Regarding the Covenant Blessing of a Relationship in the Diocese of Northern California
(January 2010)

For Couples who have a State of California honored marriage license or domestic partnership and who desire to make a commitment to a life long relationship together

Requirements:

1. At least one member of the couple will be a baptized person, involved in the life of the church as a communicant in good standing.

2. A time of Pre-counseling Discernment by the Couple as defined by the priest in charge. (*This is counseling with the couple prior to preparing for the service – focusing on the implications for the couple on moving forward. This is also a period of discernment for the clergyperson involved. The Bishop requests confidential, informal communication with the Priest at the conclusion of this step, prior to the next formal steps.*)

3. Written Communication with the Office of the Bishop at least 60 days prior to the proposed blessing, seeking permission to proceed. (*This communication will include a description of steps taken to prepare the congregation.*)

4. A signed Declaration of Intention, which outlines the church's expectations regarding the characteristics this union should exhibit:

> We, A.B and C.D., desiring to receive the Covenant blessing in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold this relationship to be a lifelong union between two people. "We believe that the union of two people in heart, body and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and when it is God's will, for the nurture of children in the knowledge and love of the Lord. And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

5. Multiple-session counseling of the Couple, defined and overseen by the priest in charge.

6. Written reflections subsequent to the blessing, from the priest and others the priest may invite, with a view to assisting in the Church-wide work described in Resolution C056.