

# **Syllabus for Marriage Preparation Course**

**Approved by the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants, for the Use of the Course Centers outside the Syro Malabar Eparchies in India and Abroad**

**Introduction:** The sacred tradition of the celebration of the sacrament of marriage and marital life in the Syro-Malabar Church

## **I. Marriage: Covenant and Sacrament**

- Marriage and Family: According to Major Religions in the world
- Family in the Bible
- Marriage: in the Redemptive plan-Couples become one with Christ-Sacramental fruits of marriage
- Marriage: oneness and inseparability
- Marriage: friendship and procreation of children
- Marriage: self surrender and mutual understanding-
- Sacrament of Marriage: The sacramental implications; liturgical celebration of the celebration of marriage

## **II. Marriage: Canon law and civil law**

- Valid and Invalid marriage
- Canonical impediments (obstructions)- nullity from marital impediments- negative aspects during marriage promises
- Canonical order of marriage, mixed marriage, marriage between different denominations- validity of marriage
- Canonical solutions to the issues in marriage
- Marital divorce, separation of spouses, dismissal of marriage-civil law
- Christian marriage-invalidity of marriage in civil law
- Marital divorce
- Proposed Christian marriage bill (for those in India)

## **III. Self awareness and personality development**

- Self knowledge / self-self awareness and transparency-openness and daringness
- Self esteem and courage
- Inborn qualities and creativity
- Self confidence and realistic mentality
- Social awareness and sensitivity
- Moral consciousness and solidarity feelings
- Integral personality: physical-emotional-social –moral maturity.

## **IV. Communications in the family**

- To strengthen the mutual understanding between spouses there should be sufficient interactive communication.
- Caring for the other- respect emotions/ opinions /interest
- Avoid parallel communication, hidden communication, defects in communication
- Control of the tongue/ ability to forgive and forget
- Importance of family counseling

## **V. Men-women biology**

- Body structure of men and women
- Theology of body and sexuality
- Sexual illness – sexual deflection or deviation
- AIDS awareness

## **VI. Psychology of women & men**

- Ability of both men and women to analyze and take decision
- Swiftness in expressing emotions
- Interpersonal and social relationship
- Variations in sexual reaction and implications for spiritual and prayer life
- Psychology of men & women at physical, mental and emotional levels and at social, moral and spiritual levels.
- Psychology of men and women: in different ages: during marriage, when becomes a parent, significance of mid- age and the psychology of the aged

## **VII. Sexual morality in marital life**

- Sexuality as God's gift
- Purity and holiness – marital and moral statutes
- Conjugal life giving surrender –
- Premarital and extra marital affairs
- Sexual disorder and impotency
- Immorality of artificial means of preventing pregnancy and the practice of sterilization
- Abortion: a mortal sin and unethical practices of using modern mechanism for pregnancy.

## **VIII. Responsible parenthood**

- Value of life and the glory of human beings
- Natural means of family planning (Billings' method)
- Pregnancies, delivery, care for children, parenting - physical – mental – and emotional development during infancy, childhood, teenage etc.
- Human and religious formation
- Giving right education and providing the best context for integral growth.
- Other points to remember while bringing up their children

## **IX Family problems and possible solutions**

### **a) Inter-personal relations in the Family**

Avoid prejudices and suspicion

Foster tolerance and harmony

Face challenges and conflicts in an even mindedness (equanimity)

Understand the problems of the other if he/she is an employer

Keep good relationship with in-laws and relatives of the spouse

Nuclear family

Problems in the family due to one man's rule

**b) Financial standardization**

- Habit of earning and spending in moderate way
- Eco-friendly life and life situations
- Hygienic - physiotherapy – indigenous treatment
- Avoid prodigality, lavishness and luxury life
- Fight against consumerist business culture
- Avoid bad habits – like drinking, drugs, smoking, chewing pan etc.

**c) Media literacy**

- Influence of advertisement
- Avoid superstitious beliefs and practices
- Significance of Christian mass media, audio visuals and publications

**X. Spirituality in the family**

- Family: family as the church, temple, divine tent
- Marriage: call to holiness
- Reading of the Holy Scripture
- Family prayer: Power house of the family
- Sacramental life: Ways for sanctification of the family
- Traditional spirituality
- Celebrations of the liturgical seasons,
- Observations of penance
- Charities and acts of mercy

**XI. Ideal family in the third millennium**

- Jesus: head of the family
- Holy family: model of a family
- Family: fertile land of virtues
- Gospel values in the family
- Love and compassion
- Sacrifice, service, reconciliation and righteousness
- Peace and tranquility
- Formation of conscience
- Customs and courtesy
- Resistance towards evils
- Civic and social consciousness

**XII. Sin - sacrament of reconciliation – graceful life**

- Sin: Alienation from God, Human beings and nature
- Transgression of commandments ten commandments and laws of the Church duties living up to the Vocation of family life
- Evaluation of life and change of heart
- Sacrament of reconciliation
- Observations of rites and practices
- A life fitting to receive the eternal reward

### **XIII. Theme for group discussion**

- a)** Signs of a mature person
  - b)** Ideal husband/ wife; model father / mother
  - c)** Things to keep in mind before choosing the partner
  - d)** Main reasons of the family problems
  - e)** External factors that influence the family today
  - f)** The necessary articles that should have in a Christian family
  - g)** Changes in the construction of family; advantage or disadvantage  
(Joint family – nuclear family – family of one man's rule)
  - h)** How to face marital family problems
  - i)** Characteristics of an ideal Christian family
  - j)** Importance of pious associations/organizations in the sanctification of Christian families
  - k)** Parents gathering in pre-marriage course

Approved by

Sadakel

Bishop Sebastian Vadakel  
Chairman  
Major Archiepiscopal Com

Kakkanad  
February 15, 2010