



Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

Metropolitan Tribunal

P.O. Box 907 - Houston, TX 77001-0907 - (713) 807-9286

DSF Supported

Dear Petitioner and Case Sponsor,

Thank you in advance for considering to pursue this process with our Tribunal. The Catholic Church bases her understanding of marriage on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Among many things, this teaches us that marriage is more than just a private relationship between two spouses, but something which is intimately connected with God and touches on our very nature as human beings. As such, marriage has both a social and spiritual dimension. When a marital relationship breaks down, the Catholic Church is always concerned about its impact on the couple, their children (if any) and family members, the people of God in society and the stability of the institution of marriage itself.

Following a divorce, there are various ways that someone can pursue having a future marriage recognized as valid within the Catholic Church. One of these options is called a Favor of the Faith (also known as the Petrine Privilege). This is not a Declaration of Nullity, but rather a merciful action of the Church which dissolves a non-sacramental marriage bond to benefit someone's faith. By non-sacramental marriage, we are referring to a marriage in which one or both parties were not baptized. A Favor of the Faith (Petrine Privilege) dissolves a non-sacramental marriage bond in which at least one of the parties was not baptized during the common life of the previous marriage. These dissolutions can only be granted on behalf of the Holy Father by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF), which charges petitioners \$530 to process these cases.

Before beginning this process, it is important to review the requirements for these cases in order to determine whether such a dissolution is possible. The DDF in Vatican City is governed by special norms for this process, and they cannot grant this dissolution unless all of the following conditions are met:

1. At least one of the former spouses was unbaptized throughout the entire conjugal life of the marriage.
2. There is no hope of reconciliation.
3. The petitioner was not the only or main cause of the breakdown of the conjugal relationship.
4. The petitioner has a new intended spouse, and that spouse did not provoke or cause the breakdown of the relationship.
5. The petitioner has fulfilled his/her moral and civil obligations toward the first spouse and offspring.
6. If the previously unbaptized spouse in the prior marriage became baptized after they separated, they did not exchange sexual relations afterward.
7. A Catholic party must declare that he/she is prepared to remove all dangers of defecting from the faith. The non-Catholic (if there is one) in the future marriage must declare that he/she is

prepared to allow the Catholic party the freedom to practice his/her religion and the freedom to baptize and educate their children as Catholics.

8. If the previous marriage to be dissolved was between a Catholic and an unbaptized person, then a petition for a Favor of the Faith can only be accepted if the Catholic party's new marriage will be with someone who is also baptized.
9. The Petitioner has not already received a dissolution in Favor of the Faith before for any other marriage.
10. The Catholic party in the new, intended marriage is actively practicing his/her faith.

If these conditions apply in your particular case, please complete the Favor of the Faith Petition Form with the assistance of your Case Sponsor. Make sure to include the following necessary information and documents:

1. For the Petitioner, please enclose the following document:
 - If baptized, a newly issued baptismal certificate
2. For the Respondent, please enclose the following document (if you are able to obtain it):
 - If baptized, a newly issued baptismal certificate
3. For the marriage to be dissolved, please enclose the following documents:
 - A certified civil marriage license
 - The complete civil divorce decree
 - Baptismal certificates of any children of the union who are still minors
 - Copy of any dispensation for disparity of cult (if applicable)
4. For the Intended Spouse, please enclose the following documents:
 - If baptized, a baptismal certificate (issued within the last 6 months for Catholic parties)
 - Promises for a Mixed Marriage (if applicable)
5. For any previous marriages by any party, including the intended spouse, please include the following documents:
 - A certified civil marriage license, complete civil divorce decree, Catholic declaration of nullity, and/or death certificate if applicable

We trust and hope that this new process will be a blessing to you. Humbly I remain

Your servant in Christ,



The Very Rev. R. Lucien Millette, J.C.L.
Judicial Vicar