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Editorial Comment

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Almost all of the cases tried before the Church court are concerned with the annulment or dissolution of marriages. It is important that persons in various unfortunate marital circumstances have an opportunity to seek relief in trying to obtain ecclesiastical annulments or ecclesiastical divorces. Qualified laymen, especially lawyers, can sometimes help such persons seek their rights by helping priest-advocates. For example, a lawyer may be of considerable help in obtaining medical records and in enlisting the cooperation of witnesses. This role of the layman can be implemented under the present law. It is possible that with the revision of canon law this role may be more extensive.

In line with this possibility, the Archdiocese of New York, in cooperation with Fordham University School of Law, recently held a seminar on the subject "The Lawyer's Role in Church Courts." The papers which were presented at this seminar have been edited and make up the symposium which is featured in this issue.

In addition to the symposium we have included a very excellent analysis of the problem concerning individual conscience and the Church's teaching authority. Written by the Most Rev. John J. Wright, it appears in response to the many inquiries on the subject which we have received from readers following publication of the symposium on religious freedom in our last issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Tegen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

EDITOR