

PRENUPTIAL INVESTIGATION FOR CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Form E-1 evaluation referral process for a special circumstance.

Form E-2 must also be used in a request to prohibit marriage.

Form E-1

EVALUATION REFERRAL PROCESS FOR A SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE MARRIAGE

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: Should a pastoral minister find that a couple is experiencing significant difficulty or that a truly serious issue needs to be addressed, the couple should be referred for evaluation. A review may involve psychological, medical or theological consultation according to procedure established in the particular diocese.

1. This form is to be completed and sent to the designated diocesan office in an envelope marked CONFIDENTIAL. It will then be referred to the proper local agency.
2. If a psychological evaluation is needed, an intake screening will be arranged.
3. If professional counseling is indicated, a referral will be recommended to the couple.

Pastoral ministers must keep a balanced perspective. FOCCUS, PREPARE or other types of premarital inventory are normally administered early in a couple's process of marriage preparation. When results are received, do not overreact simply to low scores in such instruments. FOCCUS literature, for instance, states: "the inventory is not used to determine whether or not they should get married" (p. 7); and "Percentage of agreement scores of 75% and above generally represent areas of strength ..., while ... below 40% generally represent areas of weakness that deserve special attention." (p. 4). Often a couple can work through many ordinary issues during months of marriage preparations.

Before referring a pending marriage, explain the basic concerns to the couple and ask permission to discuss the matter first with the pastor of the parish and, if necessary, with a diocesan consultant. When a serious doubt remains, the case should be referred to the designated diocesan office which will determine the appropriate steps to take.

Date of submission to the designated diocesan office: _____ / _____ / _____

Name of the Pastoral Minister: _____

Parish: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Proposed date of the marriage (if a wedding is already scheduled): _____ / _____ / _____

Church where the wedding is to be held: _____

I hereby request the evaluation of the marriage readiness of this couple whose situation is explained on the reverse side.

SIGNATURE OF THE PASTORAL MINISTER: _____

DATA ABOUT THE COUPLE AND THE ISSUE(S) UNDER CONSIDERATION

Groom

Bride

NAME _____

CURRENT ADDRESS _____

CITY OF CURRENT RESIDENCE _____

STATE, ZIP CODE _____

RELIGION AND RITE _____

AGE _____

BEST PHONE NUMBER FOR CONTACT _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

OCCUPATION _____

1. When did this couple first contact the parish? _____
2. How many meetings has the couple had with the pastoral minister? _____
3. Has the couple taken a pre-marital inventory? yes no
If so, attach a copy of the results.
4. Did the couple attend a marriage preparation program? yes no
5. For those under 18 years of age, have the parents been consulted? yes no
If so, what do they think? _____
6. **Explain the difficulties or problems encountered:**

7. The couple consents to the referral of their marriage readiness to the diocesan review process.

We have reviewed the statement above about the difficulty we are experiencing as explained by the pastoral minister to us. We agree to having this matter referred to the designated diocesan office. If it is necessary for us to see a professional counselor, we understand the choice is ours as to whether or not to cooperate. If we do so, we know that we would need to sign a release before any counselor could communicate with the designated diocesan office and pastoral minister about us. We also know that a decision about our proposed marriage may finally have to be made by the Diocesan Bishop or his Vicar.

SIGNATURE OF THE GROOM

____/____/____
DATE

SIGNATURE OF THE BRIDE