Divorced Persons Seeking Remarriage

In order to comply with the 2015 Canon of the Episcopal Church permitting divorced persons to be remarried in the Episcopal Church, Bishop John S. Smylie asks the following of clergy and divorced couples seeking remarriage:

1. Permission from the Episcopal Bishop in whose Diocese you live. This applies to non-Episcopalians as well as those who are members of the church.

2. A period of one-year minimum must have elapsed since a Final Divorce Decree has been issued before the Bishop will consider approval of remarriage in the Church.

3. The couple must attend pre-marital counseling. A letter stating the couple has completed counseling must be included with the request.

4. A copy of the Final Decree must be returned with the answers to the four questions. These will be reviewed in consultation with the Rector of the Parish, then forwarded to the Bishop for his consideration.

5. All provisions of Canon I. 18 shall, in all cases, apply.

Please give prayerful and careful response to these questions, which are designed to give insight into your former relationship and to help identify any problems which may be prevented in the marriage you now contemplate.

1. **What caused the divorce?** This should be stated from your point of view, ignoring any blaming of the other party. The important factor is: What did you contribute to the situation?

2. **What insights did you gain from the divorce?** This question depends on you understanding your contribution to the breakup of your previous marriage. You might find useful an examination of your expectations, dreams or hopes which were frustrated in your previous relationship.

3. **What insights and strengths do you now bring to this new relationship?** How does this new knowledge apply? What expectations do you have now?

4. **What part does the church play in the future marital relationship?** This question is crucial because we take seriously the concept of Christian marriage. You need to acquaint the Bishop with your view of Christian in contrast with only a Civil marriage. Since the marriage ceremony is only the beginning of a new life together, our desire is to help you establish a solid foundation for a happy and fulfilling life together.