

**DIOCESAN NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING MINISTRY
NATIONAL
2025 PROFILE REPORT**

**NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM
Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
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OVERVIEW

In January 2025, 196 dioceses were invited to take part in the annual *Diocesan Natural Family Planning Ministry National Profile (Profile)* survey. Sixty-one dioceses completed the questionnaire, representing 31 percent participation.

Since its creation in 1990, the *Profile* has served several key purposes. Its combined data provide insight into national trends in Natural Family Planning (NFP) programs, helping the Natural Family Planning Program staff of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) develop strategies and resources to support local diocesan NFP ministries. Because the *Profile* presents respondents' statistical averages, diocesan staff can regularly record their annual information and compare their diocesan efforts with national trends.

Finally, Diocesan leaders can evaluate an NFP program by asking one essential pastoral question: *Can couples seeking to follow Church teaching on conjugal love and responsible parenthood easily obtain the NFP support they need?* The answer should guide planning and support for the local diocesan NFP ministry.

SUMMARY

The following is the summary of the 2025 *Profile* of participating dioceses' responses to crucial questions about NFP ministry efforts from around the country.

Because pastoral circumstances vary widely, diocesan programs differ in scope and strength, NFP efforts remain uneven across the country. These differences often reflect complex local factors. For example, as one diocese expands its commitment to NFP education and financial support, another diocese may face setbacks from teacher loss, budget reductions, limited public ecclesial support, or diocesan restructuring. The good news is that regardless of how robust a particular diocesan program may be, across the country, NFP is presented in some fashion and for various amounts of time to thousands of couples preparing for marriage.

To facilitate NFP efforts, practically every diocese has a person designated as the NFP coordinator, most are placed within the Marriage and Family Life office. Typically, NFP programs share funding, materials, and staff support of an umbrella department (e.g., the Marriage and Family Life Office, Faith Formation, etc.). Thirty percent of the 2025 respondents rely on paid part-time staff and volunteers. Sixteen percent have a full-time paid NFP coordinator.

Limited funding has been and continues to be a significant stumbling block. Nationally, diocesan NFP programs remain underfunded. Sixty-eight percent of dioceses surveyed budgeted

less than \$5,000 for NFP programs. Seventy-six percent of all NFP diocesan-funded programs operate on less than \$10,000 annually. A few diocesan budgets (14%) exceeded \$30,000. Most diocesan NFP programs rely on indirect funding from other sources (e.g., NFP materials, donations from parishes, grants from local Knights of Columbus councils, a fee for course instruction, and follow-up fees).

Most diocesan marriage preparation programs try to provide basic NFP information to various groups, with particular attention directed toward couples preparing for marriage (e.g., booklets, fact sheets, witness couple talks, and NFP course instruction, etc.). The amount of time devoted to the discussions of NFP varies significantly from a few minutes to over two hours.

As in many past years, there is an exaggeratedly wide gap between the numbers of couples who enroll in an introduction to NFP education program (very large) and those who follow-up with a full course of an NFP method of choice (very little). Setting aside the difficulty of knowing whether these couples enroll in on-line non-diocesan NFP courses or not, two common implications can be identified regarding the gap: one points to the question of whether the couples accept Church teaching and want to live the teachings in their married lives; and the second has to do with the quality of the local NFP pastoral programming. Regarding the acceptance of Church teaching: unfortunately, the wide gap in enrollment speaks of a disconnect between the truth of Church teaching and the every-day lives of the couples enrolled in the introductory NFP programs. Popular culture has harmed the meaning of human sexuality and the very nature of marriage. Modern culture also accepts the severing of the two-fold nature of the conjugal act—its love-giving and life-giving powers with the use of contraception. Too many Catholics no longer understand Church teaching in this area of life and are at the mercy of the culture. A renewed national pastoral effort could help to inspire couples to fully understand and embrace the Church's beautiful teaching on marriage, married love and the gift of life. In addition, diocesan staff could consider implementing a robust evaluation of current local pastoral programs of marriage preparation and NFP education. Diocesan leaders can investigate the reasons for the gap between numbers of individuals enrolled in NFP introductory educational programs and the severely low numbers of couples who move on to complete a full course of education in an NFP method. More research must be done to understand this disparity and adjust NFP efforts to meet these challenges.

As in years past, internet instruction has become increasingly popular for couples to fulfill the NFP education requirement for marriage preparation, rather than the classroom setting.

The 2025 respondents have also consistently noted that diocesan NFP programs are strongest when the diocesan bishop provides visible support, regular encouragement, and funding. In short, NFP efforts flourish when a bishop recognizes NFP as an essential element of marriage ministry.

I. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- 1) The diocesan NFP Program is: *(Check one)*
 - 96% Part of the Office of Marriage and Family Life
 - 0% A service of one of our Catholic hospital(s)
 - 0% Part of Catholic Charities
 - 4% Its own department

N=27
- 2) Who is responsible for coordinating the NFP Ministry for the Diocese?
 - 50% Family Life Director
 - 42% NFP Coordinator
 - 0% Respect Life Director
 - 8% No person designated

N=26
- 3) For this position, NFP work is: *(Check one)*
 - 65% A part of full-time responsibilities
 - 16% Full-time paid
 - 0% Full-time volunteer
 - 16% Part-time paid
 - 3% Part-time volunteer

N=31
- 4) Is the NFP coordinator trained in NFP methodology? *(Check one)*
 - 80% Yes 20% No

N=30
- 5) If the answer to question (4) is “Yes,” for which of the following roles was the NFP coordinator trained? *(Check all that apply.)*
(Frequency)
 - 13 Teacher 19 User 12 Promoter
- 6) If you answered the question (5), please indicate which school(s) of NFP trained the coordinator: *(Check all that apply.)*
(Frequency)
 - 4 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
 - 1 Boston Cross-Check

- 9 Couple to Couple League (CCL)
- 10 Creighton Model *FertilityCare*TM
- 2 Family of the Americas Foundation
- 5 FEMM (Fertility Education Medical Management; a Sympto-Hormonal method)
- 3 Marquette University Institute of NFP (Marquette Model)
- 2 Sympto-Pro (a Sympto-Thermal method provided by Northwest Family Services)

- 7) Which statement best describes the NFP program policy regarding the remuneration of its teachers? (*Check one*)

- 58% Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We do not give them a stipend.
- 16% Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We give them a stipend to cover expenses.
- 7% We pay our NFP instructors (*part-time or full-time*).
- 19% The salaries/stipends for instructors are provided by other sources (*e.g., Catholic Hospital, Knights of Columbus, etc.*)

N=31

- 8) How many NFP teachers are part of the diocesan program? (*Count teaching couples as two*)

Total number of teachers: 378

The average number of teachers: 13

N=29

- 9) Which organization trains the diocesan teachers? (*Check all that apply.*)

(*Frequency*)

- 15 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
- 22 Couple to Couple League (CCL)
- 25 Creighton Model *Fertility Care*TM
- 4 Family of the Americas Foundation
- 12 FEMM (Fertility Education Medical Management)
- 19 Marquette University Institute of NFP (Marquette Model)
- 5 Northwest Family Services (Sympto-Pro)

- 10) Does your diocesan NFP program use on-line NFP client instruction?

83% Yes 17% No

N=30

II. PROGRAM BUDGET

- 11) Of the total operating budget for the NFP ministry, how much was directly funded by the diocese last year?

25%	\$0	
25%	\$1 - 999	
18%	\$1,000 - 4,999	
3%	\$5,000 - 9,999	
14%	\$10,000 - 29,999	
4%	\$30,000 - 49,999	
0%	\$50,000 - 69,999	
11%	\$70,000+	N=28

- 12) Do you charge a fee for a full course in NFP? (*Check one*)

64% Yes 36% No N=28

- 13) How much is charged to clients/couples for a full course in NFP?

19%	\$0	
0%	\$1 - 25	
0%	\$26 - 45	
9%	\$46 - 65	
0%	\$66 - 85	
5%	\$86 - 100	
67%	\$101+	N=21

Comment: Most fees vary from \$46 to over \$100+, depending on materials, length of course, and the number of follow-up services requested.

III. PROGRAM SERVICE

- 14) Which NFP method(s) is currently taught in the diocesan program? (*Check all that apply.*)

(*Frequency*)

- 17 Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
 23 Couple to Couple League (CCL)
 25 Creighton Model *Fertility Care*TM

- 6 Family of the Americas
- 11 FEMM (Fertility Education Medical Management; Sympto-Hormonal Method)
- 19 Marquette University's Institute of NFP (Marquette Method)
- 0 Standard Day Method (a calculation method)
- 6 Sympto-Pro (a Sympto-Thermal method provided by Northwest Family Services)
- 0 Two-Day Method (a cervical mucus-based method)
- 4 Other

- 15) How many individuals (couples count as two) in the diocese received an introductory/promotional talk on NFP during the last twelve months?

A total of 18,211 individuals received some information/instruction on NFP.

N=28

- 16) How many individuals (couples count as two) in the diocese attended a full course (both on-site and online or distance learning) in NFP during the last twelve months?

A total of 7,518 individuals attended a class/instruction on NFP.

N=25

- 17) On average, how much time is allowed for NFP education in marriage preparation programs? (*Give your best estimate*)

- 3% 0 minutes - 15 minutes
- 10% 16 minutes - 30 minutes
- 16% 31 minutes - 45 minutes
- 19% 46 minutes - 1 hour
- 52% 60 minutes - 2 hours+

N=31

- 17) Does the diocese require a full *course* in NFP for engaged couples? (*Check one*)

6 Yes 25 No

N=31

Gratitude is extended to the following dioceses
for participating in the *2025 Profile Report*

Arlington, Atlanta, Birmingham, Bismarck, Charleston, Denver, Erie, Fort Wayne-South Bend, Harrisburg, Jefferson City, Lacrosse, Lincoln, Louisville, Manchester, Miami, Milwaukee, Nashville, New York, Norwich, Oklahoma City, Orange, Phoenix, Rockford, Salt Lake City, Shreveport, Sioux Falls, Springfield-Cape Girardeau, St. Cloud, Trenton, Wichita, Winona-Rochester

Program Resources

The following documents help strengthen diocesan NFP programs.

Diocesan Plan for Natural Family Planning Program Development. Washington, DC: Diocesan Development Program for NFP, 1981. (Available online at www.usccb.org/nfp/diocesan-ministry/upload/Diocesan-Plan.pdf; orders, 1-866-582-0943.)

Standards for Diocesan NFP Ministry. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 2000. (Available at usccb.org/nfp/diocesan-ministry/standards.cfm.)

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