

Should I Marry a Non-Catholic to Save Her Soul?



A few years ago, when I was doing a lot more coaching than I am now, someone asked me a question about courting someone non-Catholic. He was hoping that that marrying someone non-Catholic might be seen as noble in some way. I thought I'd reprint the question here along with my humble opinion.

How easily we rationalize all sorts of decisions that we know we shouldn't be making. When it comes to the heart, we can easily fool ourselves into thinking that our case is different or special.

In any case, here is the question:

Dear Cynthia,

I already know your views on marrying non-Catholics; however, I really want to get married and I feel I have a lot to offer to a prospective wife, but, all the girls in my area are liberal Catholics. I feel my chances of converting a devout, non-Catholic are greater.

What if God wants me to marry someone to convert her? Would it be okay to marry a non-Catholic for that reason?"

Here is my response to: Should I Marry a Non-Catholic to Save her Soul:

Dear reader, I must say your first sentence made me chuckle. You're right. I don't believe in Catholics marrying non-Catholics (mixed marriages).

But let's look at your hypothetical union.

It is true that we are to hunger for souls, which means we should be praying and sacrificing, that souls might come to the saving knowledge of the Gospel. This is a wonderful and worthy desire to have.

However, I have never seen the Church recommend marrying people to save their souls. It is a path that is fraught with danger for the Catholic, even though in some cases, the non-believing wife or husband eventually converts. We'll take a deeper look at that scenario a little later.

There are two possible outcomes in this scenario:

Best Outcome of Marrying a Non-Catholic

The best outcome is that the non-Catholic woman you might marry will grow into the knowledge that the Catholic faith is the one true faith, and by your example, she will convert to our faith..

Some Catholics who are in mixed relationships do their best to expose the non-Catholic to all aspects of Catholicism, with the result being that the non-Catholic begins to express an interest in converting.

If he or she is truly interested in converting, then let her convert before you get married. Of course there is the possibility that she might convert to "get the man."

I know one situation where the wife "lost her faith" (not sure if she ever had it), soon after her wedding.

Worst Outcome of Marrying a Non-Catholic

The worst outcome of marrying a non-Catholic actually has many different sub-outcomes, including:

- She might never convert.
- She might stop attending Mass altogether once it's a done deal and she doesn't have to impress you anymore.
- She might decide she doesn't want any kids right away and start taking contraceptives, despite your disapproval.
- If you do have kids, she might refuse to have the kids baptized.
- The kids might be confused because you'll be teaching them about the faith and the mother will be teaching them to be open about religion.
- She might start to explore the [New Age](#) and other man-made religions.
- You might end up losing your faith – yes it can happen!

There is a reason why the Church of old was vehemently against mixed marriages – only giving dispensations as a last measure:

“In an instruction to the Bishops of England, March 25 1868, the Congregation of the Propaganda declared that the above conditions are exacted by the natural and divine law to remove the intrinsic dangers in mixed marriages, but that in addition there must be some grave necessity, which cannot otherwise be avoided, for allowing the faithful to expose

themselves to the grave dangers inherent in these unions, even when the prescribed conditions have been fulfilled."

[Source.](#)

You might marry a non-Catholic and have the most wonderful marriage. In fact, I know one or two couples for which this is the case. However, that outcome brings about lots of pain, when you think about your spouse never attaining the beatific vision.

I know many more couples, whose disparity of belief ended in much confusion, grief and oftentimes divorce.

I do understand how you feel because I too was tempted to go outside the Church, but God spared me that trial.

Maybe God has a nice Catholic girl for you.

You want to save souls? Go for it. You don't have to marry them, though.

God bless!

This was my response to the question. I don't know if he ended up marrying her or not.

What are your thoughts on mixed marriages?

Books on Courtship & Marriage

- [Christian Courtship in an Oversexed World: A Guide for Catholics](#)
- [Clean Love in Marriage](#)
- [Dear Newlyweds, by Pope Pius XII](#)
- [Casti Connubii](#)
- [Three to Get Married by Ven. Bishop Fulton Sheen](#)
- [The Wife Desired by Fr. Leo Kinsella](#)