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Editorial Comment

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

One of the articles featured in this issue of *The Catholic Lawyer* is a reprint of a recently updated study of material dealing with intolerable marriage situations compiled ten years ago by Ladislav Orsy and published at that time in *The Jurist*. Entitled "Intolerable Marriage Situations Revisited," the new study appeared initially in *The Jurist* as a follow up to the Orsy article and was authored by its Managing Editor, the Reverend James Provost.

Subsequent to the publication of this new study, Pope John Paul II addressed himself to certain aspects of the problem treated in both studies. Speaking at the closing session of a Synod of Bishops in Rome on October 25, 1980, the Pope stated unequivocally that divorced Roman Catholics who remarry may not receive communion unless they abstain from sexual relations with their spouses.

The Pope's speech in the Sistine Chapel formally ended the Fifth World Synod of Bishops, which began September 26, 1980, to discuss the problems of Christian families.

The Pope, speaking in Latin, told the 216 bishops that divorced Catholics who are remarried "are not to be considered separated from the church."

"By virtue of their baptism, they can and ought to participate in the life of the church by praying, by hearing the Word, by assisting at the eucharistic celebration of the community and by fostering charity and justice," he said.

But he added that divorced and remarried Catholics may not receive communion unless they "live in a manner which is not opposed to the indissolubility of marriage; live in complete continence, that is, by abstinence from acts in which only married couples can engage."

The Pope's message came one day after the Canadian delegation to the Synod had recommended a new study to consider allowing divorced and remarried Catholics to take communion.

Vatican sources said the Pope was reaffirming traditional church teaching on the subject and indicating that he did not go along with suggestions for a reappraisal.



Editor

