

# FAITH CHAT

with James & John

## Can Divorced Catholics Remarry, Validly?

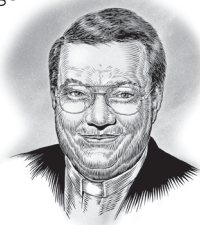
*Know This...*

In a valid marriage, spouses vow to remain faithful to each other. Jesus says a valid marriage is indissoluble. In the eyes of God and His Church, only the death of a spouse can end a valid marriage. Since God does not recognize divorce, neither spouse is free to remarry. An annulment is not a Catholic divorce. It's a declaration of nullity issued by the Church after careful and thorough investigation. An annulment, not a divorce decree, declares a marriage invalid and frees the man and woman to enter into a valid one.



**John:** If divorced Catholics attempt to remarry without permission of the Church, they enter into an invalid marriage, they objectively commit adultery when they partake of sexual intimacy, and they are not properly disposed to receive the sacraments.

**James:** The Church does acknowledge that there are situations in which a validly married husband and wife must obtain a civil divorce to protect one spouse from the other; to ensure certain legal rights, and to protect and care for the children.

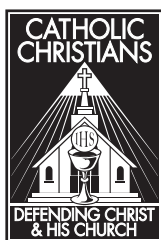


**John:** Examples include: gambling debt, substance abuse, physical harm, or child support. When this happens, neither spouse is free to remarry, but they can share in the sacraments.

**James:** Jesus is crystal clear in His teaching on divorce and remarriage. If validly married spouses divorce and remarry, they are objectively committing the grave sin of adultery. The Church cannot change divine law.

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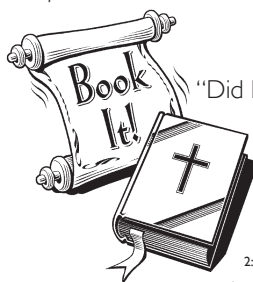
"Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.'" Mk 10:11-12

"The Church holds the exchange of consent between the spouses to be the indispensable element that 'makes the marriage.' If consent is lacking there is no marriage. The consent must be an act of the will of each of the contracting parties, free of coercion or grave external fear. If this freedom is lacking the marriage is invalid. For this reason (or for other reasons that render the marriage null and void) the Church, after an examination of the situation by the competent ecclesiastical tribunal, can declare the nullity of a marriage, i.e., that the marriage never existed." ccc 1626, 1628-29 "The union of man and wife is from God, so divorce is from the devil." St. Augustine



## PAPA SAYS

"We have decided, with the support of the Catholic Faith, that the marriage which was first strengthened by divine grace is to be upheld; and the arrangement with the second woman, the first woman surviving and not dismissed by divorce, can by no means be legitimate." Pope St. Innocent I, 417 A.D.  
 "[Marriage is] 'a deliberate act of will, and from this union of souls by God's decree a sacred and inviolable bond arises.'" Pope Pius XI  
 "Divorce is born of perverted morals, and leads, as experience shows, to vicious habits in public and private life." Pope Leo XIII



"Did He not make one being, with flesh and spirit: and what does that one require but godly offspring? You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith with the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce, says the Lord, the God of Israel." Mal 2:15-16 "To the married, however, I give this instruction (not I, but the Lord): a wife should not separate from her husband—and if she does separate she must either remain single or become reconciled to her husband—and a husband should not divorce his wife... A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she wishes, provided that it be in the Lord." 1 Cor 7:10-11, 39

Loving Father in heaven, what you have brought together no one has the authority to separate. The unity of husband and wife can no more be broken than Your Son's unity with His Church. I pray that every husband and wife will turn to You in times of joy and times of trouble and know that You are always with them. I ask this in Your Most Holy Name. Amen.

