"The Christian family...is the first community called to announce the Gospel to the human person during growth and to bring him or her, through a progressive education and catechesis, to full human and Christian maturity."

On the Family, Pope John Paul II

Marriage Tip from foryourmarriage.org

"Have no anxiety at all, but... make your requests known to God." (Phil 4:6) Do you pray together as a family about the things that cause you anxiety? Praying out loud lets you hear what is in the hearts of your spouse and children.

What have you done for your marriage today?

For Your Marriage has ideas to help you make your marriage healthier.

An initiative of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Want advice about your marriage? Whether you do or don’t, when you marry in front of a community of believers like you do in the Catholic Church plenty of people will have suggestions for you! Here’s great advice about how Facebook can affect your marriage from Jason and Kelly Krafsky.

Facebooking Do’s and Don’ts for Engaged Couples

by K. Jason and Kelli Krafsky

You changed your Relationship Status to “engaged.” You posted Status Updates and pictures about every detail leading up to, during, and after the “big question” was popped. And, you have filled our News Feeds with notices of each and every one of 136 different wedding-related Facebook Pages you now Like.

We get it, you’re tying the knot!

Want some unsolicited marriage advice you won’t find anywhere else? You may not want it, but you’re going to get it because that’s what married people do to engaged couples. (It’s part of the initiation process to join the marriage club).

The social media age we live in is revolutionizing how we do relationships...including that transition point between singlehood and marriage. Having experienced and studied (and now write and speak) on how social media affects marriages and relationships, we’ve come up with six Facebooking do’s and don’ts for engaged couples.

Do #1: Dump Some Friends

The conversation about past exes being Facebook Friends is a discussion couples will have before or after the “I do’s.” It is just a matter of time and circumstances. Our advice is built upon heartbreaking stories about forsaken spouses and regretful husbands and wives who strayed: Unfriend or Block any Facebook Friends who could possibly be a threat to your marriage. This includes ex-boyfriends and ex-girlfriends, everyone you have ever hooked up, anyone you wished you had hooked up with, and anybody you’ve had an unshakeable crush on. If a Facebook Friend has even a remote risk to your marriage, it’s not an online association worth keeping.

Do #2: Clean Up Your Profile

Look at your engagement ring. Now look at your Wall. Look at your ring. Now look at the Pages and Groups you’ve joined. You will soon become someone’s spouse, merging your family tree with someone else’s family tree, and inheriting (for better or worse) a whole family of in laws. While it’s your Profile, it is public to anyone and everyone in your new family to access, read and form opinions about you. Avoid some unnecessary family (in law) drama. Review your Profile in light of this major life transition you’re making. Make sure your Facebook Profile reflects who you are becoming rather than who you have been.
Do #3: Purge Your Pictures
Pictures may be worth a thousand words, but some pictures posted on Facebook may end up taking ten thousand words to try to explain away. Be proactive. Go through your Facebook Albums and remove or untag yourself from photos that your future spouse, future in-laws or future kids won’t like (and we don’t mean the Like function here). The types of pics we’re talking about are photos with old boyfriends or girlfriends, incriminating partying pictures, old wedding photos from a prior marriage or any shameful moments captured digitally. Marriage changes things. And that may mean removing visual remembrances of your past for the sake of your future.

Don’t # 1: Don’t Forget that Your Profile is Still About You
Your new hobby in preparing for “We”-ness may be all consuming to you and your future spouse, but your Facebook Friends still want to know about you. Posts about what the two of you are doing are fine from time-to-time, but your Status Updates and Comments should be from you, not us. If you end up creating a new Profile as a couple, then using the plural pronouns of “we,” “us,” or “our” are appropriate. Until then, remember to keep using “me” and “I” in your Status Updates.

Don’t #2: Don’t Overdo It with Wedding Planning Details
One of the biggest complaints made by friends and family members about soon-to-be-brides is that they get annoyed by all the wedding talk. This was even before the advent of Facebook. Just because you can post every exciting and mundane detail of your wedding planning experience through a 24/7/365 social network, doesn’t mean you should. Otherwise, even the groom-to-be may be tempted to hit the Hide button on your Updates.

Don’t #3: Don’t Forget Who Sees Your Posts
Planning and coordinating all the details surrounding your wedding day is an emotionally-draining, physically-demanding, financially-stressful, relationship-straining experience. Add to that the spoken and unspoken expectations of not one, but two (or more) sets of parents...and you will have numerous situations where you are ready to explode! The temptation is to rant in a Status Update attempting to receive emotional comfort and forced sympathy from your Facebook Friends. Don’t! More than likely, the sources of your frustration (including your fiancé, parents, future in-laws, both sides of the wedding party, ring bearer’s mom, flower girl’s dad, and wedding guests) will read it and someone will likely react. All of a sudden, you are starring in your own episode of Bridezilla. Find a confidant you can call or visit for a face-time rant session that leaves no digital evidence of your tirades.

So, that’s our advice. Take it or leave it. Like it or unlike it. Share it or hide it.

And when you do end up changing your Relationship Status to “married,” be sure to pick up a copy of Facebook and Your Marriage so you never have to change your Relationship Status again. We’ve discovered that there’s a lot more opportunities for Facebook drama after you say “I do.” And we have some advice on that topic too.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
• Are there “friends” that need to be blocked from your marital relationship?
- Will you both have the password to each other’s Facebook page?
- Have you and your future spouse talked about what can and can’t be shared for all on Facebook?

K. Jason and Kelli Krafsky (a.k.a. The Social Media Couple) are nationally-recognized specialists in social media and relationships. They are the authors of Facebook and Your Marriage. The Krafskys live in the foothills of Washington’s Cascade Mountains with their four children.

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