

First Step Program

2017 First Step Programs: Continuing education regarding marriage and divorce in the Catholic Church

Attempting to pick up the pieces of one's life after the tragedy of divorce is an area that can impact a person's relationship with God and the Church. One of the significant issues that a person faces is their place in the Church. Does the Church still care about me even though I am divorced? Am I allowed to go to Mass? Can I receive communion? How can the Church help me heal? If I decide to marry again, what do I have to do?

The Tribunal of the Diocese of Cleveland offers its First Step Program to help individuals deal with these questions in order to renew and/or strengthen their relationship with God and the Church. This program is offered to help everyone, especially those who have experienced divorce, learn more about Catholic teaching regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Representatives from the Ministry to the Divorced Office of the Department for Marriage and Family Ministry will also be present to explain the resources they offer to the divorced.

Everyone is welcome to:

- Deepen knowledge of the Church's teaching on marriage...
- Learn about the Church's ministry to the divorced/separated in the Diocese...
- Hear about the annulment process and how to submit a case...
- Discover a path to healing after divorce in order to strengthen and/or renew a relationship with God and the Church

In any endeavor, taking the "first step" is always the most difficult. The First Step Program helps individuals to navigate the path of healing and closure. Please refer to the Tribunal website (www.dioceseofcleveland.org/tribunal) for testimonials about the program from past participants.

The following two meetings will be the final First Step meetings, as the program is being discontinued. The schedule for the final general meetings is:

- Tuesday, 12 September 2017, at St. Paul Parish, 1580 Brown St. Akron, 44301, in the Parish Activity Center at 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, 10 October 2017, at St. Ambrose Parish, Brunswick, at 7:00 p.m.

Note that the Diocese of Cleveland no longer requires any fees for this process.

For more information check our website: www.dioceseofcleveland.org/tribunal

Or call the Tribunal: 216-696-6525/800-869-6525, ext. 4000

The Divorced, Separated and Widowed Catholics of Akron will be sponsoring a talk given by Father Ralph Thomas. Father Thomas is a retired priest in residence at IHM and is our DSWC spiritual advisor. The topic for the evening will be: "Are My Struggles Worthwhile?" This event will be held at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent Building, 1945 Portage Trail in Cuyahoga Falls, on Monday, September 11th at 7:30. This event is open at no cost to single people of all faiths. Refreshments will be at 7:15. Our speaker will start at 7:30. For information call Sue at 330-554-5626.