

List of Impediments

Divine Law Impediments (cannot be dispensed from):

- I. **Impotence:** the sexual act must be achieved after the exchange of consent. (cf. Canon 1084)
- II. **Prior Bond (Ligamen):** “A person bound by the bond of a prior marriage, even if it was not consummated, invalidly attempts marriage” (Canon 1085 §1).
- III. **Consanguinity:** “In the direct line of consanguinity marriage is invalid between all ancestors and descendants, both legitimate and natural” (Canon 1091 §1).
 - “A dispensation is never given from the impediment of consanguinity in the direct line or in the second degree of the collateral line” (Canon 1078 §3).

Impediments According to Church Law (can receive a dispensation):

- I. **Lack of Age:** In the United States, the licit age for marriage is 16 for a female and 18 for a male. (cf. Canon 1083 §2) – requires dispensation from bishop
- II. **Disparity of Worship:** “A marriage between two persons, one of whom has been baptized in the Catholic Church... and the other of whom is not baptized is invalid” (Canon 1086 §1). – requires dispensation from bishop
- III. **Holy Orders:** “Those in sacred orders invalidly attempt marriage” (Canon 1087). – requires dispensation from the Apostolic See
- IV. **Vows of Chastity:** “Those bound by a public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute invalidly attempt marriage” (Canon 1088). - requires dispensation from the Apostolic See
- V. **Abduction:** “No marriage can exist between a man and a woman who has been abducted or at least detained with a view of contracting marriage with her” (Canon 1089) – requires dispensation from bishop
- VI. **Conjurgicide:** “Anyone who with a view to entering marriage with a certain person has brought about the death of that person’s spouse or of one’s own spouse invalidly attempts this marriage” (Canon 1090 §1). “Those who have brought about the death of a spouse by mutual cooperation also invalidly attempt a marriage together” (Canon 1090 §2). – requires dispensation from the Apostolic See
- VII. **Consanguinity:** “In the collateral line marriage is invalid up to and including the fourth degree” (Canon 1091 §2). (up to and including first cousins) - requires dispensation by the bishop
- VIII. **Affinity:** “Affinity in the direct line in any degree invalidates a marriage” (Canon 1092). – requires dispensation by the bishop
 - A person is related by affinity to his or her spouse’s blood relatives in the same line and degree as his or her spouse is related to them by consanguinity. (Canon 109 §2).
- IX. **Public Propriety:** “The impediment of public propriety arises from an invalid marriage after the establishment of common life or from notorious or public concubinage. It nullifies marriage in the first degree of the direct line between the man and the blood relatives of the woman, and vice versa” (Canon 1093). It extends consanguinity and affinity impediments to cover common law marriages and other informal sexual relationships- requires dispensation of the bishop.
- X. **Adoption:** “Those who are related in the direct line or in the second degree of the collateral line by a legal relationship arising from adoption cannot contract marriage together validly” (Canon 1094). – requires dispensation of the bishop