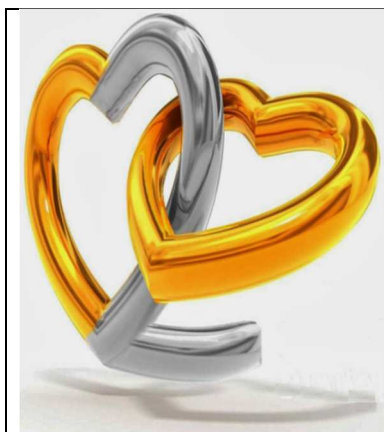


## Life Situation nº 1: Second Marriage



Maria Izabel and Fernando have been living together for five years. They have a stable union. They are married civilly, but could not marry in the church, because Fernando is divorced and the process of nullifying his first marriage was not possible. This has brought them much disillusionment, especially since the parish priest of his parish has told Maria Izabel that she could not receive communion, because she was living in sin and that she should not continue in this situation. What would you advise this couple?

### 1. Purpose of this life situation:

To place yourself in the situations that arise when a relationship (or a marriage) occurs between a divorced person and a single person, or even between two divorced persons.

### 2. Short prayer time:

Start this journey of reflection and enlightenment with a prayer, asking the Lord to be with you, and let Him reveal what a couple in these conditions today need to discern for their life of faith, and to strengthen it as a disciple/missionary of Jesus Christ.

**PRAYER - place yourself in the situation of Maria Izabel and Fernando, or any other couple in an "irregular situation" (or second marriage):**

Lord, here we are with small but confident hearts.

You know, Lord, our history, our path, the causes of our separation and divorce in our lives and the acceptance of our union with another person.

You know, Lord, our pain, our despair, our emptiness, the atrophy in our life.

However, you, Lord, have extended your arms to us and offered us your welcome and your mercy, made us pass from death to resurrection.

Lord, we want to continue to be Christians, in communion with you and the Church, in listening and reflecting on the Word, in prayer, in community life, in the participation of the holy sacrifice of the Mass, in helping others, in obedience and in communion in sacrifice of Jesus through the exercise of spiritual communion.

Lord, help us to be also a Christian family, within the doctrine and teaching of the Church, and to discover and fulfill our role and mission in this Church, which continues throughout all time.

Lord, give us your grace, your light, your strength, that we may walk and live your way and your love.

Thank you, Lord!

**3. Once more – a quiet reading of this life situation:**

Maria Izabel and Fernando have been living together for five years. They have a stable union. They are married civilly, but cannot marry in the Church, because Fernando is divorced and the process of nullifying his first marriage was not possible. This has brought them much disillusionment, especially since the parish priest of his parish has told Maria Izabel that she could not receive communion, because she was living in sin and that she should not continue in this situation. What would you advise this couple?

**4. Think about the components that constitute this life situation (write them down, if possible):**

- a) Element: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Element: \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Element: \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Element: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Establish the main constituent of the problem presented in this life situation:**

From my point of view, the main constituent of this problem is **(write it down)**:

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**6. From my/our point of view, and before reading the enlightenment presented below, a possible solution to this problem would be (write down, if possible):**

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## 7. Possible enlightenment to the situation of life presented:

### Note:

Let us look at what Pope Francis wrote in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (on Love in the Family – nº 243).

It is important that the divorced who have entered a new union, should be made to feel part of the Church, that they are "not excommunicated" and they should not be treated as such, since they remain part of the ecclesial community. These situations "require careful discernment and respectful accompaniment. Language and conduct that might lead them to feel discriminated against should be avoided, and they should be encouraged to participate in the life of the community. The Christian community's care of such persons is not to be considered a weakening of its faith and testimony to the indissolubility of marriage; rather, such care is a particular expression of its charity".

### Think of / search for some insights in the following thematic areas:

Old Testament; New Testament; Christology; Sacraments; Liturgy; Morality; Ecclesiology; Spirituality.

## 8. Personal or couple conclusions:

### Final remarks:

In a footnote, nº 351 of the Apostolic Exhortation Post Synodal *Amoris Laetitia* (Chapter VIII), Pope Francis says categorically:

"In certain cases, this can include the help of the sacraments. Hence, "I want to remind priests that the confessional must not be a torture chamber, but rather an encounter with the Lord's mercy". I would also point out that the Eucharist "is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine and a nourishment for the weak". (footnote 351 also cites the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* - The Joy of the Gospel - by Pope Francis, nº 44 and 47)

Finally, we should keep in mind these significant words of the current bishop of Rome, reproduced in *Amoris Laetitia*:

