Divorce and Annulment

Archdiocese of Chicago, 155 East Superior Street, Chicago IL 60611

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Thinking of Divorce?

When you feel there is nothing good in your relationship anymore and that you no longer have resources and energy to keep the relationship going, it is normal to think of divorce as a solution. Our culture and even our friends and family often suggest divorce as a way to escape the pain of a relationship that is troubled.

A divorce may be what is needed. However, research shows that more than 80% of divorces do not need to occur. Research also shows that couples in trouble in marriage, who ride it out, get professional help, and decide to adhere to their marital commitment end up happier when interviewed five years later.

Divorce does not solve most marital problems. Communication and understanding, often missing in a troubled marriage, are required after divorce to deal with financial and childcare issues. Learning these skills can assist in saving the marriage.

Trouble in a marriage can be addressed with hard work and good intentions. It is best if both the husband and wife agree to get help from a professional.

It is common for the person with the greatest need for change to get help from a professional therapist or educator. Sometimes when one partner changes, the other partner starts to pay attention and decides to become part of the solution.

The children are the ones who will suffer the most if a couple divorces. All research shows the same thing, that children will do better living in a household with both parents than in a two-household family with one parent.

Catholic Divorce Truths
There is much misunderstanding about divorce among Catholics.

- Divorced Catholics are not excommunicated.
- Divorced Catholics may receive Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- Divorced Catholics are full members of the Catholic Church and may participate fully in the church.
- Children will not be illegitimate if a divorced Catholic is granted a declaration of nullity.
- Before a divorced Catholic can marry in the Church, a declaration of nullity must be granted on the previous marriage.

See http://www.archchicago.org/departments/tribunal/faq.shtm for more information about divorce and annulment.

Resources:

Books

Divorce

Making Your Way After Your Parents' Divorce by Lynn Cassella, Liguori, 2003

Now What Do I Do? A Guide to Help Teenagers with Their Parents' Separation or Divorce by Lynn

Cassella-Kapusinski, Acta Publications, 2006

Spiritual Divorce by Debbie Ford, Harper 2001

Thinking Divorce? Think Again by Lorie Fowlke, 2004

Forgiving the People You Love to Hate by Judy Logue; Liguori Publications, 1997

Between Two Worlds by Elizabeth Marquardt, Three Rivers Press, 2005

Divorce and Beyond by Elsie Radtke, James Greteman, and Leon Haverkamp, ACTA, 2004

Should I Stay or Go? How Controlled Separation Can Save Your Marriage by Lee Raffel, Contemporary Books, 1999

Adult Children of Divorced Parents, by Beverly Rodgers and Tom Rodgers, Resource Publications, 2003

Healing the Wounds of Divorce by Barbara Leahy Shlemon; Ave Maria Press, 1992

Parenting After Divorce by Philip Michael Stahl. 2000

The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce by Judith S. Wallerstein, Hyperion, 2000

Annulment

Growing in Faith When a Catholic Marriage Fails by Antoinette Bosco, Resurrection Press, 2006

Undoing the "I Do" by Iris Miranda, Resource Publications, Inc, 2002

Catholic Annulment; Spiritual Healing by Dennis and Kay Flowers, Liguori, 2001

Remarriage

Making Your Second Class Marriage A First Class Success by Doug & Naomi Moseley, 1998

Saving Your Second Marriage Before It Starts by Les Parrott and Lesley Parrott, Zondervan, 2001

Websites

Catholic Divorce Ministry - North American Conference for Divorced Catholics www.nacsdc.org

Rainbows - For the children of divorce www.rainbows.org

Controlled Separation - Help for ambivalent couples www.controlledseparation.com

The Third Option - Program to help couples have a better marriage www.thethirdoption.com

Retrouvaille - Help for Troubled Marriages www.retrouvaille.org

OnceCatholic.org - Ministry by the Franciscan Friars www.oncecatholic.org

Landings International - Ministry by the Paulist Fathers www.landings-international.com

From the Family Ministries of the Archdiocese of Chicago website: www.familyministries.org/divorce