



Petition to the Bishop for Consent to Solemnize a Marriage After Divorce or Annulment

When Clergy are asked to preside at the marriage of a couple of which one or both of the parties has previously been married, Clergy must submit to the Bishop a petition to Solemnize a Marriage after Divorce. If one or both of the parties has been divorced more than once, the clergy person must refer the couple to a professional counselor who has the skill to determine if the issues that caused the dissolution of the marriages have been rectified and if the parties can enter into the sacrament of marriage fully committed to its responsibilities. Clergy should provide ample time prior to the planned wedding to counsel the couple and, if necessary, to refer them to a counselor. Early during premarital preparation, Clergy should review the necessary requirements for the Bishop's consent for solemnizing a remarriage (listed in the form below), especially examining the final decree(s) of divorce or annulment.

The petition must be submitted to Bishops Office no later than one month before the wedding date to ensure adequate time for the Bishop's review. The Bishop will respond with either approval or denial of the petition. If you are petitioning the Bishop for permission to preside at a remarriage, you should not consent to do the marriage until the Bishop's consent is received.

Send the completed petition to the Office of the Bishop:

Email: bishopsoffice@thediocese.net

Mail: 110 W. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23220

The Diocese of Virginia

Petition to the Bishop for Consent to Solemnize a Marriage After Divorce or Annulment

Petition submitted by (please type or print):

The Rev. _____

Church: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Priest's email: _____

Date of Petition: _____ Proposed Day & Date of Wedding: _____

To the Bishop:

I petition for consent to solemnize the marriage of (eliminate [b] or [c])

a. (Name) _____
whose prior marriage ended in divorce or annulment;

and

b. (Name) _____
whose prior marriage ended in divorce or annulment

or

c. (Name of other party, if not above) _____

Check "yes" or "no" to every question. Where "no" is checked, attach a full explanation.

- Yes No 1. I have met in person with both parties and they are engaged in a program of pre-marital counseling satisfactory to me, or they have met in person with a priest of this church satisfactory to me and I have consulted that priest and am assured that they are engaged in a program of pre-marital counseling.
- Yes No 2. Each party has signed the Declaration of Intention.
- Yes No 3. At least one of the parties is baptized.
- Yes No 4. I have inquired of the parties whether they have consulted any other priest of this church regarding the proposed marriage and if they have, I have personally consulted that priest prior to submitting this petition.
- Yes No 5. I have personally examined the final decree(s) of divorce or annulment and I certify that on the basis of my examination, the prior marriage(s) is(are) lawfully dissolved.
- Yes No 6. I believe these parties intend a true Christian marriage.

- Yes No 7. I have thoroughly discussed each party's personal readiness for marriage with them (or such discussion has occurred in a counseling program satisfactory to me).
- Yes No 8. I believe each has realistically faced and evaluated the cause(s) of the deaths of the previous marriage(s).
- Yes No 9. I am satisfied that each party has an adequate continuing concern for the previous spouse(s) and any children.
- Yes No 10. I believe the marriage of this couple is likely to be a demonstrable sign of the spiritual union between Christ and his Church.
- Yes No 11. I am willing to solemnize the marriage, if consent is granted.
- Yes No 12. I am satisfied that the couple (or at least one party with the support of the other) intends to live out their marriage with the support of the Christian community as participants in some congregation of the church.
- Yes No 13. At least one calendar year has elapsed since the date(s) of the final decree/s. (Exceptions are possible, but only if a minimum of 18 months' uninterrupted separation has occurred. Attach a full explanation for request for an exception.)
- Yes No 14. All matters of property and custody have been settled.
- Yes No 15. I have discussed with this couple, to the degree I believe to be appropriate, differences, if any, in age, income, religious discipline, patterns of conflict, and, especially for older couples with grown children, whether a written, pre-nuptial agreement on disposition of assets, property, or other estate planning would be appropriate for them to consider (or, such discussion of those issues has occurred in a counseling program satisfactory to me).

The following question is for situations where either or both parties has been divorced [or had a marriage annulled] more than once:

- Yes No 16. I have received from a professional counselor a statement concerning this couple and the statement is attached along with an explanatory letter from me.

Where questions 1-15 are answered "Yes" and question 16 is not applicable, no additional material is required to accompany this Petition.

I request consent of the Bishop for me to solemnize this marriage.

(Signature of member of the clergy submitting petition)