

DEAR DEACON BULLETIN INSERT

❖ Dear Deacon Jim,

My first spouse and I divorced and I remarried another person. Can I still receive Holy Communion? Is an annulment necessary?

❖ Response

In response to your question, the foundation of Church teaching on marriage is deeply rooted in Sacred Scripture. Jesus spoke of divorce and remarriage in Matthew 5:32: *"I say to you, whoever divorces his wife causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*

The doctrinal nature is made clear in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (cf. 1649, 1650, and 1651) and the Code of Canon Law that "a valid matrimonial contract cannot exist between the baptized without it being by that fact a sacrament" (1055 §2).

Any person who has divorced his or her spouse from a valid marriage and cohabits with another person is in a state of grave sin (the sin of adultery). That being said, it is **not possible** to receive valid sacraments and the person is **not properly disposed** to receive Holy Communion. Those who are in a state of grave sin place themselves in a situation where they are separated from the sacraments in their own lives.

To receive sacramental absolution and become properly disposed, he or she must turn away from sin and have their **first marriage dissolved either by the annulment** or death. Yes, submitting an application for the annulment process is necessary. If through the requested annulment process, the initial marriage is declared invalid, the current (2nd marriage) must be sacramentally blessed. This then would then be considered the first true marriage.

Deacon Jim