

# SECOND MARRIAGES

The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal, IX Bishop of Southern Ohio

## *Guidelines for Solemnizing a Second Marriage*

Under our Canons, no Member of the Clergy may solemnize the marriage "of any person who has been the husband or wife of any other person then living" except with "the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese wherein the Member of the Clergy is canonically resident."

## *Diocesan Policies*

In fulfillment of these canonical requirements, the following provisions and procedures apply to all re-marriages within the Diocese of Southern Ohio:

- ✦ A period of **one year** shall have elapsed following the final decree of divorce or dissolution.
- ✦ The written request should be received at least **sixty days** prior to the wedding. It is not necessary to specify a scheduled date in the request.
- ✦ Once the wedding (if permitted) has taken place, it will be the officiant's responsibility to inform the bishop when and where it took place using this form: <http://bit.ly/1AJIHbW>

## *Submitting a Second Marriage Request*

All requests must include a copy of the signed Declaration of Intention, a copy of the final decree(s), and a Letter of Endorsement from the officiating priest. The Letter of Endorsement should offer a thorough response to the following:

- ✦ State the relationship of the parties to the Church (at least one of the parties should be a baptized member of the Episcopal Church) and the community of faith.
- ✦ Describe the circumstances and reasons for the breakdown of the previous marriage for each individual as well as the priest's pastoral assessment of the proposed marriage.
- ✦ Provide information regarding the "continuing concern" called for in Canon 1.19 for "the well-being of the former spouse, and of any children of the prior marriage."

## **Diocesan Checklist**

- Declaration of Intention
- Copy of Final Decree(s)
- Letter of Endorsement
  - Relationship of both parties to the Church and the community of faith
  - Circumstances and reasons for breakdown of previous marriage
  - "Continuing concern" info regarding former spouse and children of prior marriage
  - Pastoral assessment of proposed marriage

Please note that the Bishop does not grant consent for third marriages except in highly unusual circumstances. In the case of a third marriage request, additional information may be required.

### *Notes on the Canons*

Canon 1.18 All provisions shall apply, including the required signing of the Declaration of Intention.

Canon 1.19 Pertains to the Bishop of the canonical residence of the priest, not the couple. As of January 1, 2001, consents under this canon may also be given by the Bishop where a priest is licensed to officiate if the marriage is to be in that Diocese.

Marriages which are to take place in a Diocese in which the priest is neither licensed nor canonically resident must be affirmed by the Bishop of that Diocese following the consent given by the Bishop of the Diocese where the priest is canonically resident.

All marriages solemnized under Title I, Canon 19, Section 3 must be reported to the Bishop following the marriage liturgy. Use this form: <http://bit.ly/1AJIHbW>

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. *I am canonically resident in the Diocese of Iowa, but am licensed and function in the Diocese of Southern Ohio. One of my parishioners asked me to solemnize her second marriage in Columbus next year. Whose permission do I need?*  
Consent for a marriage to be performed in Southern Ohio should be sought from the Bishop of Southern Ohio.
2. *Do I need to be licensed by the State of Ohio too?*  
Yes. An application for the license required to perform marriages in the State of Ohio is available on the Secretary of State website: <http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/recordsIndexes/MinisterLicense.aspx>
3. *I am canonically resident in Southern Ohio but am licensed and functioning in the Diocese of Nevada. I was just asked to officiate for a second marriage in Arizona. Whose permission do I ask?*  
Consent should be sought from the Bishop of Southern Ohio and affirmed by the Bishop of Arizona.
4. *I'm a deacon. Am I allowed to solemnize a second marriage in the Diocese of Southern Ohio?*  
No. Because the Blessing of the Marriage is at the heart of this liturgy, deacons are not authorized to solemnize marriages in this diocese.

Please email the required "Diocesan Checklist" documents to [abower@diosohio.org](mailto:abower@diosohio.org) or mail printed copies to her attention at:

Diocese of Southern Ohio  
c/o Amanda Bower  
412 Sycamore Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202