



Secretariat of Laity, Marriage,  
Family Life and Youth



## Preparation Checklist

### *for* Stateside World Meeting of Families Event (Diocesan and/or Parish)

#### 12-6 Months before event

- Form a core planning team, collaborators, and begin regular meetings
  - Who: may include bishop, a select number of diocesan clergy, diocesan staff such as directors of faith formation, youth and young adult ministry, cultural diversity, and parish marriage and family life coordinators, etc.
  - What: invite these collaborators to a series of regularly scheduled planning meetings; teams may need to be formed around specific areas (communications, catechesis, etc.)
- Why: Identify the vision, target audience, objectives, and budget for your event
- When and Where: Set the date(s) and tentative schedule of events; decide if the event will be held at the diocesan center, another event site, and/or at parishes throughout the diocese. (If you would like parishes to host events, meet with the pastor first to invite his parish to be one of many host parishes.)
- Book talent for event: choir, cantor, and musicians for Mass and/or concert, speakers, emcee, etc.
- Identify and begin to secure logistics: food, sound, lighting, technology, security, safety measures
- Create save-the-date publicity materials

## Helpful Hints

- Take this opportunity to develop a catechesis on the Sacrament of Marriage and Christian family life by providing *preparatory and post catechesis* for WMoF.
- Try to collaborate with and involve as many as the following: pastors, diocesan offices, catechetical leaders, parish leaders, ministries, and apostolic movements serving marriage and family life to celebrate WMoF!
- Consider asking local parishes to host family nights in place of or alongside a large diocesan event. This gives parishes the opportunity to convene as a family of families. By hosting special events at different parishes, a sense of pilgrimage throughout the diocese can be encouraged.
- Limited or no budget? Ask hosting parishes to cover the costs associated with their parish hosted event. Contact ministries and movements in the diocese to sponsor meals or particular activities.
- Design a diocesan WMoF t-shirt that can be pre-ordered by parishioners or sold at the event.

### 6-4 Months before event...

- Create a detailed publicity and marketing plan for your WMoF event
- Order and distribute publicity materials to parishes and ministry partners
- Identify a spiritual preparation plan to share with parish communities and with your collaborators
- Recruit priests, deacons, and religious to be present at the event and for specific event responsibilities (confessions, vocation promotion, prayer services, Mass, etc.)
- Recruit the lead volunteers and managers who will be assisting during the event

### 4-3 Months before event...

- Begin publicity measures in earnest
- Reach out to local parish and diocesan communications office and local media
- Open event registration



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## 3-2 Months before event...

- Recruit more volunteers to assist the team leaders and managers
- Plan and host first volunteer training
- Purchase or make plans to purchase the major supplies for the event

## Final Preparations

- Review all logistics and perform any test-runs of the logical elements: food, security, sound, lighting, and technology
  - Host final volunteer training
  - Create printed materials, handouts, worship aid, etc.
  - Do a final site walk-through with the lead volunteers and managers
  - Create an evaluation form or survey
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## The Week *After* the Event...

- Collect the evaluations or send out online survey for event participants; set deadline for receiving feedback
- Hold a debriefing meeting with core team and lead volunteers
- Send thank you notes to significant volunteers, collaborators, leadership of the community (bishop, pastor, lay ministers, or others), assisting priests, deacons, and religious, site/venue contacts, vendors, service providers, and others who contributed to the event
- Email stateside participants with further opportunities for them to get connected into ongoing ministries and the Church
- Begin preparations for a reunion event with stateside participants and international pilgrims (possibly with a focus on mission: what is God now calling you and your family to say, to do, to be in life after the World Meeting of Families?)



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## **Don't forget!**

The experience of the stateside and international celebrations of the World Meeting of Families is a unique event that celebrates the beauty of marriage and the family. It is a particular opportunity to catechize, evangelize, and revitalize married couples and their families. Before, during, and after the event, catechetical materials and resources should be shared with parishes on topics that strengthen and support marriages and families as the domestic church.

Following the event, plans should include continuing formation, evangelization, and mission opportunities for families in the months that follow.

Consider developing additional checklists for these next steps. After a year has passed, assess the success of this event once more by measuring the involvement, investment, and actions of the families who participated. Are they still engaged?

Look ahead to possibly hosting an annual gathering for families, as well as a stateside celebration on the occasion of the next international WMoF.

If you have further questions or additional suggestions, reach out to [mfl@usccb.org](mailto:mfl@usccb.org).

