



ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES, USA  
The Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio

**Timothy P. Broglio**  
by the Grace of God and the Favor of the Apostolic See  
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA

## GENERAL DECREE

### NORMS CONCERNING THE IMMEDIATE PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

The two accounts of creation in the Book of Genesis tell the story of God's overflowing love in the creation of man and woman in his own image and likeness (Gn 1:27). Given the command to "be fertile and multiply" (Gn 1:28), man and woman found in each other a helpmate (Gn 2:18), a partner for their entire lives. It is this natural union instituted by God that Christ the Lord raised to the dignity of a sacrament in marriages between two baptized persons (c. 1055 §2).

In his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris consortio*, 66, St. John Paul II observed: "More than ever necessary in our times is preparation of young people for marriage and family life." The pope continued:

This is even more applicable to Christian marriage, which influences the holiness of large numbers of men and women. The Church must therefore promote better and more intensive programs of marriage preparation, in order to eliminate as far as possible the difficulties that many married couples find themselves in, and even more in order to favor positively the establishing and maturing of successful marriages.

Marriage preparation has to be seen and put into practice as a gradual and continuous process. It includes three main stages: remote, proximate and immediate preparation.

For this reason, then, and to strengthen the period of immediate preparation for marriage, I decree the following:

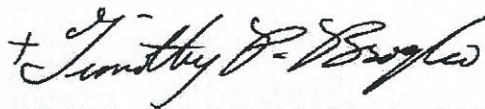
1. The immediate period of preparation for marriages celebrated in the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA shall begin at least six months before the anticipated date of the wedding. No firm date for a wedding shall be set until the conclusion of the couple's first meeting with the pastoral minister preparing them for marriage.

For a just and reasonable cause, the local ordinary or AMS priest preparing the parties for marriage can dispense from this norm.

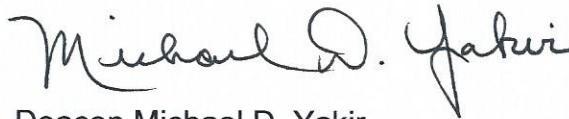
2. Both parties preparing for the celebration of marriage are to participate in a one-hour session on Natural Family Planning. This session, which can be completed either in person or online, must be led by a facilitator trained in at least one of the following methods: Cervical Mucus, Sympto-Thermal, or Sympto-Hormonal.

These norms take effect 2 February 2015. They replace any previous norms issued by me or my predecessors on the subjects contained therein.

Given this 17th day of December, two thousand fourteen at the Edwin Cardinal O'Brien Pastoral Center in the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA.



The Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio  
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA



Deacon Michael D. Yakir  
Chancellor