



# the plan Strategic

## Release Announcement

Effective August 3, 2015

### *PREPARE* Marriage Preparation



**Strategic Area:** Wellness

**Goal:** Every couple getting married in a Greek Orthodox Parish within the Metropolis of San Francisco must complete the *PREPARE* program prior to their wedding.

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**Captain:** Jackie Reckas Retelas, Ascension Parish, Oakland, CA

**Program Description:** *PREPARE* is one of the top premarital inventories used within the United States. It has a long-standing record of research-based success in preparing couples for marriage. It also offers versions for couples marrying later in life and those bringing children from a previous relationship into the marriage. It was selected by the Metropolis of San Francisco because of its ready access to training, ease of administration, and frequent review and updating in order to stay relevant with contemporary issues. You can learn more about *PREPARE* and its sister program, *ENRICH*, (which is designed for couples who are already married) by visiting [www.prepare-enrich.com](http://www.prepare-enrich.com).

**Current Status:** To-date, twenty-seven parish priests throughout our Metropolis have received their certifications in the program. In addition, some parishes have also designated lay persons who have also completed the program. Certified clergy have already begun to institute *PREPARE* as their parish's standard program in preparing couples for marriage. As one priest remarked, "It has given me the tools to effectively minister to all couples in a most influential manner. I have found *PREPARE* to be the most comprehensive of all marriage preparation programs that are out there!" Couples who have participated in the program often comment at how the *PREPARE* inventory got them talking about issues they hadn't previously considered and that the program gave them the tools for successfully tackling difficult subjects. Frequently asked questions:

- **How do I become certified?** Participate in the *PREPARE/ENRICH* one-day training program. A list of sessions can be found on the *PREPARE/ENRICH* website. An online training option is also offered. In addition, Fr. Timothy Pavlatos, our Metropolis Director for Family Wellness is a trainer for the program and would be available if groups of clergy or laity would like to organize a regional training. If interested, please contact Presvytera Donna Pappas for more information.
- **How much does it cost?** Between \$175-\$200 per person to attend a training session. If attending as a couple, there is an additional charge of only \$50 for the spouse. On-line sessions typically run \$225. Engaged couples participating in the program pay a nominal fee of \$35 to take the inventory.
- **Do I have to be pre-approved by the Metropolis to attend?** No, prior approval is not required but a copy of your certification will be sent automatically to Presvytera Donna Pappas in order to track the program.

**Recommended Parish Action:** It is recommended that each parish priest, who has not previously been certified in *PREPARE*, attend training and that parishes cover their program registration fees. Larger parishes are also encouraged to designate a lay person to become certified in order to assist in program delivery and administration.

**Anticipated Parish Impact:** Overall, low. However, parishes will need to raise awareness of this prerequisite for marriage within the Metropolis.