

Marriage Prep Coordinator/Coach

Witness to Love is a unique 8-step process that provides a rich and lasting formation for engaged and newly married couples in the Catholic Church. The Marriage Prep Coordinator (MPC) or Coach is key to successfully implementing *Witness to Love* in the parish. The role can be fulfilled by an individual or a lay or deacon couple. The MPC can be a parish staff member or a volunteer, depending on the size and needs of the parish. An initial coaching session for every engaged and mentor couple is held with the MPC to introduce the *Witness to Love* model. The MPC ensures they have answered all questions by setting the expectation of marriage preparation and guides couples through each step of the process.

The Diocesan Director of the Office for Family Life is committed to providing ongoing support to all Marriage Prep Coordinators at the parishes in the Diocese of Orange.

1- What should you look for when trying to choose a MPC for your parish? Someone who is warm, evangelical, organized, motivated, and understands the dynamics of marriage and family life, as established by the Church. An individual who encourages prayer and living out the virtues in their own marriage. Should be able to communicate effectively and provide a visible face inviting engaged couples into the life of the parish.

*You will need a MPC/Coach for every 10 couples that are being prepared for marriage.

2- What are the main roles of the MPC? To lead marriage prep ministry for the parish, especially by coordinating the successful flow of the *Witness to Love* model for each engaged couple. To coach the Mentors that engaged couples choose to be key “witnesses” in the *Witness to Love* model. Additionally, all coaches make themselves available to support the engaged couple and their mentors both before and after the wedding. They encourage the mentor couples to become more involved with upcoming retreats and parish events and to participate actively in the life of the parish.

3- What are the specific duties of the MPC? To offer ongoing support and formation to the mentor couple and the engaged couple. The MPC/Coach will meet with an engaged couple and their mentors TWICE: once as an initial consult coaching session, then after they have completed *Witness to Love*, to welcome them into the life of the parish. They should inspire living out the virtues and encourage authentic dialogue to build on their relationships through deep conversations. May also review the pre-marital inventory/questionnaire with each engaged couple (ex: FOCCUS) as decided by the needs of your parish. Responsibilities will vary depending on size and location of the parish. If the parish is large, the MPC can delegate the actual reviews of the questionnaire and the initial meeting with the engaged couple to other showcase couples who have been trained in *Witness to Love*.

**The parish should distinguish whether the MPC is only focused on *Witness to Love*, or if they will also be assisting the priests with the pre-nuptial paperwork and intake forms. Set the expectation and train accordingly.