



**St. Agnes of Rome**, patron saint of engaged couples

**St. Joseph**, patron saint of married people

**St. Priscilla**, patron saint of good marriages

- **Continuing your work.** Did you know that some couples who cohabitate before engagement decide to live chastely and even apart before the wedding once the Catholic Church’s teaching on fertility and intimacy are explained completely and lovingly? You may be the first (and only!) person to share the beauty of the teaching with them. Once you share the strong theology, refer them to the Office of NFP and we will help them actualize the theology.
- **There are many myths about NFP that you can help dispel:**

MYTH	TRUTH
Couples who use NFP ALWAYS end up with big families	Using NFP does not mean you must have a large family (though some joyfully want to!) NFP is effective when avoiding or achieving pregnancy.
The rhythm method doesn't work!	Modern methods of NFP are not the same as the rhythm or the calendar method. There is science and research behind today's methods of NFP.
I can just keep track of my period on an app.	It is possible to learn how to accurately read the signs of fertility. NFP is best learned with a trained practitioner to ensure proper learning and use of a researched method for best effectiveness.
NFP puts the woman in control of the couple's sex life.	It does not put the woman in control of the couple's sex life. Rather, learning about the wife's body enables the couple to make decisions together that are <i>best</i> for each other and the marriage. Use of NFP encourages intentional intimacy from both spouses
NFP destroys a couple's sex life.	Using NFP does not destroy a couple's sex life. Rather, it encourages sex as a more authentic expression of their relationship and total commitment to each other. It encourages romantic intentionality, over spontaneity.
NFP is Catholic birth control	Natural family planning never impedes the procreative potential of an act of intercourse therefore it cannot be contraceptive. NFP requires discernment for family planning to be prudent, generous, and in line with the principles of responsible parenthood.

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- **Learn the language of the body's fertility.** Every woman's cycle is different, so understanding the signals that her body is naturally sending empowers her to learn about her own complete fertility cycle as well as to uncover potential health issues (PMS, PCOS, infertility, irregular periods, etc.). There are four different methods of NFP offered in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Each method has different features that may make one preferable over another to a couple. Contact the Office of NFP, or schedule a free, individualized coaching call, if there is a question about which method to use.
- **Why BEFORE the wedding?** Couples benefit when they attend an introductory session about three-six months before the wedding – AND continue to learn and practice that method – regardless of when they plan to have children. Why? Because it encourages communication and self-discipline, fosters appreciation of their mutual fertility, AND it can help to reveal potential health issues that may not be recognized otherwise. Not only does this lay a strong foundation for the relationship, but NFP is easier to learn before marriage and helps build confidence in the method.
- **Strong marriage.** NFP increases communication between husband and wife. They become more in tune with each other's needs, their family goals, and they can find strong bonding apart from sex. Communicating about fertility and intimacy is also good practice for discussing other important topics like money, career, family, etc.
- **Grace to do well.** Charting and practicing NFP is neither “easy” nor “too challenging” for couples to successfully navigate. With the support of a qualified teacher, the couple can learn the method to navigate their unique situation. As with the discernment of co-creating new life with God, He gives the grace to rise to these challenges. There are practical supports available with modern, scientific methods of NFP that work.
- **Responsible parenthood.** The Catholic Church's teaching on having children is largely misunderstood as the command to have as many children as possible. When in fact, responsible parenthood is the attitude of discerning, with God's guidance, the number of children He wants a couple to have. “With regard to **physical, economic, psychological, and social conditions**, responsible parenthood is exercised by those who **prudently and generously** decide to have more children, and by those who, for **serious reasons** and with due **respect to moral precepts**, decide not to have additional children for either a certain or an indefinite period of time.” (*Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI, 1969). When a couple discerns that there are serious reasons to avoid pregnancy for a time, NFP can help them to achieve that goal.



## Refer To:

- **What Can NFP Do For You?** brochure
- **A Dozen Differences** handout
- **NFP Providers list**
- **Introductory Session Schedule**
- ***Humanae Vitae: A Challenge to Love***
- **Talking Points for Contracepting Couples**  
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See current links to these and other up-to-date resources at [bit.ly/NFP-TP-Resources](https://bit.ly/NFP-TP-Resources)