

I had hesitated in telling him of my desire because it would mean we both needed to go through the annulment process first and I didn't know how he'd feel about that. Surprisingly, Vern told me he had felt drawn to the Catholic Church also and was very willing to undergo the annulment process. We began the process through our diocese and we both found it to be very helpful. Answering pertinent questions and honestly writing out why we'd felt our previous marriages had failed was a healing experience. Eventually, we were both granted annulments and Vern joined the Catholic Church and we were able to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony surrounded by family and friends. We have since become very active in many Catholic activities.

When we became adults we both had thought we didn't need guidance anymore. We've since found that while obedience to the teachings of the Church and God's word are not always easy, it truly is the answer to peace in our lives. For us, the Catholic Church has been a blessing beyond measure."

Jean & Vern Packard
Omaha, Nebraska USA

How do I start?

If you wish to learn more about church annulment or marriage in the Catholic Church you can contact one of the 4 Regional Marriage Tribunals in Ireland.

To contact a marriage tribunal near you:

[Armagh 048 37 524 537](tel:04837524537)

[Dublin 01 837 9253](tel:018379253)

[Cork 021 496 3653](tel:0214963653)

[Galway Ph \(091\) 565179 / Fax 563512](tel:091565179)

[E mail: 7waterside@eircom.net](mailto:7waterside@eircom.net)

[Website:](http://homepage.eircom.net/~gmtribunal)

<http://homepage.eircom.net/~gmtribunal>

REFERENCE:

1. Going Out, Marriage and Sex, Dr. Chris Richards, Dr. Liz Jones, www.loveswise.org.uk

Marriage & Fertility Treatment



www.fertilitycare.net

Are you married?

NaProTECHNOLOGY and FertilityCare are scientific medical systems, inspired by Catholic thinking. Although originally used for mostly Catholic Couples, these systems are medical and can be beneficial to any couple in need of Reproductive Health Care.

Couples who request fertility treatment in our programme must be legally married.

Obviously many couples who seek FertilityCare are not Catholic and wonder why we ask this question.

Marriage is required in order to safeguard the best interests of any child that may be conceived through our programme.

Statistics from the United Kingdom show that **children born to an unmarried couple have a 52% chance of seeing their parents split up by the age of 5 compared to just 8% of children who are born to married parents¹.**

We accept that a legally binding marriage is not a guarantee that any couple will stay together, but it is the best guarantee we can get to secure this end.

Why do we ask?

Marriage is as a simple way of assessing couple suitability to pursue treatment and embrace the commitment of parenthood if

treatment is successful. Couples who seek adoption must go through in depth interviews and rigorous assessment by social workers to determine if they are fit to look after a child. Our requirements are thankfully much less stringent! Nonetheless, we feel obliged to do what we can, so that any child conceived with the help of NaProTechnology is given the best chance to grow up in a stable family unit.

Catholic Marriage

In this context an increasing number of couples are asking FertilityCare Professionals complex questions regarding Catholic marriage that are not easy to answer.

In fact, the best place to start seeking answers is from your local parish priest.

The Catholic Marriage Tribunal

The Marriage Tribunal advises couples to do everything possible to prevent separation. The help of a marriage counsellor should be sought for marriages in difficulty. If all efforts to save the marriage are unsuccessful the tribunal can be contacted to assess the possibility of annulment. The separating couple must be living apart for one year before proceedings begin, and annulment is not a guaranteed outcome.

A Catholic Marriage tribunal can help you to determine whether there are grounds for

saying that a previous marriage that took place was invalid. This is a detailed legal process based on the principles and teachings of Catholic Canon Law (The law of the Church).

Why bother?

If faith is important to one or both partners we encourage couples to pursue this matter further through your church or online via <http://homepage.eircom.net/~qmtribunal>.

It is up to each individual couple to decide if this is a path worth pursuing or not. The following is a personal story from an American couple who went through such a process and what it has meant to them;

"I was married in the Catholic Church but after 15 years the marriage ended in divorce. Several years later I met Vern, who had been previously married in the Lutheran Church and was also divorced. A few months later we joined and were married in a Lutheran Church. Greatly influenced by our choice of family planning with the FertilityCare System, I finally told Vern I felt a strong desire to get back into full communion with the Catholic Church.