

**A Guide on
Catholic-Orthodox
Marriages for
Catholic Clergy and
Other Pastoral
Ministers**

COMMITTEE ON
ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

This pamphlet was produced under the auspices of the Catholic members of the Joint Committee of Orthodox and Catholic Bishops. Its purpose is to provide information for Catholic clergy and pastoral workers who are helping to prepare Catholics for marriage with an Orthodox Christian. The text was reviewed by Archbishop Rembert Weakland, Catholic Co-Chairman of the Joint Committee of Orthodox and Catholic Bishops, and was approved for publication by the NCCB Administrative Committee on September 9, 1997. It is authorized for publication by the undersigned.

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General Secretary
NCCB/USCC

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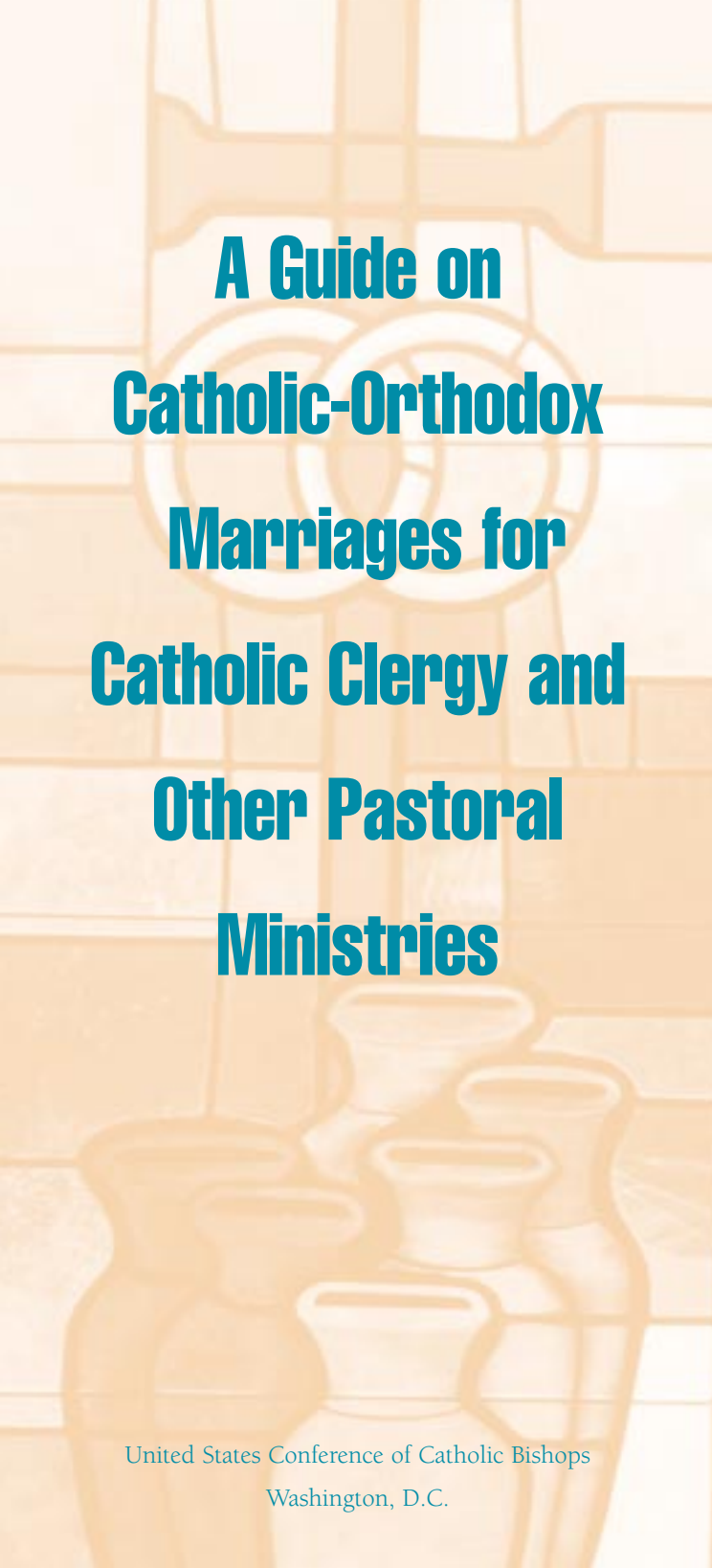
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United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Washington, D.C.

FACTS TO CONSIDER

Thinking About a Catholic-Orthodox Marriage

This pamphlet has been prepared for the purpose of assisting Catholic priests, deacons, and lay leaders involved in the preparation of Catholic-Orthodox couples for marriage. It is intended to provide accurate information about the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church and how this relationship affects Catholic-Orthodox couples, both in marrying and in living as Christian families. In the United States, where the Orthodox are small in number compared to Catholics, the reality of such marriages touches upon the future of those churches in our society. Reports now indicate that the overwhelming majority of recorded marriages involving Orthodox Christians are mixed marriages, and that the largest number of these are with Catholics.

A Relationship Between Churches

When spouses are active participants in separate churches, their marriage easily becomes a reflection of the relationship those churches have. These married couples are living examples of the ecumenical relationship between two churches that are both seeking to overcome the obstacles that prevent complete unity and to celebrate all that they have in common in faith and practice. Fortunately for Catholics and Orthodox Christians, their churches have undertaken monumental steps, in our own times, towards restoring unity between them. Referring to the coming millennium, Pope John Paul II and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I said together in 1995 that “we will celebrate this Great Jubilee on our pilgrimage towards full unity and towards that blessed day, which we pray is not far off, when we will be able to share

the same bread and the same cup, in the one Eucharist of the Lord.”

This positive vision is especially meaningful in the United States, where Catholics and Orthodox live side by side, generally without the age-old rivalries that still strain relations between their communities elsewhere. Catholics and Orthodox came to the United States from many countries, and gradually joined others in building the nation. Catholic and Orthodox leaders in the United States were the first anywhere in the world to form an ongoing ecumenical dialogue after the promulgation of the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) at the Second Vatican Council in 1964. Even today, this dialogue continues its work.

What Is the Orthodox Church?

The Orthodox Church is a communion of many national and regional churches that share the same faith and sacraments, as well as the same Byzantine liturgical, canonical, theological, and spiritual traditions. This communion is sometimes referred to as “the Byzantine Orthodox Church” or “the Eastern Orthodox Church” to distinguish it from the ancient Oriental Orthodox and Assyrian churches with which it is not in full communion.

All churches in the communion of the Orthodox Church recognize the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople (now located in the city called Istanbul in Turkey) as the “first among equals” and see in him the focal point of their unity. Major Orthodox churches are “autocephalous,” which means that they are fully independent and consequently able to administer themselves and resolve internal questions on their own. Currently there are thirteen generally recognized autocephalous churches, in addition to a number of other churches that are dependent on another Orthodox church. In our coun-

try there is also the Orthodox Church in America, which was granted autocephalous status by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1970. Its autocephaly, however, is not recognized by most of the other Orthodox churches.

Orthodox Christianity reached North America in the eighteenth century through the work of Russian missionaries in Alaska. Eventually Greek, Arab, Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian, and other Orthodox immigrants also came to America, bringing with them their faith and distinct national traditions. Clergy to serve them soon followed, and under their leadership these new communities organized themselves into distinct Orthodox church structures in various relationships with the churches of their homelands. Although there is an ancient church maxim that there should be only one bishop in each city, and in spite of the fact that the limits of Orthodox churches have normally followed national boundaries, several Orthodox churches now exist in our nation and have overlapping dioceses. Under the leadership of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which has responsibility for ministering to the Greek Orthodox in the Americas, in 1960 the leaders of the various Orthodox churches in our country formed a consultative body called the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOBA). Under the auspices of SCOBA and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, there are now two ongoing dialogues (one of bishops and one of scholars and specialists) on a national level between Orthodox and Catholics, and there are local dialogue groups and cooperative relationships in several cities around the country.

Sister Churches

In recent times the term “sister churches” has become very significant in this context. Used

earlier to refer to the relationship between local Orthodox churches, Catholic and Orthodox leaders today often use it to describe the relationship between their churches. For instance, on the Feast of St. Andrew, November 30, 1993, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I observed that the presence in Istanbul of a delegation from Rome

. . . bears witness to the profound desire, the inflexible will, and the firm decision of the two sister Churches to remain estranged no longer from one another but to make an effort to prepare, by sincere, honest and appropriate means, the way towards the full restoration of unity and communion in Christ, for the glory of the All-powerful God and for the salvation of his people everywhere.

The patriarch was following a practice begun by a predecessor, Athenagoras I, who first used this application of the term “sister churches” in a letter to Rome in 1962. Pope Paul VI used it convincingly in a message that he handed personally to Patriarch Athenagoras:

For centuries we lived this life of “sister churches,” and together held the Ecumenical Councils which guarded the deposit of faith against all corruption. And now, after a long period of division and mutual misunderstanding, the Lord is enabling us to discover ourselves as “sister churches” once more, in spite of the obstacles which were once raised between us.

In June 1993, the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue

between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church held its seventh plenary session at Balamand Monastery in Lebanon. In a joint statement, the representatives listed these elements among the things that the Orthodox and Catholic churches share as “sister churches”: profession of the same apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments, above all the one priesthood celebrating the one sacrifice of Christ, and possession of the apostolic succession of bishops. None of these is the exclusive property of either church. Clearly major efforts are underway in our times, to paraphrase the words of Pope John Paul II, for the sister Catholic and Orthodox churches through dialogue and prayer to attain perfect and total communion. This will not be an absorption or fusion, but a meeting in truth and love.

A Catholic-Orthodox Relationship

“A meeting in truth and love” aptly describes the loving relationship to which a Catholic-Orthodox couple can aspire. Both of them are baptized into the one Church of Christ. The Orthodox partner was sealed with chrism at baptism, and the Catholic may have already been sealed with chrism at confirmation. Their incorporation into the one body of Christ was completed by participation in the eucharist. Husband and wife have a firm foundation of unity in faith that will be a source of inspiration and strength for them as a couple. They will be able to read together from their respective spiritual heritages of the one Church and may already be reciting some prayers together. At the same time, the couple will have observed that the form of the creed used in their churches is slightly different regarding the sending of the Holy Spirit: the Orthodox profess belief in the “Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father,” while Latin Catholics add the phrase, “and the

Son” (*filioque* in Latin). There are other differences and disagreements in viewpoints and practice that may present obstacles and even become divisive.

The Catholic Church has recently taken a more positive attitude towards mixed marriages. After certain initiatives taken by Pope Paul VI, the change was firmly established in 1981 in Pope John Paul II’s apostolic exhortation on the family (*Familiaris Consortio*). After reviewing the difficulties inherent in mixed marriages, the pope suggested that such marriages can also have a beneficial effect on the effort to restore unity among Christians. His words are an encouragement for both parties to be faithful to their religious duties. He noted especially their common baptism, the grace alive in them and through them, their pursuit of common moral and spiritual values, and the religious celebration of what they share as Christians. This is especially true for Catholic-Orthodox couples.

The Reality of a Mixed Marriage

In spite of the progress towards unity that has been achieved between Catholics and Orthodox in recent years, both churches still consider marriages between their faithful to be “mixed” marriages, although truly the sacrament of marriage in Christ. The primary concern of both churches remains that of assuring the strength and stability of the indissoluble marital union and the family life that flows from it. Practical experience suggests that mixed marriages frequently encounter difficulties for the couples themselves, for the children born to them in maintaining their Christian faith and commitment, and for the harmony of family life. Thus both churches recommend that their faithful marry a member of their own church.

Although, as Pope Paul VI once put it, the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church are

already in “nearly total communion” with each other, a Catholic is still expected to obtain permission to marry an Orthodox. If the couple desires that the wedding should take place in an Orthodox church, a dispensation from canonical form by the Catholic bishop is also required. This is necessary for liceity, not validity. The Catholic partner will be asked to give an assurance that he or she intends to remain a Catholic and do all that is possible to baptize and raise any children as Catholics. The Orthodox party is to be informed that the Catholic party has given this assurance.

An Orthodox also needs the permission of the Orthodox Church to marry a Catholic. Here it must be kept in mind that as a general rule, the Orthodox Church does not allow its faithful to be married in a non-Orthodox ceremony, and that in Orthodox practice the marriage usually takes place in the parish of the groom. It is of the greatest importance that the couple discuss the implications of where the wedding ceremony will take place with both their pastors, Catholic and Orthodox.

For several decades, the usual Catholic practice has been to accommodate the requirement placed on the Orthodox partner by his or her Church and recommend an Orthodox wedding to avoid obvious negative effects on the couple. Although this obligation is imposed on the Orthodox Christian, it is not in itself an ecumenically valid motive for the Catholic pastor to recommend automatically a dispensation from the Catholic canonical form of marriage. There are often very good reasons for prolonging the discussion of the location of the wedding ceremony. Moreover, this situation may well foreshadow other difficulties that the marriage will encounter, such as negative attitudes in the families.

Since 1970, Catholic and Orthodox representatives in the United States have been dis-

cussing dispensations and other topics related to Orthodox-Catholic marriages, but a mutually agreeable solution has not been reached. Catholic pastors know that there are some cases when the couple agonizes over this requirement placed on the Orthodox partner, and that the better pastoral advice would not be for the Catholic partner to give up the opportunity to be married in the home parish. On the other hand, in nearly all cases of mixed marriages celebrated outside the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox partner incurs a disciplinary condition that must be corrected before he or she will be able to receive the sacraments again in the Orthodox Church. Whenever possible, it is helpful for the Catholic and Orthodox pastors to be in contact with each other to discuss the pastoral implications of the couple's decision.

Celebrating the Eucharist Together

Participation in the eucharist together is potentially a particularly vexing problem for Catholic-Orthodox couples. In principle, the Catholic Church allows Orthodox Christians to receive the sacraments of penance, eucharist, and the anointing of the sick when they ask for them of their own free will and are properly disposed. Indeed, in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, Pope John Paul II described this possibility as “a source of joy” (no. 46). On the other hand, the Orthodox Church does not allow its faithful to receive Catholic sacraments. From an Orthodox point of view, sacramental sharing is a sign of full communion of faith which does not exist yet between the two churches. This is why most Orthodox pastors instruct their faithful not to receive communion in a Catholic church and will not give communion to Catholics who request it.

For both Catholics and Orthodox, there are two principles at work here: (1) the inseparable

link between receiving the eucharist and full unity in faith, and (2) the fact that the eucharist is also spiritual food for the baptized enabling them to overcome sin and to live the life of Christ. Given the fact that Catholics and Orthodox share the same belief about the eucharist, there are occasions when the Catholic Church not only allows but even encourages the Orthodox to share in its liturgical worship, and Catholic pastors have been instructed to administer certain sacraments to them with no general questions asked (see the 1993 *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, nos. 122-128). If Orthodox pastors were willing, Catholics would be free to receive from them. In all these cases, every effort should be made to avoid scandal, suspicion, indifference, and pressure to leave one church and join the other.

Children and Religious Upbringing

The legislation of the two churches may present unforeseen challenges regarding the spiritual upbringing of the children born of Catholic-Orthodox marriages. Each partner will almost certainly be asked to promise in some way to baptize and raise the children in his or her own church. Many will be tempted to put off this decision to see how things work out, but in any case the question needs to be discussed by the couple before the marriage takes place.

How the children will be raised may be an especially serious concern of family members, pastors, and friends. Ideally, the couple would be able to make this decision and make sure that their children, though members of one church, would be comfortable participants in the traditions and church life of the other parent's church as well. Their home would be a sign of the unity that the two churches can enjoy, and their hopes would be in the forefront of hopes for the

restoration of unity between Christians in the east and the west. But this is only an ideal. Besides the impossibility of predicting how the children will respond to the decision, the parents may continue to feel pressure, overtly and subtly, to raise the children exclusively in one way or the other.

At present both the Catholic and Orthodox churches require their faithful entering into such marriages to ensure that any children be baptized and raised in their own church. *The Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, issued in 1993 by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, offers helpful advice on this question. The Catholic party will be asked to affirm "that he or she is prepared to avoid the dangers of abandoning the faith and to promise sincerely to do all in his/her power to see that the children of the marriage be baptized and educated in the Catholic Church" (no. 150). On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that if, "notwithstanding the Catholic's best efforts, the children are not baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church, the Catholic parent does not fall subject to the censure of Canon Law" (no. 151). Marriage with an Orthodox Christian is a special case, given the fact that we share the same sacraments, above all the priesthood and the eucharist. "If proper pastoral care is given to persons involved in these marriages, the faithful of both communions can be helped to understand how children born of such marriages will be initiated into and spiritually nourished by the sacramental mysteries of Christ. Their formation in authentic Christian doctrine and ways of Christian living would, for the most part, be similar in each Church" (no. 152).

It is recommended that the integrity of church membership be respected, so that all such children receive the sacraments in one

church and that they be educated in that one church. However, there is a special obligation, especially in these marriages, to make every effort for the children to know and to appreciate the traditions and practices of the church of the other parent. This does not mean only an occasional visit to the other church or a brief discussion with that parent. It implies that the life of the family is marked in special ways by the traditions and practices of both churches. In addition, there are many kinds of services that the family can attend together, apart from the eucharist, which do not highlight the exclusion of any members of the family. Vespers or evening prayer services, scripture celebrations and study, and seasonal services for Advent or Lent are all examples of these.

Family Traditions

Marriage preparation should include an opportunity for each to learn about the traditions of the other. Patience and adjustment will be required for the marriage to grow. The seasons of Lent and Easter may not overlap exactly, the practices of fasting and preparation and reception of communion may not be the same, and the forms of daily and weekly prayer will differ. The challenge will be given to these couples to try to work out these differences. Forming support groups with other couples and families may be of help. Certainly they have every right as Christians to expect their pastors to assist them through the marriage. Ongoing contact with their pastors should be encouraged and not limited to marriage preparation and the ceremony itself.

A COMMON THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE

Mutual Understanding and Dialogue

In spite of the difficulties, there is a growing consensus among Catholic and Orthodox theologians regarding the sacrament of marriage. Numerous dialogues in the United States from 1970 through 1990 produced a wealth of agreed statements and reflection papers on Orthodox-Catholic marriages. The following five sections summarize the main themes of the consensus that has emerged so far.

The Sacredness of Marriage

At a time when the sacredness of married life is seriously threatened by contrary views and lifestyles, Catholics and Orthodox can affirm a common faith in the sacred reality of married life in Christ. Together the two churches regard Christian marriage as a vocation from God in which the liberating effect of divine love, a gift of the Holy Spirit, is experienced through love of one another. This human love will express itself in permanent commitment to mutual fidelity and support in all aspects of life, spiritual as well as physical. The couple's love may also express itself in the generation of new life and in the physical and spiritual nurturing of children. A primary responsibility of parents will be the spiritual formation of their children, a task not limited to assuring church membership and providing for formal religious education, but extending to all aspects of Christian living.

The married couple will assume new roles in the church community. Just as marriage partners have a responsibility for the building up of the Church, so too the church community has a responsibility to help each Christian family foster its life of faith. In particular, the Church community shares in the parents' responsibility for the spiritual formation of children. Pastors in

particular are to provide spiritual assistance to couples in mixed marriages and to help them foster the unity of their families.

The Sacramentality of Marriage

Catholic and Orthodox Christians share a common faith and conviction that marriage is a sacrament of Jesus Christ. They profess together the presence of Christ in the Holy Spirit through the prayers and actions of wedding liturgies. The spouses hold the common belief that it is Christ who unites them in a life of mutual love. Hence, in this holy union, both of them are called by Christ not only to live and work together, but also to share their Christian lives so that each of them, under grace and with the aid of the other, may grow in holiness and Christian perfection. This relationship between husband and wife has been established and sanctified by the Lord. Marriage, as a sacred vocation, mirrors the union of Christ with the Church (Eph 5:23).

The Gospels record that Jesus affirmed the profound significance of marriage. Christian tradition, building upon the teaching of Jesus, continues to proclaim the sanctity of marriage. Both churches teach that marriage is a fundamental relationship in which a man and a woman, by total sharing with each other, seek their own growth in holiness and that of their children, and show forth the presence of God's kingdom. Having God's love poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit, they will exemplify and reflect in their lives together the mystery of love which unites the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Thus, marriage becomes a dynamic relationship that will challenge them to live according to the high standards of divine love.

The Celebration of Marriage

In the teaching of both churches, a sacramental marriage requires both the mutual con-

sent of the believing Christian partners and the official witness of the Church. At the present time, there are differences in the ways the theological and canonical norms for marriage are fulfilled in each church.

The Orthodox Church, as a rule, accepts as sacramental only those marriages of Christians baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity that are sanctified in the church's liturgy through the blessing of an Orthodox bishop or priest. As a norm, the Catholic Church accepts as sacramental those marriages of Christians baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity at which a Catholic bishop or priest presides or, in the more recent discipline of the Latin church, a deacon. With proper permission, a minister of another church may assist.

There are also differences in Latin Catholic and Orthodox theological understandings of the minister of the sacrament of matrimony. Most Orthodox theologians hold that the priest is the proper "minister of the sacrament," whereas Catholic theologians of the Latin tradition usually speak of the couple as "ministering the sacrament to each other." It should be noted, however, that this Catholic position has never been formally defined and that Eastern Catholics have the same understanding of this as the Orthodox.

Both churches agree that ecclesial context is constitutive of the Christian sacrament of marriage. Within this fundamental agreement, a study of history shows that no one particular form of expressing this ecclesial context may be considered absolutely normative in all circumstances for both churches. If this reading of history is correct, then the present differences of practice and theology concerning the required ecclesial context for marriage are expressions of legitimate diversity rather than a contradiction in primary teaching or dogma.

A “double wedding” ceremony, that is, a wedding first before one pastor and then before the other, cannot be approved by the Catholic pastor because the couple can receive the sacrament only one time. In the case of a Catholic wedding, the Catholic pastor would do well to invite the Orthodox pastor to the ceremony and to seat him in a place of honor and provide him with a role in the service. This could be reading from Scripture, giving an exhortation, and offering a blessing, but not the marital blessing. But it may be that the Orthodox pastor will not be able to attend the wedding in a Catholic parish.

Many Catholics desire a wedding ceremony within a eucharistic liturgy. Often for a mixed marriage, this serves to draw attention to the separation of Christians especially on the question of eucharistic sharing. Concerning an Orthodox-Catholic wedding, the guidelines are accommodating from a Catholic point of view. However, the Orthodox partner and the partner’s Orthodox family and friends will be asked by their church not to receive communion at a Catholic eucharist. Conversely, at a eucharist in an Orthodox parish, Catholics will not be offered communion. Keep all this in mind when planning the ceremony. Know that for these reasons and others—for example, the distinct liturgical practices in the two churches—one family may feel “left out” as the ceremony takes place.

The Enduring Nature of Marriage

The common teaching of the two churches follows sacred Scripture in affirming the enduring nature of marriage. Already the Old Testament used marriage to describe the covenantal relationship between God and God’s people (Hosea). The Epistle to the Ephesians sees marriage as the image of the relationship that exists between Christ and the Church (Eph 5:31-33). Jesus spoke of marriage as established

“from the beginning of creation.” He also taught: “‘And the two shall become one.’ . . . So they are no longer two but one. . . . Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate” (Mk 10:6, 8-9; Mt 19:4-6).

The two churches have expressed their conviction concerning the enduring nature of Christian marriage in diverse ways. In the laws of the Orthodox Church, for example, perpetual monogamy is upheld as the norm of marriage, so that those entering upon a second or subsequent marriage are subject to penance, even in the case of widows and widowers. In the Catholic Church the enduring nature of marriage has been emphasized especially in the absolute prohibition of remarriage after divorce.

Given this common understanding of the enduring nature of marriage, it is of the greatest importance that pastors give special attention to Catholic-Orthodox couples and do what they can to support their marriages. Such couples can be invited to participate in worship services together, serving together as lectors, for example. It might also be possible to organize support groups for Catholic-Orthodox couples and to develop other ways of offering encouragement to them. As always, any impression of proselytism is to be avoided.

The Catholic understanding of the enduring nature of marriage has an effect on one pastoral situation that should be noted. If the Orthodox partner had been married before, was divorced, but has been declared free to marry again by the Orthodox Church, the Catholic pastor will not be able to permit the marriage until the case of the previous marriage has been evaluated by the Catholic Church. Catholic leaders have expressed the greatest respect for Orthodox canon law, and the general councils held in the West carefully avoided declaring that the Orthodox practice of allowing divorced

Orthodox Christians to remarry is an obstacle to full communion. Nevertheless, the Catholic pastor cannot allow a divorced person, whether Orthodox or Catholic, to marry without a declaration from a Catholic marriage tribunal that he or she is free to do so.

Spiritual Formation of Children

Both parents will need to play an active role in every aspect of their children's spiritual formation. Pastors are expected to counsel them and their children against indifference in religious matters. But since unity in Christ through the Holy Spirit will be the ultimate goal of their family life, all the family members should be willing, in a spirit of love, trust, and freedom, to learn more about their Christian faith. By their prayer, study, and discussion, they will seek ever greater unity in Christ and will be led to express their commitment to this unity in all aspects of their lives.

In marriages in which these two churches are involved, decisions, including the initial one of the children's church membership, rest with both of the parents. The decisions should take into account the good of the children, the strength of the religious convictions of the parents and other relatives, the demands of conscience, the unity and stability of the family, and other specific contexts. In some cases, when it appears highly probable that only one of the parents will fulfill his or her responsibility, it seems desirable that the children should be raised in that partner's church. It is most important that both parties be informed of any promises the other has made.

In other cases, the children's spiritual formation may include a fuller participation in the life and traditions of both churches, respecting always each church's canonical order. In these cases, the decision regarding the children's

church membership is more difficult to make. It is possible to make this decision in good conscience because of the proximity of the two churches' doctrine and practice which enables each, to a high degree, to see the other precisely as Church, as the locus for the communion of the faithful with God and with each other through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

By Way of Conclusion

If any canonical problems arise, it is advisable to consult the chancery. But Catholic clergy would also benefit from personal study of the relationship between these two churches. Useful resources include the fifth edition of *The Eastern Christian Churches: A Brief Survey* (Rome, 1995), by Ronald G. Roberson, CSP, and, in the case of marriages with Oriental Orthodox Christians, *Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Interchurch Marriages and Other Pastoral Relationships* (Washington, D.C., 1995). In addition, all the joint documents produced by the Catholic-Orthodox dialogues at the international and national levels are found in *The Quest for Unity: Orthodox and Catholics in Dialogue* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, N.Y., 1996) edited by John Borelli and John Erickson. All these books are available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.

Related Titles

A Guide for Catholics Considering Marriage with an Orthodox Christian

Intended to provide background information about the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church for couples contemplating marriage with an Orthodox Christian. Issues include an overview of the Orthodox Church and the realities of an interchurch marriage, eucharistic celebration, children and religious upbringing, and family traditions. No. 5-263, 16 pp.

The Eastern Christian Churches

A Brief Survey

This fifth edition provides a clear overview of four distinct and separate Eastern Christian communions: the Assyrian Church of the East, the six Oriental Orthodox churches, the Orthodox Church (including the autocephalous and the autonomous churches), and the Catholic Eastern churches. By Ronald G. Roberson, CSP, and published by the University Press of the Pontifical Oriental Institute.

No. 310-X, 256 pp.

Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Interchurch Marriages and Other Pastoral Relationships

An excellent set of pastoral aids created for priests and families entering into interchurch marriages of Roman Catholics and Oriental Orthodox, specifically Syrian and Armenian. Contains resources and documentation providing background, relationships, and current contact information within these churches. From the Catholic bishops and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches.

No. 097-4, 164 pp.

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