

*How well do you know the Catholic faith? Well, let's find out..."*

First time I have heard words **“marriage without the certificate”**: ***What does the Church have against “marriage without the certificate”?***

- A) Pope Francis is trying hard to change the teaching of the Church. He wants to establish a marriage without the certificate.
- B) The Catholic Church doesn't talk about marriage in her teaching.
- C) For Catholics there is no marriage without a church wedding. In that ceremony Christ enters into a covenant with the husband and the wife and generously endows the couple with graces and gifts.

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***We were talking with our teenage children and these questions came up in our discussion: What is adultery? Is divorce the appropriate answer?***

- A) Adultery is committed when two people, at least one of whom is married to someone else, have sexual relations and when it occurred spouses are automatically divorced.
- B) The Church doesn't talk about divorce. It is a gray area in the teaching of the Church.
- C) **Adultery is committed when two people, at least one of whom is married to someone else, have sexual relations. Adultery is the fundamental betrayal of love, the violation of a covenant that was made in God's sight, and an injustice to one's neighbor. Jesus himself explicitly declared the indissolubility of marriage: “What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mk 10:9). Citing the original will of the Creator, Jesus abolished the tolerance of divorce in the Old Covenant. (CCC 2353,2364-2365, 2382-2384)**

The encouraging promise of this message of Jesus is, “as children of your heavenly Father you are capable of lifelong love.” Nevertheless, it is not easy to remain faithful to one's spouse for a lifetime. We must not condemn people whose marriages fail. Nevertheless Christians who irresponsibly bring about divorce incur guilt. They sin against God's love, which is visible in marriage. They sin against the abandoned spouse and against abandoned children. Of course the faithful partner in a marriage that has become unbearable can move out of shared living accommodations. In some serious circumstances, it may be necessary to go through a civil divorce. In well-founded cases the Church can examine the validity of the marriage in an annulment proceeding.

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