Endures All Things" marriage preparation program is a great opportunity for you, as an engaged couple, to take time to focus on your relationship. During this special time together you will receive the delightful message that marriage can be a beautiful lifetime partnership with each other and with God.

As do many engaged couples, this program may be the very first time that you will think of your imminent marriage as a true sacrament. It will offer you the opportunity to learn about how you, as a married couple, will become an outward sign of Christ's love and how your marriage will affect, not only you, but your families, your friends, the Church, and the greater community.

**Topics Covered -** *(per adw program requirements and course outlines)*

## ***The Biblical Vision of Marriage:***

The Lord's desire from the beginning of Creation is to draw His people into a loving intimate relationship with Himself. Marriage is one of the means to help people come to union with Christ and live a life of holiness. Yet many engaged couples come to marriage preparation with fundamental questions about life and love, such as: "Where did I come from? Why was I created? Why is there evil in the world? Can love and marriage really last?" These and many other questions can begin to be answered by looking at God's design for the human person, the world and God's plan for marriage. Giving you, as a couple, the biblical view of humanity and marriage will help you to see why God created you - to give yourselves away to God and to one another in love!

## ***An Introduction to Natural Family Planning:***

Introduction to Natural Family Planning is an opportunity to learn that there is a way to balance the generosity of love to which you are called, with the prudence that will be required of you as responsible parents. It is also an opportunity to clarify any misconceptions that you may have about Natural Family Planning. You will acquire a clear understanding of both what NFP is, and what it is not. *(Note: This is only an introductory session. The content does not include full instruction on NFP.)*

## ***Christian Parenthood:***

This session is meant to assist you as a couple as you deepen your understanding of Christian marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman whereby you establish between yourselves a life long partnership that is ordered to your mutual well-being and to the procreation and upbringing of children.

## ***The Life Giving Love of Marriage:***

Christ wants His people in marriage to experience a love

that is total, faithful, fruitful and forever. God, as the author of marriage, intends for his people to experience a taste of His love for them in marriage. This is the only kind of love that will truly lead to fulfillment and happiness in this life and the next. As love and its constitutive parts are examined, you will come to realize this is what you are seeking and what you will say "yes" to in your vows on your wedding day. Once love is examined, we will use this standard to examine various ways couples love each other in the sexual act. It is only in loving as God originally intended that you will experience the total, faithful and fruitful love that you yearn for in marriage.

## ***Prayer in Marriage and Family Life:***

Christ's desire is to draw His people into a loving intimate relationship with Himself. Prayer is our daily conversation with God; our creator, our Father and our friend. Prayer draws us into a deeper and more intimate relationship with Christ as we discover more about who He is and who we are through Him. This talk opens up various prayer possibilities for you as individuals and as a couple to begin or strengthen your prayer lives as you embark on your married life together.

## ***Communication with your Spouse:***

Christ's desire is to draw His people into a loving intimate relationship with Himself and with others in community. We achieve this union through a deep interpersonal relationship with Christ that is fostered through prayer and effective communication with your spouse and others. Communication with God through prayer is the focus of another talk. However, this talk will