

Ask the Deacon

I am in the midst of a divorce I believe could be avoided with counseling, but my wife is moving toward divorce with no second thoughts. Is it wrong for me to sign divorce papers? If I don't, she can still divorce me, but we would have to go thru trial, and that would ruin me financially.

Civil divorce has no effect on the indissolubility of a valid marriage! The Church permits civil divorce only for the equitable division of property that has been held in common, and or for the safety of a spouse and children. If not signing the divorce papers will not prevent the divorce, then refusing to do so might be only a waste of money and time. You are not obliged to incur financial ruin in order to avoid signing divorce papers. Remember you are still able to participate in the sacraments, as long as you are free from serious sin!

Can Catholics pray to Old Testament heroes such as Abraham, Moses, David, and Elijah, as one would pray to Christian saints like St. Peter or St. Clare?

Certainly. The Catechism tells us, "The patriarchs, prophets, and certain other Old Testament figures have been and always will be honored as saints in all of the Church's liturgical traditions (CCC 61). Statues of such Old Testament figures as Moses, David, and Elijah can be found in many older Churches, a reminder to ask for the intercessions of these saints.

Many Old Testament saints offer compelling examples of faith, perseverance, and heroic virtue and are worthy of our devotion and prayers as the angels named in the Old Testament, Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel.

A prayer called the Litany to Old Testament Saints can be found online; it includes invocations of holy patriarchs, kings, women, prophets, and martyrs, both as individuals and as a group.

Of course, whether praying to Old Testament saints, or Christian saints, we are always asking their intercession not praying to them as we do to God.