



# DIocese OF COLORADO SPRINGS

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Office of the Chancellor

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Dear clergy of the Diocese of Colorado Springs,

Greetings in the Lord!

Information was brought to the Office of the Chancellor in regard to the celebration of marriage in the Diocese of Colorado Springs, specifically related to the number of celebrations and the re-exchanging of matrimonial consent. It must first be recalled for the sake of clarity that canon 1127 §3 of the Code of Canon Law reads as follows:

*It is forbidden to have another religious celebration of the same marriage to give or renew matrimonial consent before or after the canonical celebration according to the norm of §1. Likewise, there is not to be a religious celebration in which the Catholic who is assisting and a non-Catholic minister together, using their own rites, ask for the consent of the parties.*

In view of this indisputable prohibition codified in the Church's universal law, we must clearly note and hold to the following:

- I. As seen in canon 1057, the exchange of consent makes marriage. For Catholics, this exchange of consent must be done according to canonical form (cf. can. 1108). Under no circumstances is the exchange of matrimonial consent between man and woman to be done anew for a marriage that is presumed valid; to do so would be concomitant with a 'convalidation' or new exchange of consent as seen in canons 1156-1160 in dealing with invalid unions.
- II. This prohibition for the exchanging of matrimonial consent again pertains to the wedding day itself and to any day thereafter. Exchanging marital consent takes place once and is binding for life; no new or additional exchange of matrimonial consent is needed or permitted. On the day of the actual wedding, there is not to be a second "wedding ceremony" with exchange of marital consent again at another church or venue; no matter the personal significance such an edifice or location may have for one or both parties, consent is not to be re-exchanged. Should a cleric deem it opportune, a blessing or prayers of thanksgiving can take place at that second location, but the bride and groom are not to exchange matrimonial consent again.
- III. This prohibition of renewing marital consent also extends to wedding anniversaries. On such occasions, clerics are bound to follow the prescribed liturgical books. In particular, clergy are directed on such occasions to follow the rite described in paragraphs 115-134 of the *Book of Blessings*. Here it will be noted that the cleric will "invite the couple to pray in silence and to renew before God their sacred

matrimonial commitment to each other (cf. para. 123)”. The more recently revised *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (2016) and its blessing for anniversaries clarifies this further by stating that “the couple renew their commitment quietly (para. 241)”; this newer text does provide for a public renewal of commitment (cf. para. 242), which amounts to a prayer of thanksgiving and a request for God to help them remain steadfast—it is not a renewal of matrimonial consent. In place of the renewal consent, which we know is not to be done, the *Book of Blessings* offers an option for the renewal of the exchange of rings (cf. para. 125); this can be done with the original rings or new ones especially blessed for the occasion (cf. *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, paras. 243-244).

Should any questions arise regarding the celebration of marriage, please direct them to the Office of the Chancellor.

Yours in the Lord,

  
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Rev. Msgr. Ricardo Coronado-Arrascue, J.C.D.  
Chancellor

