

Ask the Deacon by Deacon Mike for January, 2017

Are non-Catholic marriages valid in the eyes of the Catholic Church?

In general, marriages between non-Catholics, of whatever religion, are considered valid. But the situation is not as simple as it sounds because there are two kinds of marriage: natural marriage and sacramental marriage. Sacramental marriage exists only between baptized people, so marriages between two Jews or two Muslims are not sacramental.

Assuming that there are no impediments, marriages between Jews, Muslims, or other faiths are valid natural marriages.

Marriages between two Protestants or two Eastern Orthodox also would be valid, presuming no impediments, and these would be sacramental marriages and thus indissoluble once they are consummated.

When one spouse is a Catholic and the other is non-Catholic, the marriage will be natural or sacramental depending on whether or not the non-Catholic party is baptized. Thus if a Catholic marries a Hindu, the marriage will be valid and natural; if a Catholic marries a Protestant, it will be valid and sacramental.

All that is assuming that there is nothing to prevent the marriage from being valid. One common cause of marriages being invalid is the failure on the part of Catholics to observe the Catholic form of marriage. As members of the Church, Catholics are obliged to either observe the Catholic form of marriage or be dispensed from it by the Bishop. If a Catholic does not observe the Catholic form of marriage (e.g., by having a non-Catholic wedding) and does not receive a dispensation before the service, then the marriage--whether to a Catholic, a baptized non-Catholic, or an unbaptized person---will be invalid in the eyes of the Church, though not necessarily by the state.

I admit it: I drive fast, since I hate wasting time in traffic and I have a long commute. Someone told me speeding was a mortal sin. Is it? Isn't the speed limit a law of man and not of God?

Yes, but breaking the speed limit can be mortal sin if it threatens harm to you or anyone else. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "the virtue of temperance disposes us to avoid every kind of excess; the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, or medicine. Those incur grave guilt who, by drunkenness or love of speed, endanger their own and others' safety on the road, at sea, or in the air." (CCC 2290)

EMBRACE YOUR HERITAGE AS A CHILD OF GOD

Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians reveals many remarkable gifts that we as Christians are given in the Church. This letter tells us about the nature of the Church--as a body, as a household, as a mystery, as a communion, as a bride, and as an army. It shows us the great inheritance that awaits us as sons and daughters, adopted fully into the family of God. It reveals how God's great love for us can transform our daily lives---if we allow it. Ephesians will enrich your faith and show you how to live it out.

In an eight-part video program, Jeff Cavins provides an in-depth explanation of the Letter to the Ephesians. You do not have to be Catholic, have prior Bible study experience, or a member of Queen of Peace parish to participate. All are welcome!

You can be part of this parish study beginning Tuesday, January 3 from 7-8:30 p.m. or you may choose to attend on Thursday morning January 5, from 9-10:45 a.m. all in St. Isidore Hall. There is no cost to you unless you would prefer to have a study guide which will cost around \$24. Please call the parish office at 863-4344 to register to help with planning. Call Deacon Mike @ 867 1832 if you have any questions.

Please keep Sunday January 22nd free in order to participate in the annual Right to Life Prayer March around the Butler County Courthouse. Time has not yet been established.