

M+talk general format

PRE-MARRIAGE TALKS FORMAT www.sheepgate.com

This is approximately a nine (9) hour format ending with Holy Mass. It is designed for one full Saturday. Some of the following guidelines are important or appropriate for some talks and not so important for others. All are suggestions and options in planning your teaching. Those with an * should be incorporated into each talk without exception. As part of the team, please take these guidelines seriously.

TITLE / TOPIC: **General Format** Each teaching has a specific format sheet similar to this general format. The title will be here near the top. Specific talk formats will be available at www.sheepgate.com under the Pre-Marriage section.

LENGTH IN MINUTES: 0... the approximate amount of time allotted for the talk. It is necessary to stay within reasonable limits to fit into our day.

PRESENTORS: married couples from the team

* **PREPARATION:** Prayer, research, planning, revision, and practice, should take place in the weeks before the Pre-Marriage day. Even when the talk has been given several times before, it always needs to be refreshed.

OPENING CEREMONY: (for each talk) Choose people to process in with Bible and two candles while all sing our theme song. Choose reader for solemn scripture. This is followed by introduction of topic and of presenter couple by the Master of Ceremonies. All sing blessing over presenters.

PATRON: There is a patron saint for each teaching. This saint should be prayed to in preparation, studied for examples to be used and referred to in teaching. The patron is also noted in the introduction of each talk by the Master of Ceremonies.

SOLEMN SCRIPTURE: used in the opening ceremony before each talk

* **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** The aim or goal; the intended informational content of the teaching. These objectives may be factual, moral, catechetical, legal, or spiritual insights to be shared. Presenters should not stray from the listed objectives.

ACTION OBJECTIVES: What changes and visible results would we like to see in the lives of our listeners?

PRESENTER'S OPENING PRAYER: Sign of the Cross. A moment of silent prayer to the Holy Spirit at the podium before beginning.

ATTENTION GRABBER: a good **BANG OPENER** for your teaching. This could be a good story, a "rash," promise, a rhyme, a little song, an intriguing question, appropriate humor, and interesting show-&-tell object, etc.

TOPIC QUESTION: The big question that is answered in your talk. This, of course is related to the objectives.

KEY POINTS: A teaching agenda list that forms the skeleton of your talk. This may be given out in a handout or listed on the overhead projector.

* **KEY STATEMENTS:** A few short clear teaching sentences that should be used **WORD FOR WORD** and then built upon in your own style.

RELATED THOUGHTS: brief sub-topics that support your main goals or logical follow up ideas.

RELATED SCRIPTURES: Some Bible quotes related to the talks are listed on the format sheets for each teaching. These can be for the inspiration, meditation and spiritual power of the presenters, and a few should be used in your presentations. While these talks are not meant to be Bible studies we must assume there is power in the Word of God even for unbelievers in our audience.

RELATED HUMOR: Humor can serve three purposes in our teaching.

1. To illustrate a point. To use as kind of a parable.
2. To get attention.
3. To break resistance, to get their guard down, put them at ease, and open doors to reluctant listeners.

RELATED STORY: a little tale, fable, news item, or biographical sketch, etc. to illustrate a point.

* RELATED PERSONAL WITNESS: This is an important part of every talk. It should serve one or more of three purposes:

1. to illustrate the objectives of the teaching
2. to evangelize; to share a relationship with Jesus
3. to add human interest

AUDIO-VISUALS: Charts, flash cards, posters, banners, pictures, objects, maps, overhead projection, brief videos, music, etc. Audio-visuals must be just tools and cannot substitute for the teacher.

HANDOUTS: There are several handouts available for each teaching. You may also develop your own. Handouts may be passed out during your talk or made available in the packet they receive at registration. They may be for take-home use or used during the teaching. Make sure ahead of time you have enough copies.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: It is important to most teachings that our listeners actively participate in the lessons. We should write questions into our talks and not just at the end. Listeners should also be able to ask questions. You may want to write out some discussion questions on a handout, chalkboard or overhead transparency. Other team members present may comment appropriately but should restrict their comments to a minimum. It is important that presenters use authority, if necessary, to keep the discussion close to the objectives of the teaching.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES: games, activities, posters, handouts, fun quizzes, projects to do together as couples or group. Remember, however, our time is limited.

SYMBOLIC RITUAL ACTION: brief little ceremonies of faith or action prayers may be used in some teachings during or near the end of the talk.

CLOSING PRAYER: briefly by one of the presenters.

STUDY RESOURCES: reading, videos, tapes, etc for teachers to use in preparation.

RESOURCE PERSONS: Experts or inspiring witnesses other than the main presenters who may be used briefly, as appropriate in some teachings.

NOTES: comments, reminders, observations for next time, etc

OUTLINE: listing of topics, sub-topics and supporting data that should be included in talks and evaluations.

EVALUATION: What went well, what could be improved, etc. Compare to objectives.