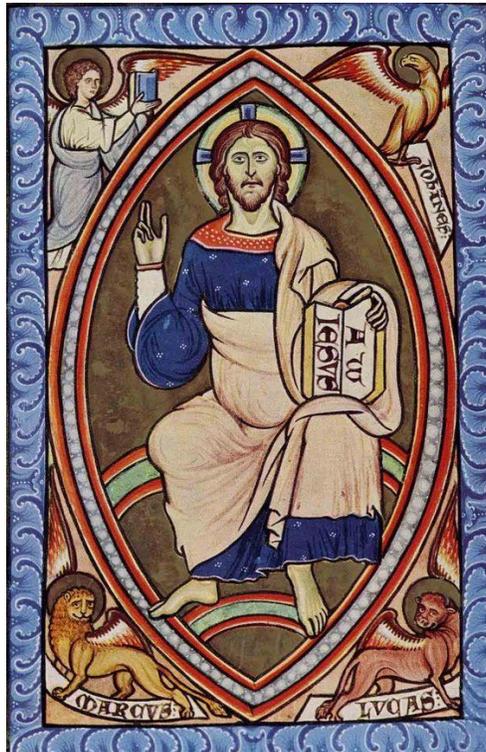




Ecclesiastical Divorce



The Orthodox Church does not promote divorce but rather firmly believes in the sanctity of the marriage and sees it as a life-long commitment. At the same time, though, with pain acknowledges the fact that some marriages die, causing more damage than good to spouses' and children's well-being. In these cases, the church permits the granting of divorce.

Steps to be taken...

The ecclesiastical divorce is something that can be granted only by the Archdiocese and not the local parish. In order for someone to apply for an ecclesiastical divorce (a process almost similar to the civil divorce but without lawyer involvement) the following steps must be taken:

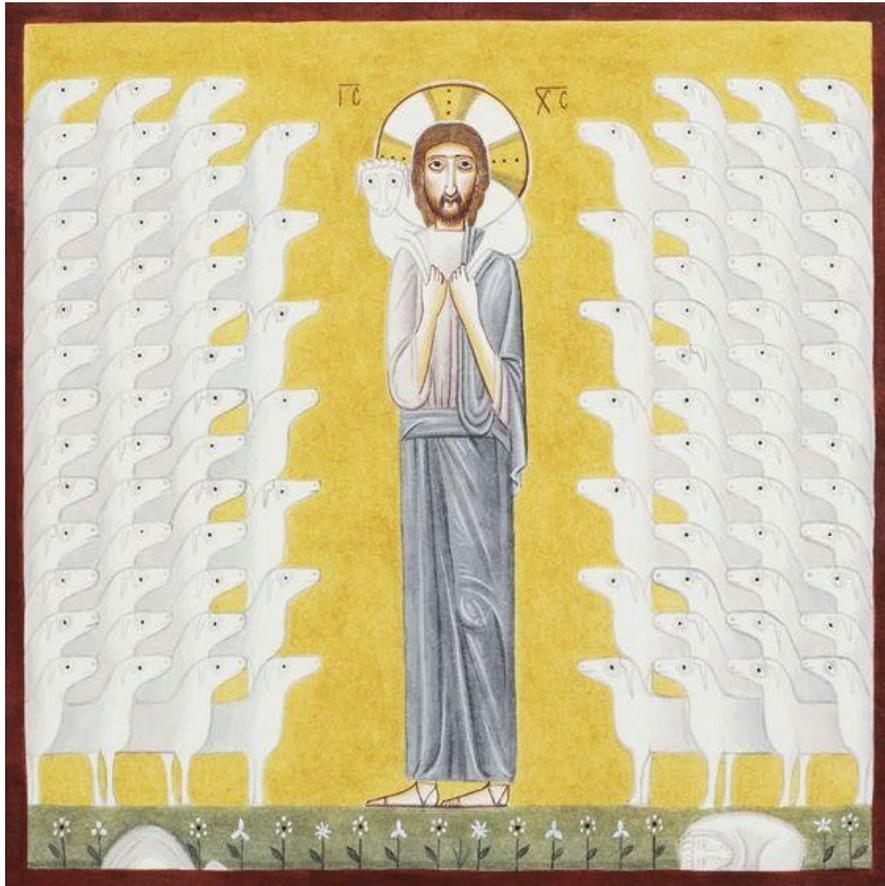
1. The petitioner must be a member of the parish through which he or she is petitioning for divorce.
2. A meeting, must take place, between the Priest and the one requesting divorce, in order for the Priest to have a good understanding of the reasons that led to the divorce and any other relevant information that he needs to include in his Pastoral Report that has to accompany the petition.
3. At the meeting the following documents should be produced:

- The Civil Court Decree by which the marriage was dissolved in accordance with Civil Law
- The letter of petition, signed in front of the Priest
- The original Ecclesiastical Marriage Certificate
- The amount of \$250.00 (Money Order or Certified Check issued to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America) for expenses incurred for the granting of the divorce
- The current information of the former spouse

Once all documents have been received by the Archdiocese a date for the Spiritual Court will be sent by through an invitation to attend the Court (place and time). The people petitioning for divorce need to be present at the Spiritual Court for their case to be decided. After the case is decided in the Spiritual Court the decision, with the necessary justification, will be forwarded to the Registry Department for the issuance of the Divorce Certificate.

When the parish Priest receives the Divorce Certificate from the Archdiocese, the petitioner will

be called to the church office to sign, in front of the Priest, the acknowledgment of the receipt of the Ecclesiastical Divorce Certificate.



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