

## DIOCESE OF DALLAS

### Marriage Nullity – RCIA & Previous Marriage Bonds

Date: November 5, 2010  
Re: RCIA  
To: Clergy and Lay Ministers  
From: Margaret Gillett, Assessor

The following has been communicated on several different occasions. However, I am sending this as a reminder.

Any candidate/catechumen being brought into the Church, if living in a conjugal relationship, must be in a presumably valid marital union according to the laws of the Catholic Church. Any candidate/catechumen being brought into the Church, even though now not living in a conjugal relationship but hoping to marry some day, must be free to marry according to the laws of the Catholic Church. If a person is not living in a conjugal relationship and never anticipates marrying again, he/she might be brought into the Catholic Church so long as the person understands, once a Catholic, he/she is bound to the Catholic form of marriage. In these rare instances, please consult with the Tribunal.

Thus, if a previously married candidate/catechumen is to be brought into the Church, all previous marriages must be reviewed and declared invalid so the current marriage or any future marriage can be presumably valid according to the laws of the Catholic Church. Again, in the case of a person who declares he/she never intends to marry again, the person still should be encouraged to have the previous marriages reviewed by the Tribunal.

Likewise, any spouse/intended spouse of the candidate/catechumen also must be free to marry according to the laws of the Catholic Church and must meet the same requirements concerning any review of previous marriages.

Any marriage of a candidate/catechumen requiring convalidation should be convalidated prior to bringing the person into the Church. An exception may arise with Privilege cases; therefore, please call the Tribunal if a decree has been issued to allow the person coming into the Church to use the Pauline or Petrine Privilege.

Any convalidation must be preceded by the appropriate marriage preparation as required by the parish and Diocese. And the parties must be properly instructed so they can fully understand that they are making a new act of consent in order to marry.

Please contact me at (214) 379-2840, [mgillett@cathdal.org](mailto:mgillett@cathdal.org) with any questions, so we can be sure all candidates/catechumens meet the marital requirements of the Catholic Church.