

28. The Annulment Fiasco – The Vatican II Sect’s *De Facto* acceptance of Divorce and Remarriage

Pope Leo XIII, *Dum Multa* (# 2), Dec. 24, 1902: “It follows then that **the marriage of Christians when fully accomplished... cannot be dissolved for any reason other than the death of either spouse**, according to the holy words: ‘What God has joined, let no man put asunder.’”¹

According to Catholic dogma, the essential properties of marriage are unity and indissolubility. A marriage validly contracted and consummated is binding until death separates the spouses. *“There is no such thing as the annulment of a consummated sacramental marriage. The expression is sometimes used inaccurately for the declaration of nullity of a union reputed to be a marriage but which upon examination is proved not to have been such.”*² It’s important for us to understand that there is no such thing as “an annulment” of a consummated marriage, but only a declaration of nullity that a certain union never was a marriage to begin with if there is clear-cut evidence proving that a particular union was not validly contracted.

With this in mind, it’s easy to see why “annulments” (that is, declarations that certain unions *were not actually marriages to begin with*) were traditionally given very rarely. Such cases are extremely difficult to prove, and if there’s a doubt about whether a particular union was a validly contracted marriage, the Church presumes the validity of the marriage.

Canon 1014, 1917 Code of Canon Law: “Marriage enjoys the favor of law; therefore in doubt the validity of marriage is to be upheld until the contrary is proven, with due regard for the prescription of Canon 1127.”³

A good example of “an annulment” that could be given on solid grounds would be if a woman were to “marry” (through no fault of her own) a man whom she later discovered to be a validly ordained priest. Since priests cannot enter into matrimony (canon 1972),⁴ the union between this priest and the woman was not a valid marriage. She would be given a decree of nullity that she was never married. She would be free to marry another person.

Another obvious example for an “annulment” would be if the person you “married” turned out to have been married before, but he hid this information from you. An example from the past would be if a woman married a slave whom she actually thought was a free man, but was not. A declaration of nullity would be given, since that particular error about the person one is marrying is so grave that it renders the marriage invalid (canon 1083.2).⁵

In all of these cases, the reason must be grave and the evidence that there never was a valid marriage must be clear. That’s why **only 338 annulments were granted in 1968 in the U.S., when the pre-Vatican II teaching on marriage was still held by most.**

However, with the explosion of the post-Vatican II apostasy, the teaching of the indissolubility of marriage has been thrown out the window along with the other dogmas. **From 1984 to 1994, the Vatican II Church in the U.S. granted just under 59,000 annually,** even though the number of Catholic marriages has fallen one third since 1965!⁶

In 2002 alone, the Vatican II sect granted 50,000 annulments in the United States!⁷ An astounding 97% of all annulments requested are granted in the United States! This means that almost everyone who wants an “annulment” of his or her marriage gets one!

Fr. Leonard Kennedy: “From 1984 to 1994 **it was 97% for First Instance trials.** All cases however have to have a second trial. **The percentage of decisions overturned in the United States is 4/10 of 1%.**”⁸

This means that almost 100 percent of requested annulments are granted in the first trial, with the chances of such an annulment being overturned in a second trial being less than 1/2 of 1%! This is a total rejection of the indissolubility of marriage in fact and in deed. This annulment fiasco was the subject of Sheila Rauch Kennedy’s famous book, *Shattered Faith: A Woman’s Struggle to Stop the Catholic Church from Annuling Her Marriage.* This allowance of divorce and remarriage under the pretext of phony marriage annulments has destroyed countless families and mocked the Catholic Church before the world.

Things are so bad that, **“There is advertising in church bulletins, Catholic newspapers, and even the secular press, that annulments are available,** sometimes with a suggested guarantee that they will be granted. **‘Some invitations practically promise an annulment to all who apply.** The promotional efforts . . . may evoke responses from . . . spouses who dream of greener marital pastures but would not seriously consider separation and divorce were annulment not presented as a convenient and acceptable alternative.”⁹

Basically anyone who wants a declaration that they aren’t married can get one. They issue them for all kinds of ridiculous reasons, such as alcoholism, personality incompatibility, etc., etc., etc., none of which are valid grounds. **11.68% of annulments today are granted because of “defective consent,” which involves at least one of the parties not having sufficient knowledge or maturity to know what was involved in marriage!**¹⁰ In other words, if after a few years of marriage a person discovers that he doesn’t like his spouse anymore, he wasn’t properly “mature” or didn’t know what he was getting into when he decided to exchange the perpetual vows with this person. This is obviously absurd, completely bogus and outrageous.

The people that think they are free to marry based on such false and dishonest grounds are deceiving themselves; they are placing themselves on the road to damnation. And the Vatican II sect confirms them on their false path. When people take the marriage vows, it’s until they are parted by death. They wanted the benefits of marriage; they’re the ones that chose to contract it. The obligations accompanying marriage didn’t seem to bother them when they took advantage of their marriage rights. It’s their own fault if, after some time, they don’t like their choice or weren’t prepared for it. **The capitulation of the Vatican II sect on this issue is another proof of its worship of man,** appeasing man at all costs, **relieving him of all his responsibilities and contracts before God because they’re inconvenient for him or not to his liking.** This abominable annulment fiasco is one of the most despicable aspects of the Vatican II sect.

Robert H. Vasoli, author of the book *What God Has Joined Together*, was part of a totally valid marriage for 15 years when he suddenly found himself as a respondent for the annulment of his own marriage. He writes that the scandal generated by an annulment which people who know the spouses can't possibly approve of "is infinitesimal compared to the scandal generated by the tribunal system. The system as a whole is scandalous."¹¹

The antipopes of the Vatican II sect do nothing to curb this outrage or enforce the sanctity of the marriage bond. This mockery of marriage by the issuance of phony annulments continues inexorably under their watch like lava spilling out of an erupting volcano.

Based on these amazing facts, one can truly say that the Vatican II sect allows divorce and remarriage, proving once again that it's not the Catholic Church, but a counterfeit sect of the final days. Notice how differently the true popes of the Catholic Church acted when confronted with these problems.

While the Vatican II sect denies the indissolubility of marriage, the Catholic Church and the true popes have defended it at all costs

In the year 995, King Robert of France put away his wife Suzanne and "married" Bertha of Chartres. Despite the problems which might have arisen from opposing the powerful king, **Pope Gregory V condemned Robert's union with Bertha as bigamous and ordered him to put Bertha away or face excommunication.** Robert then sent an ambassador to Rome in the hope that the pope would compromise; but to no avail:

"...Pope Gregory V could only say with his Lord: 'What God has joined together, let no man put asunder.' Almost a thousand years before, Jesus Christ had given to His disciples this, which seemed to them one of the hardest of his teachings. Still it re-echoed down the corridors of time, the terror of the mighty, the shield of the innocent, as the one hundred and thirty-eighth of His Vicars on earth spoke His mind once more on the sacred, unbreakable bond of marriage, on behalf of Princess Suzanne. **When King Robert still did not send Bertha away, he was excommunicated, about the end of the year 988.** Three years later he finally submitted, and sent her away."¹²

In 1141, the sister of Queen Eleanor of France, Peronelle, desired marriage to one of the richest nobles and most powerful officials at court, the Seneschal Raoul of Vermandois. The problem was that the Seneschal Raoul of Vermandois was already married to another Eleanor. A three-man commission of bishops, certainly influenced by King Louis VI, pronounced Raoul's marriage to Eleanor invalid on the specious grounds of consanguinity. He promptly married Peronelle. **St. Bernard denounced the decision of the bishops in words that apply strikingly to the post-Vatican II situation, with one crucial difference:**

"St. Bernard denounced the three bishops as 'shameless men... who, despite the law of God, have not scrupled to separate what God has joined together. Nor is this all. They have gone further and added one sin to another by uniting what should not be united. The sacred rites of the Church have been violated and the robes of Christ have been torn, and to make matters worse this has been done by those very persons whose business it ought to be to mend them.' He did not hesitate to point out that Louis' own marriage to Eleanor was within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, yet had received no Papal dispensation. **Pope Innocent III responded in 1142 by excommunicating Raoul of Vermandois and imposing an interdict on his lands, and suspending the three bishops.**"¹³

In this episode we see a striking analogy to the present situation. St. Bernard denounces the bishops for granting a phony annulment when there weren't grounds to do so, and condemns them for tearing the union of matrimony when it is their business to see that it remains. But the difference is that St. Bernard was living when there was a true pope, unlike those living today. The true pope, Innocent III, promptly backed up St. Bernard by excommunicating the culprit and suspending the bishops. Nothing like this is done by the antipopes of the Vatican II sect, of course, because they are not Catholic and their sect endorses divorce and re-marriage under the cover of easy and fraudulent annulments.

In 1193, the powerful King Philip II of France announced that he would seek an annulment one day after marrying Princess Ingeborg. The French bishops obediently granted Philip an annulment without even giving Ingeborg a hearing. **But in 1195 Pope Celestine III overruled the annulment** given by the French bishops and demanded that Philip take Ingeborg back; he further warned him that no future marriage of his would be recognized by the Church while Ingeborg lived.

“The king resisted furiously, and in 1196 bigamously married Agnes of Meran; but Pope Celestine III and his successor... continued to insist on Ingeborg’s rights. **In January 1200 Pope Innocent placed the whole kingdom of France under an interdict to enforce them.** Philip made a pretense of yielding, but his heart remained hardened; only thirteen years later did he finally take Ingeborg back and reign with her at his side. Once again, **the Vicars of Christ had defended a royal marriage bond regardless of the political cost.**”¹⁴

Perhaps the most obvious case that should be mentioned in this regard is the Anglican Schism. The Anglican Schism (16th century) resulted from the Catholic Church’s just refusal to grant King Henry VIII of England an annulment of his valid marriage to Catherine of Aragon. King Henry VIII wanted it to be considered invalid because he desired to marry Anne Boleyn (whom some scholars suggest was actually his illegitimate daughter),¹⁵ so Henry put away Catherine and invalidly married Anne Boleyn. On July 11, 1533, Pope Clement VII excommunicated King Henry VIII and commanded all the faithful to avoid him for putting away Catherine and sacrilegiously and invalidly “marrying” Anne. The next year (1534), King Henry VIII declared himself head of the Church in England. He denied that the pope had supreme jurisdiction over the universal Church by denying the pope’s authority over the Church in England. He declared his own marriage to Catherine invalid, and his marriage to Anne valid.

If the popes had simply granted Henry VIII the annulment he wanted based on “defective consent” or psychological incompatibility or some other bogus reason, *as the Vatican II sect is wont to do*, the entire Anglican Schism would have been avoided. But no, **the truth and the sanctity of the marriage bond had to be defended at all costs, even if it meant that a king would take an entire country into schism.** That’s the difference between the Catholic Church and the Vatican II sect; one is Catholic and the other is not.

Endnotes for Section 28:

¹*The Papal Encyclicals*, by Claudia Carlen, Raleigh: The Pierian Press, 1990, Vol. 2 (1878-1903), pp. 517-518.

² Donald Attwater, *A Catholic Dictionary*, Tan Books, 1997, p. 23.

³ *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law*, translated by Dr. Edward Von Peters, San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2001, p. 352.

⁴ *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law*, translated by Dr. Edward Von Peters, p. 369.

⁵ *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law*, translated by Dr. Edward Von Peters, p. 373.

⁶ Fr. Leonard Kennedy, *Catholic Insight*, “The Annulment Crisis in the Church,” March 1999 Issue, http://catholicinsight.com/online/church/divorce/c_annul.shtml

⁷ <http://www.townhall.com/opinion/columns/patbuchanan/2002/12/11/165161.html>

⁸ Fr. Leonard Kennedy, *Catholic Insight*, “The Annulment Crisis in the Church,” March 1999 Issue, http://catholicinsight.com/online/church/divorce/c_annul.shtml

⁹ Fr. Leonard Kennedy, *Catholic Insight*, “The Annulment Crisis in the Church,” March 1999 Issue, http://catholicinsight.com/online/church/divorce/c_annul.shtml

¹⁰ Fr. Leonard Kennedy, *Catholic Insight*, “The Annulment Crisis in the Church,” March 1999 Issue, http://catholicinsight.com/online/church/divorce/c_annul.shtml

¹¹ Quoted by Fr. Leonard Kennedy, *Catholic Insight*, "The Annulment Crisis in the Church," March 1999 Issue, http://catholicinsight.com/online/church/divorce/c_annul.shtml

¹² Warren H. Carroll, *A History of Christendom*, Vol. 2 (*The Building of Christendom*), Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1987, pp. 437-438.

¹³ Warren H. Carroll, *A History of Christendom*, Vol. 3 (*The Glory of Christendom*), p. 55.

¹⁴ Warren H. Carroll, *A History of Christendom*, Vol. 3 (*The Glory of Christendom*), pp. 141-142.

¹⁵ Rev. Dr. Nicholas Sander, *The Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, Tan Books, 1988, pp. 96-100.