

# **A GENERAL**

## **MARRIAGES BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND NON-CATHOLICS (Norms for applying the Roman Document on Mixed Marriages)**

The Bishops of Southern Africa, meeting in Plenary Session from 1-4 September, 1970, have resolved as follows:

- a) That pastors be reminded of their responsibilities to instruct the Catholic party to a mixed marriage of his moral duty to persevere in the faith, and to do all he can to have the children baptised and brought up in it. It should be made clear that no promises are now required of the non-Catholic party;
- b) That the declarations and the promises of the Catholic party be given verbally; that this fact be recorded on the marriage information sheet signed by the parties; that this annotation be considered legal proof that the declaration and promises have been made; that, in addition, the declaration and promises may be asked for in writing where an Ordinary decides that this should be done for pastoral purposes;
- c) That the pastor is responsible for seeing that the non-Catholic party's declaration and promises, either by himself or by the catholic party; and that annotation to the effect that the information has been given be made on the marriage information form;
- d) That the onus of informing the minister of another Church concerning a mixed marriage to be performed before a Catholic priest rests with the non-Catholic party;
- e) That the general norms of dispensing from canonical form be:
  1. the need to secure the validity of a marriage;
  2. the interest of good ecumenical relations;
  3. the pastoral good of the whole marriage;
- f) that a sound interpretation of article 13 of the Motu Proprio does not rule out the performance of a single ritual shared by two ministers, but only the duplication of ritual whereby matrimonial consent would be asked for and received more than once, whether before or after or during the wedding ceremony itself;
- g) that it is most desirable that the churches concerned should give official and reciprocal notice of mixed marriages celebrated. Meanwhile, in cases when a mixed marriage has been contracted with a dispensation from the canonical form, the Catholic party is to notify his pastor and the marriage is to be duly recorded in the ecclesiastical register.

The Conference resolved that a uniform marriage information form be drawn up for the whole delegation, with a mixed marriage section in which the following can be noted:

1. the declaration and promises of the Catholic party;
2. the notification to the other party;
3. a dispensation from the impediment of mixed marriage or disparity of cult;
4. a dispensation from the canonical form.

The Conference resolved that the Ecumenical and Liturgical Commissions, in consultation with other churches, investigate the possibility of drawing up a suitable marriage rite for use when a Catholic priest officiates in association with a minister of another church.