

Dear Marriage Ministers,

Last week I shared some basic theological foundations that are at the heart of Catholic marriage prep and marriage enrichment by sharing key church documents and some contemporary videos that present the theology in an attractive way. This week, I'm going to highlight three upcoming events that help married and engaged couples deepen their understanding of Catholic marriage.

Marriage Enrichment:

St. Mary Magdalen in Everett is presenting [Six Dates for Catholic Couples](#). For six Saturdays beginning Sept. 16th, couples drop off their children for free childcare in the parish library and watch a short video as a group in a different room. Then the couples go out to a restaurant for their individual dates, while their kids stay at the church childcare. The Marriage and Family Life group at Holy Rosary, Edmonds, successfully offered this in recent years as well. This program offers solid, well-presented Catholic theology in a fun and practical format. To register, contact Fran and Lyle Kendall at SixDates@smmparish.org, or call them at 425-985-6357. It's free! Here is their flyer [online](#). (Sidenote: The creators of the Six Dates materials, John and Teri Bosio, have also created a new marriage prep program called [Joined by Grace](#) which is also [very good](#).)

The [Living in Love](#) theology of the body marriage enrichment retreat is being offered this October 14-15 at Holy Rosary, Edmonds. Our Lady, Star of the Sea in Bremerton is hosting it Nov. 11-2, 2017, and Feb 10-11, 2018. I cannot recommend this retreat highly enough, having personally experienced its powerfully transformative impact in my own marriage. It can offer healings and conversions, and can rejuvenate a couple's romance. Register [here](#).

Marriage Preparation

The [Betrothed](#) marriage prep retreat will be offered at the Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center at the Palisades Nov. 17-19, and again Jan. 19-21, 2018. My husband and I created this catechetically-rich sacramental preparation for marriage based on the *Beloved* video series, our own presentations, and a guest speaker presenting NFP.

Want a great online marriage prep option to recommend to your couples? Catholicmarriageprep.com is available in English and Spanish, and it's based on the theology of the body as well. I have reviewed their content and interviewed the program's creators, and I highly recommend their program.

Marriage Help

The next [Retrouvaille](#) weekend in the Seattle area will be Sept. 22-24. This program offers a lifeline for hurting marriages. For more information, contact 206-706-2608. My interview for Northwest Catholic Magazine with Mick and Deanna Maddock, Seattle-area Retrouvaille coordinators, is [here](#).

Are you looking for marriage programs in Spanish? What about resources to help with marriage and family problems like cohabitation, pornography, and domestic violence? Would you like more information about upcoming retreats and workshops? Check this space in the weeks ahead—there is so

much to share with you! Write me and let me know about your parish's marriage events, or let me know what information would be most helpful for you in your ministry.

In the Joy of the Love of Family,

Dr. Sarah Bartel

Marriage and Family Life Consultant