

QUESTIONS ASK ABOUT MARRIAGE/MARRIAGE CEREMONY

My soldier husband and I were married in a civil ceremony overseas. Can we still have a big Catholic wedding in a church when he returns from active duty?

You certainly can. The Church doesn't recognize the civil weddings of its members. Therefore your Catholic wedding will be your first and only wedding. You can make it as big as you want.

My fiancée and I live together. Will the church make one of us move out before our wedding?

There is no rule regarding couples living together, although some dioceses have policies. **Some pastors will** make you move out and **some pastors won't**.

The pastor **who makes you live apart** is trying to help you understand the sanctity of marriage. For Catholics, the personal, social, and sexual union of a man and a woman can only be made within the sacred commitment of the sacrament of marriage. Without the strength of that publicly made commitment and the grace that attends the sacrament, the union is vulnerable. The common pressures of life will more easily cause a rupture in the relationship that may lead to disunion, not good for the couple or the society, and certainly not good for any potential offspring of the union.

The pastor **who overlooks your living situation** is thinking that taking up separate residences would place a rather heavy, perhaps unbearable financial burden on you. At the same time, he's taking into consideration that a couple living together outside of marriage is certainly moving in the right direction by approaching the church to get married. His pastoral sensibility suggests that such a step should be supported and encouraged by rolling out the welcome mat and not setting up what amounts to an insurmountable obstacle.

It must be considered too that on this issue the Church lives in two worlds. On the one hand, if a couple who has been married in a civil ceremony approaches the church to have their marriage "blessed," the Church usually does so readily without requiring that they live apart first. On the other hand, if a couple is not civilly married, they are considered a different case and sometimes, especially if they are young, are required to take up separate residence. Neither the civilly married couple nor the couple living together are considered married in the eyes of the Church; they're both the same. Yet one is treated differently than the other. This is a disparity the Church still struggles with.

Can I invite active homosexuals to my wedding? May an active homosexual play an active role in my wedding (e.g. bridesmaid, best man)? You sure can. No one can presume to know the conscience of anyone coming to church for a public celebration. Therefore, everyone is invited to attend and participate. If the "activity" to which you refer is considered sinful, you can see how excluding one person for a certain kind of sinful activity would mean that we'd have to exclude everyone for every kind of sinful activity. That would probably include the bride, the groom, most of the guests, and even the priest!

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

Our challenge is to bring Dr. King's message into the present moment in a way that inspires lasting change.

In a pivotal 1958 essay, he wrote that: 'Along the way of life, someone must have the sense enough to cut off the chain of hate. We pray in confidence that Jesus Christ will remind us all that he is the most powerful means to break the chains of hate that still bind too many hearts, a truth which lies at the center of Dr. King's legacy.'

RHODE ISLAND CATHOLIC

This being Catholic Press Month the parish is offering a free subscription to the parishioners.

See the pastor.

CCD NEXT SUNDAY

The teachers and the parents met last week. The parents loved the work sheets the children brought home. The teachers were pleased with attendance at CCD and asked the parents continue to do what they can.

WEB PAGE

Just type stkateriexeter.org to be on our parish WEB PAGE. Then select Monsignor Gerry's Corner.

BIBLE STUDY

On Mary the next two months on Monday at 8:30, Feb. and March.

TAX REPORT

Pick up your Tax Report envelope and Budget Box in the Parish Center. Thank you.

NEXT WEEK: 01/27

BAKING:

Sat. Lillian Nieves, Tony Dzkiewicz

Sun. Judy DeFrancesco

Donna Manchester

FAMILY INTENTIONS:

DePasquale, Schreiber-Cote, Lesvitt

COLLECTION \$4,045.00

Thank you.

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