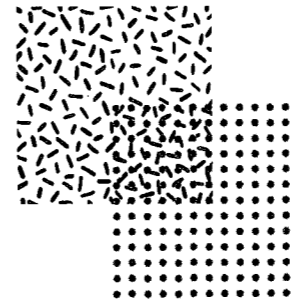


PASTORAL GUIDELINES FOR
**INTERCHURCH
MARRIAGES**
BETWEEN ANGLICANS AND
ROMAN CATHOLICS IN CANADA

Authorized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
and the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada.



Differences of religious background in a marriage can be either a source of tension or an opportunity for growth in the unity to which the Church is called. With a view to encouraging cooperation between Anglican and Roman Catholic couples and their pastors, the bishops of both Churches are presenting these *Pastoral Guidelines for Interchurch Marriages Between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in Canada*.

Initially discussed at the national Anglican-Roman Catholic Bishops' Dialogue of 1985, the *Guidelines* were referred to both the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops for revision and approval. With each Church following its own procedures, the resulting text has been accepted by both bodies and is now being offered as a joint publication.

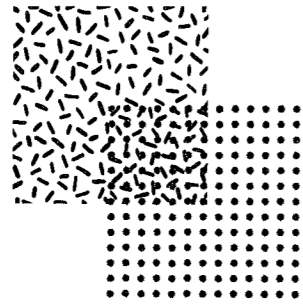
Over the past number of years, a growing closeness has developed between our two Churches. Building upon this ecumenical experience, these *Guidelines* do not attempt to break new ground nor to anticipate future changes but to give full expression to the possibilities present in current regulations and practice. It is to be hoped that joint discussion and increasing cooperation will extend our vision and lead to more consistent pastoral care for interchurch couples and families.

We also pray that the dialogue between Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches will, when and in the way Christ desires, bear fruit in unity of faith and life. In that dialogue, the partners in interchurch marriages may have a prophetic role to play.

+ Bernard Hubert + Michael G. Peers

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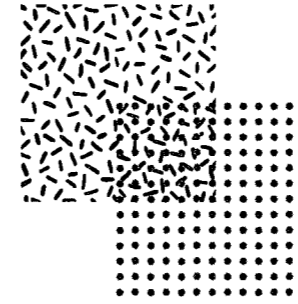
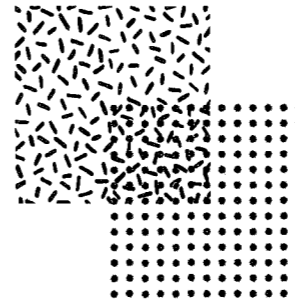


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Anglican-Roman Catholic Marriages

Introduction

The eleventh annual meeting of representative Anglican-Roman Catholic Bishops in Canada is happy to offer this statement for the assistance of Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy and laity.

We acknowledge that until our two Churches are in full communion, the sharing of one's own faith tradition with one's partner and children would be easier if one's spouse were from that same tradition. Nonetheless, though Anglicans and Roman Catholics who marry have been baptized in different Churches, their union is a true sacrament and gives rise to a "domestic Church". They are called to a unity which reflects the union of Christ with his Church and their family is bound to a witness based on that spiritual union. Our prayerful hope is that the partners in these marriages will be encouraged to deepen their own faith commitment and to grow in respect for that of the other while seeking to provide their children with a truly fruitful Christian education.

Marriage, as a covenant, builds upon the original baptismal covenant by which the believer is united to Jesus and his Body, the Church. Exercising the priesthood of their baptism-confirmation, each baptized party administers in the name of the Church the sacrament to the other, with its special sacramental grace, which perdures throughout their married life.

They "establish between themselves a partnership of their whole life, and which of its own very nature is ordered to the well-being of the spouses and to the procreation and upbringing of children." (Code of Canon Law, Canon 1055, 1.)

"The essential properties of marriage are unity and indissolubility: in Christian marriage they acquire a distinctive firmness by reason of the sacrament." (Code of Canon Law, Canon 1056.)

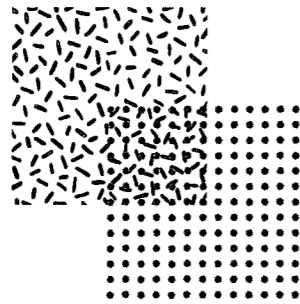
"The Church affirms in like manner the goodness of the union of man and woman in marriage, this being of God's creation (cf. Gen. 1: 27-31). Marriage also is exalted as a sign (Eph. 5: 31b) of the redeeming purpose of God to unite all things in Christ (Eph. 1: 9b), the purpose made known in the reunion of divided humanity in the Church (Eph. 2: 11-16)". (The Anglican Church in Canada, Canon XXI, *On Marriage in the Church*, Preface, No. 2)

The blessing of the celebrant, who acts as official witness and presides over the liturgical celebration, recalls the importance of the Lord for the couple who confer this sacrament.

Role of Law

An international commission set up to study the theology of marriage as it related to interchurch marriages, set out some important insights regarding the role of law in the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions. It pointed out that in a marriage between an Anglican and a Roman Catholic "there is a meeting, not only of the two Churches represented by the parties, and not only of the doctrines and traditions of those Churches, but also of two jurisdictions, two societies whose lives are regulated to different extents, by law". (Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on the Theology of Marriage, *Final Report*, 1975.)

For both Roman Catholics and Anglicans the way in which Canon Law is interpreted has



great pastoral implications. In general terms, Roman Catholic Canon Law is based on Roman Law: the written canons are strictly stated and are to be interpreted with all the personal adaptations contained in the law. Anglican Canon Law is based on English common law: the laws are few but to be interpreted strictly. The difficulty for Roman Catholics arises in those cultures where English common law abounds: the strict Roman-based law is interpreted with the English common law mind-set, i.e. strictly!

*. . . Roman Catholic Canon Law
is based on Roman Law . . .
. . . Anglican Canon Law is based
on English common law . . .*

For Anglicans marriage is regulated by each autonomous church in the Anglican Communion, although there is a common teaching about marriage based on the Scriptures. In Canada, marriages solemnized in Anglican Churches are governed by Canon XXI of the Canons of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. While Canon XXI makes fewer specific demands on persons coming to marriage than does Roman Catholic Canon law, it is important that the parties understand the standards set by Canon XXI. The canonical responsibilities of a pastor in preparing for and solemnizing a marriage also need to be understood by all the parties concerned.

In the Roman Catholic Church Canon Law has to be seen in the context of that church's understanding of its pastoral responsibility for its members, to help them grow in the knowledge and love of Christ. The canonical regulation of marriage, like the dispensation of all the sacraments, generally is seen to be part of this whole. The Code of Canon Law

represents the last stage in Roman Catholic modification both of discipline and of its expression. It takes account of the rapidly changing conditions of today and the development of thought reflected in such Vatican II documents as the *Declaration on Religious Liberty* and the *Decree on Ecumenism*. Interchurch marriages are seen as a fact of life and an object of pastoral solicitude; a solicitude which, in the case of Anglican-Roman Catholic marriages, is proper to both Churches involved and a proper object of sincere openness and enlightened confidence between the respective clergy.

There are several areas concerning interchurch marriages which require particular care:

- pre-marital preparation
- completing necessary forms
- promises (of the Catholic party) regarding the Baptism and education of children
- worship in each other's Churches
- celebration of the marriage
- joint pastoral care
- spiritual growth of the couple and future family

The following pastoral guidelines are an attempt at this moment of our ecumenical journey, to promote our life in Christ and to live in joyful hope for the day when our churches will be one in the richness of a legitimate diversity.

Pastoral Care of Interchurch Marriages

A. Preparation for Marriage

Article 1

Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy at the local level are encouraged to get to know each other and to understand the faith and life of each other's faith

community. This commitment to grow in reconciliation and seek unity by stages ought to facilitate our joint pastoral care of couples preparing for Anglican-Roman Catholic interchurch marriages.

Interchurch couples

Although each individual situation will be different there are three types of interchurch marriage often spoken of:

1. *Marriages where both parties are active and practising members of their respective churches and wish to maintain these allegiances*

It is such marriages that are most appropriately called "interchurch" marriages. An ecumenical approach to the preparation for the marriage and joint pastoral care afterward can be of great support to such marriages. The commitment of each partner should be a source of rejoicing to all concerned, as each will bring the strengths and insights of their tradition into the marriage relationship.

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encouraged to get to know each
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community.*

2. *Marriages where only one party is a practising member of either Church and the other a nominal member of the other*

In such cases it seems likely that the marriage ceremony will take place in the church of the more active partner. However, it should not be too quickly assumed that there should be no

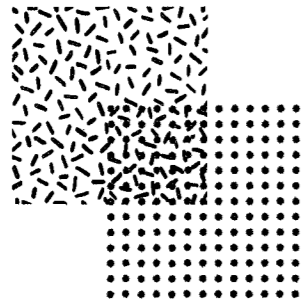
involvement of a priest of the other church. For the officiating priest to try to gauge the commitment of the person concerned would be inappropriate. People often have deep ties of loyalty and affection to the church in which they were brought up, even though they may not attend worship. Also a Roman Catholic may become unable to receive communion if the proper procedures are not followed. Prior to the service the officiating priest should suggest that the parties contact a priest of the other church and express a willingness to invite the other priest to participate. The relationship between the two partners will also be enhanced if the non-practising partner is encouraged to learn more about the faith commitment of the other.

3. *Marriages where both parties are inactive or nominal members of their respective churches*

The couple may be coming for a church wedding out of social custom or family insistence. Equally, however, they may have a real desire to have God's blessing on their marriage. Such marriages provide an opportunity for the officiating priest to present the claims of the Gospel and to set forth the Christian understanding of marriage. The couple should be received in a spirit of evangelization rather than of proselytism. What has already been said about the emotional ties of people to the church of their upbringing should also be kept in mind.

Relationships with Parents and Families

In many interchurch marriages there are often devout parents, and other family members, of either or both parties to be considered. This may be the case even when the couple's practice is only nominal. The priest's major pastoral responsibility is toward the couple themselves



but it can be of great help to all concerned if the couple are enabled to retain the goodwill and support of their parents and family. It may be necessary for the priest to help the couple understand and respect the religious convictions of their parents.

The clergy concerned may also see it as part of their pastoral responsibility to discuss the situation with the parents and encourage them to respect the consciences of the couple. It is in this kind of situation that an ecumenical approach can prove its value.

... The priest's major pastoral responsibility is toward the couple themselves ...

Article 2

The priest of the church in which the marriage is to be celebrated should contact the priest of the other church so that mutual responsibilities can be discussed.

From the start, preparations for the marriage should be conducted in a cooperative manner. Wherever possible, various aspects of the preparation including investigations, instructions, ecclesial permissions and dispensations, the publishing of banns, the recording of the marriage and the wedding ceremony itself, should be reviewed and jointly planned by the two priests involved.

Article 3

The responsibility for the preparation of the couple will be that of one or other of the Churches in the regular marriage preparation process.

Premarital instructions are to be arranged for the couple in accordance with the practice of each Church (Catholic Engaged Encounter, pre-marriage courses, Evenings for the Engaged,

etc.). Wherever possible, joint marriage preparation is to be encouraged. At least one joint session involving the couple and the Anglican and Roman Catholic priests should be held. This is likely to be difficult to schedule but it is important as a witness to our Churches' concern for the spiritual lives and the marriage of the couple, as well as to provide a model for the couple of the interchurch respect they are being called upon to live.

Article 4

The priests should ascertain that both parties freely and knowingly consent to the marriage with a proper understanding of its nature and without fraud, mental reservation, coercion or mistake in the identity of the partner.

Article 5

The couple should be helped to understand that marriage is a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, a partnership of life and love which is entered into by mutual consent within the community of faith with the intent that it be lifelong and open to the gift of children.

Article 6

If, for any reason, a priest of either an Anglican or Roman Catholic Church refuses to solemnize a marriage and the couple then approaches a priest of the other church for this purpose, it is strongly recommended, without prejudice to Article 10, that the two priests discuss the matter to achieve some mutual clarification.

Article 7

Care should be taken to ensure that each partner in the marriage understands the faith and values of the other partner and the other partner's community, and knows that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches are committed to the reconciliation of our

Churches in a process of unity by stages. It should be made clear that the stage of unity presently attained does not permit reciprocal open communion (cf. Art. 17), but does encourage common prayer and witness and a recognition of our baptismal unity and agreement in faith on most fundamental doctrines.

Article 8

Responsible parenthood is an essential topic in premarital instructions. Although responsible parenthood is a recognized value in both Churches, there are differences in the teachings of each. In giving instructions on this matter, both the Anglican and the Roman Catholic priests must be consistent with their own Church's teaching and aware of the other's doctrinal perspective.

Article 9

The obligation to educate children in the faith is shared by all Christians, for it arises from the movement of God within the conscience of every believer. The Catholic Church specifies that the Catholic express a promise to fulfill this religious duty. This promise "to do all in one's power" does not rule out the similar obligations of conscience in the Anglican party, but is to say "all one can do in the actual circumstances of the marriage."

... Care should be taken to ensure that each partner in the marriage understands the faith and values of the other partner ...

In practice, it is important to remind both parties that the Christian education of children is a bilateral obligation of conscience which will have to be lived out in mutual respect and

support. The following hierarchy of values may be helpful in making a wise decision:

1. the mutual respect of the faith and doctrine of the partner, which must not be forced or manipulated;
2. the good of the marriage itself, which must not be placed in jeopardy;
3. the baptism and religious education of the children. (SPCU, *Information Service*, No. 42, 1980/1, p. 6)

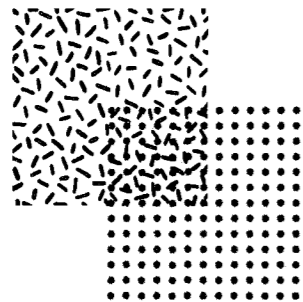
The promise made by the Roman Catholic to uphold his or her faith and pass it on to his or her children through Baptism and education in the Catholic faith, is necessary in order to receive the permission of the Bishop for the marriage. This promise is made in the presence of the pastoral minister; the Anglican party is informed of it. The minister concerned certifies that the promise has been made by the Roman Catholic and that the other party has been informed of this fact. (See Canons 1086, 2 and 1125.)

It is to be recognized that the obligation and desire of the Anglican parties in interchurch marriages to share their faith with their children is no less real than that of Roman Catholics.

Article 10

For the valid marriage of a Roman Catholic, the canonical form is required, that is, the marriage must take place before the local Ordinary or Roman Catholic pastor of the place or their delegate (priest, deacon or lay person), and two witnesses. (See Canons 1108, 1 and 1112.)

The local Ordinary of the Catholic party may grant a dispensation from the canonical form for reasons such as the following: to achieve or promote family harmony, to recognize the special relationships there may be



with the Anglican minister, to allow the marriage to take place within the community which has special significance for the Anglican. (See Canon 1127, 2.)

Article 11

Both Anglicans and Roman Catholics encourage the celebration of marriage within the context of a supportive Christian community although witnesses of an Anglican-Roman Catholic marriage need not be members of either Church.

... the Christian education of children is a bilateral obligation of conscience which will have to be lived out in mutual respect ...

Article 12

When one or both of the baptized partners have drifted away and are marginalized or nominal, then the needs of evangelization and witness (cf. Art. 1, No. 3) apply. The normal rules of ecumenical sensitivity apply, but each Church is challenged to find ways of ministering to the unchurched when they seek the services of the Church.

Article 13

Priests of both communities should emphasize love and pastoral care rather than rivalry and rigorism. If the clergy respect each other's loyalty to their own community, then it will help the couple to do so as well (cf. Art. 3).

B. Specific Procedures for Anglican-Roman Catholic Marriages

Article 14

Roman Catholic priests not already authorized by the local Ordinary will apply for either of the following:

- a) Permission for a marriage of mixed religion: for a Roman Catholic to marry an Anglican with a Roman Catholic priest or qualified celebrant officiating.

or

- b) Permission for a marriage of mixed religion; and dispensation from form for a Roman Catholic to marry an Anglican with an Anglican priest presiding.

Article 15

The Anglican priest will ensure that the requirements set out in Canon XXI, *On Marriage in the Church*, have been met, including the signing of the Declaration of Intention.

We, _____ and _____, hereby declare that we intend to enter into marriage which we acknowledge to be a union in faithful love, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for better or for worse, until we are separated by death.

We undertake to prepare ourselves for the exchange of vows at our wedding, recognizing that by this mutual exchange our union in marriage will be established.

We intend to strive thereafter to fulfill the purposes of marriage: the mutual fellowship, support, and comfort of one another, the procreation (if it may be) and the nurture of children, and the creation of a relationship in which sexuality may serve personal fulfillment in a community of faithful love.

Article 16

Where both partners are active in the life of their parish, it is pastorally important for them to have their priest, deacon or pastoral minister present to participate liturgically in the

ceremony of marriage. An effort should therefore be made to have a priest, deacon or pastoral minister of each communion present — even though this is not canonically required by either.

It is the responsibility of the priest in whose church the marriage ceremony is being performed to receive the marriage vows and to declare the blessing on the marriage according to the rites of that particular church. Within the framework of this rite the assisting cleric should be given the opportunity to offer appropriate prayers and blessings, read the Scriptures or preach.

Article 17

Owing to the present legislation regarding Eucharistic hospitality, it is normally not recommended that the wedding be celebrated within the context of a Eucharist.

Where both partners are active in the life of their parish, it is pastorally important for them to have their priest, deacon or pastoral minister present to participate liturgically in the ceremony of marriage.

Article 18

When the marriage is celebrated in an Anglican Church, the Roman Catholic priest is obliged to record the marriage or to have it recorded in the usual manner, in the register of the parish to which the Roman Catholic party belongs, in the baptismal register by marginal notation and in the register of dispensations at the diocesan curia. (Canons 1121, 3; 1122)

C. Participation in the Anglican or Roman Catholic Wedding

The orders of celebration for non-Eucharistic Anglican and Roman Catholic wedding ceremonies are given below. Assisting clergy from the other church may be invited to perform any part of the service which is indicated by an asterisk.

1. The Anglican Marriage Ceremony

a) *Book of Common Prayer*

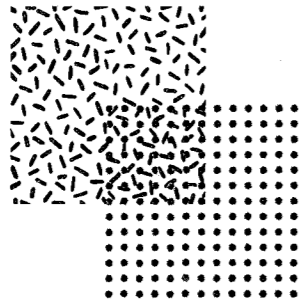
- 1. Entrance of clergy
- 2. Exhortation and charge
- 3. Marriage rite
- 4. Psalm and Prayers*
- 5. Nuptial Blessing

b) *Book of Alternative Services*

- 1. Entrance of Roman Catholic and Anglican clergy
- 2. The greeting and charge
- 3. Prayer
- 4. Readings*
- 5. Sermon*
- 6. Rite of Marriage
- 7. The prayers of the people*
- 8. Nuptial blessing
- 9. The peace*

2. The Roman Catholic Ceremony

- 1. Entrance of Roman Catholic and Anglican clergy
- 2. Greeting
- 3. Prayer
- 4. Readings*
- 5. Homily*
- 6. Rite of Marriage
- 7. Petitions*
- 8. Nuptial blessing
- 9. Lord's prayer*
- 10. Concluding blessings*



D. *Continuing Pastoral Care After the Wedding*

Article 19

Each partner should be encouraged to participate actively in his (her) own faith community and to respect and take an interest in the other. Couples should try to do all together that can be done together: prayer, Bible readings, services, works of mercy, Christian commitment to justice and peace. They should also, through their mutual support, pray and long for the day when unity of faith and life of their respective Churches may more adequately mirror the unity willed by Christ.

Article 20

The parents should encourage their children to respect and understand both Church communities, even though they can fully belong to only one of them.

Article 21

Joint pastoral care should include consultation and sharing of information between Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy when this can be done without breaking a pastoral confidence.

Article 22

We strongly encourage the formation of associations of Anglican/Roman Catholic couples: i.e. *The Association of Inter-Church families*.

It would certainly be most helpful for couples of Anglican/Roman Catholic marriages to meet and to share their experiences of spiritual growth as well as the challenge of living out their inter-church marriage.

As Pope John Paul II said during his visit to the City of York, England on May 31st, 1982:

In your country, there are many marriages between Catholics and other baptized Christians.

Sometimes these couples experience special difficulties. To these families I say: You live in your marriage the hopes and difficulties of the path to Christian unity. Express that hope in prayer together, in the unity of love. Together invite the Holy Spirit of love into your hearts and into your homes. He will help you to grow in trust and understanding. (Osservatore Romano, June 7, 1982)

. . . It would certainly be most helpful for couples of Anglican/Roman Catholic marriages to meet and to share their experiences of spiritual growth

. . .

Conclusion

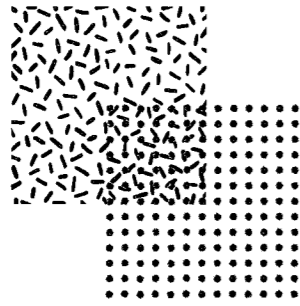
These pastoral guidelines for interchurch marriages between Anglicans and Roman Catholics are an attempt to reflect our joint ecumenical journey in the realization that the "domestic Church" of the Anglican-Roman Catholic family is called to exercise a prophetic role for our larger Church communities.

Given that partners in Anglican-Roman Catholic marriages have much at stake in the progress of their respective Churches towards unity, they are encouraged to be active promoters of collaboration between their two Churches in the spirit of the ecumenical principle: "Do everything together as far as conscience permits". Thus they will be, in the unity they live in their "domestic Church", a prophetic sign that the unity of faith and life sought by their respective institutional Churches is a real possibility. Their family itself

is called to be an image of the Church and a sign of unity for the world.

As their bishops, we encourage them to celebrate their conjugal union and their family life in Jesus Christ through mutual faith, hope and love, enhanced by prayer and enriched by the Scriptures. Finally, we ask the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to bless these Anglican-Roman Catholic marriages with true peace, happiness and holiness.

The Appendices which follow are included for your information. They do not constitute part of the agreed text.



Statements on the Holiness of Marriage

An Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on the Theology of Marriage reported in 1975 that it found "no fundamental difference of doctrine between the two Churches as regards what marriage of its nature is or the ends which it is ordained to serve".

1. **Roman Catholic** teaching is expressed in the Second Vatican Council's *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (nos. 47-52).

48. The intimate partnership of life and the love which constitutes the married state has been established by the creator and endowed by him with its own proper laws: it is rooted in the contract of its partners, that is, in their irrevocable personal consent. It is an institution confirmed by the divine law and receiving its stability, even in the eyes of society, from the human act by which the partners mutually surrender themselves to each other; for the good of the partners, of the children, and of society this sacred bond no longer depends on human decision alone. For God himself is the author of marriage and has endowed it with various benefits and with various ends in view . . .

Christ our Lord has abundantly blessed this love, which is rich in its various features, coming as it does from the spring of divine love and modeled on Christ's own union with the Church. Just as of old God encountered his people with a covenant of love and fidelity, so our Saviour, the spouse of the Church, now encounters Christian spouses through the sacrament of marriage. He abides with them in order that by their mutual self-giving spouses

will love each other with enduring fidelity, as he loved the Church and delivered himself for it. Authentic married love is caught up into divine love and is directed and enriched by the redemptive power of Christ and the salvific action of the Church, with the result that the spouses are effectively led to God and are helped and strengthened in their lofty role as fathers and mothers. Spouses, therefore, are fortified and, as it were, consecrated for the duties and dignity of their state by a special sacrament . . .

. . . The Christian family springs from marriage, which is an image and a sharing in the partnership of love between Christ and the Church . . .

50. . . . God himself said: 'It is not good that man should be alone' (Gen. 2: 18), and 'from the beginning (he) made them male and female' (Mt. 19: 4); wishing to associate them in a special way with his own creative work, God blessed man and woman with the words: 'Be fruitful and multiply' (Gen. 1: 28). Without intending to underestimate the other ends of marriage, it must be said that true married love and the whole structure of family life which results from it is directed to disposing the spouses to cooperate valiantly with the love of the Creator and Saviour, who through them will increase and enrich his family from day to day.

52. . . . Let married people themselves, who are created in the image of the living God and constituted in an authentic personal dignity, be united together in equal affection, agreement of mind, and mutual holiness. Thus, in the footsteps

of Christ, the principle of life, they will bear witness by their faithful love in the joys and sacrifices of their calling, to that mystery of love which the Lord revealed to the world by his death and resurrection.

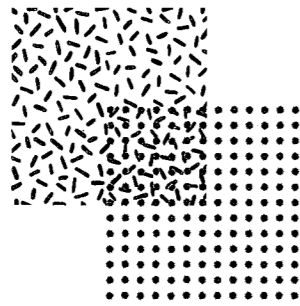
2. **The Anglican** position is stated in the following excerpts taken from the Canadian General Synod Canon *On Marriage in the Church*:

1. The Anglican Church of Canada affirms, according to our Lord's teaching as found in Holy Scripture and expressed in the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, that marriage is a lifelong union in faithful love, for better or for worse, to the exclusion of all others on either side. This union is established by God's grace when two duly qualified persons enter into a contract of marriage in which they declare their intention of fulfilling its purposes and exchange vows to be faithful to one another until they are separated by death. The purposes of marriage are mutual fellowship, support, and comfort, the procreation (if it may be) and nurture of children, and the creation of a relationship in which sexuality may serve personal fulfilment in a community of faithful love. This contract is made in the sight of God and in the presence of witnesses and of an authorized minister.

2. The Church affirms in like manner the union of man and woman in marriage, this being of God's creation. Marriage also is exalted as a sign of the redeeming purpose of God to unite all things in Christ, the purpose made known in the reunion of divided humanity in the Church.

5. From these principles and precedents the Church, living in many cultures and in contact with many different systems of law, has sought in her Rites and Canons to uphold and maintain the Christian standard of marriage in the societies in which believers dwell. This standard and these Rites and Canons pertain to the selection of marriage partners, preparation for marriage, the formation of a true marriage bond, the solemnization of marriage, the duties of family life, the reconciliation of alienated spouses, and to the dissolution of marriage and its consequences.

7. The particular duties of the clergy, described in part elsewhere in this Canon, include the provision of education for marriage and family life, the solemnization of marriage, the pastoral care of families, the encouragement of reconciliation of estranged spouses, and the pastoral care of those whose family ties have been broken or interrupted by death, sickness, poverty, enforced absence, human weakness, or by willful act.



On Eucharistic Sharing

I. *The Anglican Church of Canada* has no canonical provision regarding ecumenical Eucharistic sharing, but in 1972 the Canadian House of Bishops agreed that:

1. Communicants of other Christian Churches who have been baptized with water in the Name of the Holy Trinity, are welcome, if they so desire, to receive Holy Communion in Anglican Churches.
2. Members of the Anglican Church of Canada may, in accordance with their conscience, receive Holy Communion in non-Anglican Churches where they are welcome.

This ruling recognizes that there are situations of special pastoral need or of ecumenical significance where eucharistic sharing may be appropriate. It does, however, attempt to be sensitive to the convictions and practice of other churches.

II. *The Roman Catholic position* is explained with reference to the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

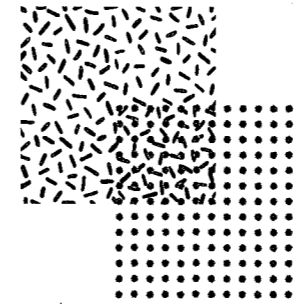
If there is a danger of death or if, in the judgement of the diocesan Bishop or of the Episcopal Conference, there is some other grave or pressing need, Catholic ministers may lawfully administer these same sacraments to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who spontaneously ask for them, provided that they demonstrate the Catholic faith in respect of those sacraments and are properly disposed.

(Canon 844 § 4)

Thus, for eucharistic sharing to be permitted, the person must

- be a baptized Christian;
- have a faith in the sacrament in conformity with that of the Roman Catholic Church;
- experience a serious spiritual need;
- have for a significant time or reason been unable to have recourse to a minister of his or her own community;
- have asked for the sacrament of his or her own accord;
- possess proper dispositions and lead a life worthy of a Christian.

The interpretation and application of these conditions are to be determined by the Bishop of the diocese. It also belongs to him to designate the agent(s) who decide(s) in particular cases.



Cases Where One or Both Parties Have Been Married Previously

If one or both of the parties has been married previously, both priests must present the situation to their respective Diocesan offices for resolution.

- I. The Anglican priest will be responsible for gathering the appropriate documentation and sending it to his Bishop for decision.
- II. The Roman Catholic priest will be responsible for presenting the case to the Chancery or Tribunal and doing the work ordinarily required to gain a decision in such cases.
- III. It should be noted that there remain some differences in the doctrine and discipline of the two Churches regarding the indissolubility of the marriage bond and, therefore, at times the Churches will respond differently to the question of re-marriage after civil divorce. One Church might declare a person canonically free to marry, while the other one will not. In such instances, each priest shall have the responsibility of counselling his parishioner as to the consequences of entering into a marriage which one or both Churches do not consider valid. If, after such counselling, the parties decide to marry, continued pastoral concern of Christian charity, understanding and generosity should be extended them. However, they should be informed that neither the Roman Catholic nor the Anglican is free to receive the Sacrament(s) of his/her own Church until the marriage conforms to the requirements of that Church. It would be an act of good faith for the officiating priest to notify the priest of the other Church about his action.

IV. If it should happen that one priest decides to solemnize a marriage in which the other will not or cannot have any part, each priest should do his best to respect the good conscience of the other, while not failing to give the reasons for his position. Given the continuing difference in the theology and practice in the two Churches, it is not unlikely that such situations will arise and that significant demands will be placed on a priest's understanding and generosity.

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