

## **Marriage Resources from the Committee on Education**

In response to a resolution from the 2009 Annual Council, the Executive Board charged the Committee on Education with investigating, researching and evaluating potential resources for marriage preparation. Resources provided are not exhaustive; there are other materials used in the Diocese that meet specific needs of clergy and churches.

The results of their report can be found in the following pages.

***Cohabiting Couples & Cold Feet: A Practical Marriage-Preparation Guide for Clergy***

By Robert W. Prichard

Church Publishing Incorporated

Cost \$20

*Cohabiting Couples & Cold Feet: A Practical Marriage-Preparation Guide for Clergy* offers practical advice guide for clergy who preside at marriages and provide premarital counseling. It could be especially helpful for newly ordained clergy or others who are looking for guidelines to prepare marriage policies.

The book begins with background information and data regarding the changing nature of marriages. Prichard speaks to the resurgence of the Betrothal Rite and discusses the important of pre-martial counseling. He notes that in a sampling of 3,444 adults; those receiving some form of pre-martial counseling were 31% less likely to divorce. Additional chapters discuss parish policies such as who may be married in the church—members only or perhaps members and seekers. General information to be used in counseling sessions is provided, including the financial impact of marriage, conversations about sex, wedding rehearsals, the marriage service, wedding receptions, and the invisibility of clergy after the ceremony is completed. Prichard provides useful resources, such as The American Guild of Organists' web site that may help establish parish polices regarding music at weddings.

Robert W. Prichard is a professor of church history at Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia, and an Episcopal priest.

## **Curricula for Marriage Counseling**

### **VIDEO/DVD**

*Making Marriage Work* by Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott, directors of the Center for Relationship Development, Seattle, Washington  
Total TV Network, 2002

Four videos (about 25 minutes each) with study guides for leaders and participants

Teaches basics of good Christian relationships through four areas:

1. Myths: unrealistic expectations and misguided assumptions
2. Pressure: handling pressures, such as finances, relocation, infidelity, loss or illness of a child
3. Conflict: working through conflict and “fighting fair”
4. Faith: exploring spiritual intimacy and its meaning in marriage

*Boundaries in Marriage: An 8-Session Focus on Understanding the Boundaries that Make or Break a Marriage*, DVD by Henry Cloud and John Townsend  
Zondervan Publishers, 2008

For small groups, this DVD helps husbands and wives move beyond the friction points and serious hurts in their marriages to build a stronger, more loving and intimate relationship.

Designed for use with the Boundaries for Marriage Leader and Participant Guides, the DVD includes eight interactive group sessions.

*Mentoring Engaged and Newly Wed Couples*, video with leader and participant guides, by Les and Leslie Parrott

Designed for small group sessions to set up mentoring programs in churches.

### **Books**

*Saving Your Marriage before It Starts*, with participant guides, by Les and Leslie Parrott,  
Zondervan Publishers, 2006

*A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples*, by Everett L. Worthington, Downer’s Gove, IL:  
Intervarsity Press, 1989.

*Sacred Marriage*, by Gary L. Thomas, Zondervan Publishers, 2000.

## *Marriage Savers*

Michael J. McManus, Author  
President, Marriage Savers

The Committee does not recommend *Marriage Savers*. The curriculum is not educationally sound and includes statistics, some of which are from the U.S. census leaving most unsubstantiated with no official citation. The resource refers to a premarital inventory called FOCCUS; because it is not available for review, the committee has concerns about its validity. The training for couples who lead the program occurs over a Friday night and Saturday period; couples learn how to counsel and work with couples currently experiencing stress in their marriage. We feel that this brief training period is inadequate.

Cost: \$3,000 (weekend training is required)

*Marriage Savers* defines three steps essential to its program.

Step 1: It establishes Community Marriage Policy® (CMP) programs in cities and towns throughout the United States and Canada, in which pastors, priests and rabbis join together to strengthen marriages with the conscious goal of lowering the community's divorce rate.

Step 2: It establishes Marriage Savers into congregations in churches and synagogues throughout the United States and Canada, where mentor couples are trained to help other couples prepare for a lifelong marriage, strengthen all existing ones, and restore troubled marriages.

Step 3: It enriches existing marriages and restore troubled ones. Michael and Harriet McManus, founders of the Marriage Savers program, regularly conduct Marriage Enrichment Weekends at churches. They also train others to operate a "Restoration Marriage Ministry." for "back-from-the-brink" couples who once considered divorce.

The title Marriage Savers is an apt description of the program. Its primary focus is to enrich and restore marriages. Most clergy would find its usefulness limited in premarital counseling, but could use it in a church-wide program to strengthen existing marriages.

<http://www.marriagesavers.org/sitems/index.htm>

## ***Premarriage Awareness Inventory***

Peter L. Velandar, Author

Cost: \$35.51

The following information is from the Logos website.

Pastors have the unique privilege of helping couples establish a life together. *Premarriage Awareness Inventory* is a simple and effective marriage preparation tool that reveals important issues couples need to address prior to marriage. Partners answer questions tailored to their situation and their responses create a basis for further discussion.

- *The Premarriage Awareness Inventory (PAI)* comes in three forms to assist pastors with customized packets for each couple they counsel.
- *PAI Form F* is tailored to the needs of couples who are being married for the first time and who have not lived together for a significant period prior to marriage.
- *PAI Form C* is for couples who live together, preparing them for the changes that will happen when they add the commitment of marriage to their relationship.
- *PAI Form R* is focused on the unique needs of couples in which one or both persons have been previously married.

The resource includes two basic elements:

- *The Counseling Packet* contains the survey forms the couple completes (your choice of Form F, Form C, or Form R) and the form for completing a comparative analysis of their responses.
- *The Administrator's Portfolio* is your permanent reference tool for evaluating completed inventories.

Complete your counseling program with the premarriage reader, *A Good Beginning*. It contains basic information about the transitions involved in starting a marriage.

### **Review Pak**

If you are new to the *Premarriage Awareness Inventory* you may order a *Review Pak* which includes:

- one complete *Administrator's Portfolio*
- one copy each of all three *Counseling Packets*
- one copy of the premarriage reader *A Good Beginning*

Logos:

[http://www.logosproductions.com/product\\_detail.taf?site\\_uid1=5310&hallway\\_uid1=5328&search\\_id=&catalog\\_uid1=370&link\\_type\\_uid1=&person\\_id=&u\\_currency\\_id=128&UserReference=F36E0C1DFB0C8E3D43CFE4BC](http://www.logosproductions.com/product_detail.taf?site_uid1=5310&hallway_uid1=5328&search_id=&catalog_uid1=370&link_type_uid1=&person_id=&u_currency_id=128&UserReference=F36E0C1DFB0C8E3D43CFE4BC)

The Rev. Susan E. Goff, uses this resource for premarital counseling. You may contact her, beginning on January 19, 2010, at (800) DIOCESE

***Prepare and Enrich***  
By Life Innovations Inc.

Cost: \$175 training for each person (cost for facilitator materials and couples materials were not available)

The following information is from the Prepare and Enrich website.

**What is PREPARE/ENRICH?**

PREPARE/ENRICH is a customized couple assessment completed online that identifies a couple's strength and growth areas. Based on a couple's assessment results, a trained facilitator provides 4-8 feedback sessions in which the facilitator helps the couple discuss and understand their results as they are taught proven relationship skills.

**What are the major goals of the PREPARE/ENRICH Program?**

There are several goals of the PREPARE/ENRICH Program. In order to achieve these goals there are exercises designed to help couples improve their relationship skills. The program helps couples:

- Explore strength and growth areas
- Strengthen communication skills
- Identify and manage major stressors
- Resolve conflict using the Ten Step Model
- Develop a more balanced relationship
- Explore family of origin issues
- Discuss financial planning and budgeting
- Establish personal, couple and family goals
- Understand and appreciate personality differences

Facilitators must attend one of our PREPARE/ENRICH Workshops held throughout the country. The 1-day training includes all the materials you will need to get started using PREPARE/ENRICH in your community, as well as a complimentary online scoring credit. The average price of a workshop is \$175 and they are usually about 7 hours in length.

Prepare and Enrich:

[https://www.prepare-enrich.com/webapp/pe\\_main/mainsite/home/template/DisplaySecureContent.vm;pc=1247169303930?id=pe\\_main\\_site\\_content\\*pages\\*home\\*public\\*HomeLinks.html&xlat=Y&emb\\_org\\_id=0&emb\\_prp\\_id=0&emb\\_unq\\_id=0&emb\\_lng\\_code=ENGLISH](https://www.prepare-enrich.com/webapp/pe_main/mainsite/home/template/DisplaySecureContent.vm;pc=1247169303930?id=pe_main_site_content*pages*home*public*HomeLinks.html&xlat=Y&emb_org_id=0&emb_prp_id=0&emb_unq_id=0&emb_lng_code=ENGLISH)

The Very Rev. Kent Rahm, Trinity Episcopal Church, Fredericksburg, uses this resource for premarital counseling. You may contact him at [krham@trinity-fredericksburg.org](mailto:krham@trinity-fredericksburg.org).