

Dear Petitioner:

Thank you for accessing the Tribunal website. Your case is important to the Tribunal.

The questionnaire below is intended to gather preliminary information regarding your petition for a declaration of nullity. All of the questions are important and must be answered in detail. Before completing the questionnaire, **please read all of the following information**. The following pages explain the questionnaire and the overall process in some detail. Please follow the instructions carefully. Return the completed questionnaire and documents to the Tribunal by postal mail. **Please note that all incidents of child abuse, as required by Archdiocesan policy and Pennsylvania state law, are reported to the appropriate authorities.**

When we have received your completed materials: (1) If all materials are in order, you will receive a telephone call from the Tribunal to schedule the date and place of your hearing; (2) If there are documents missing or incomplete, you will be informed of what is missing and you will need to bring it with you to your hearing.

The following materials MUST accompany the returned questionnaire:

1. **A BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE ISSUED WITHIN THE LAST SIX MONTHS** for yourself (if you are a Catholic).
2. **A BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE ISSUED WITHIN THE LAST SIX MONTHS** for your former spouse he/she Catholic). If you do not know where your former spouse was baptized, the Catholic Church where you were married can tell you where the baptism occurred but cannot issue a certificate.
3. **A CHURCH MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE ISSUED IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS** (if the marriage occurred in a Catholic Church or with a dispensation). This is not the same as the Civil License.
4. **A CERTIFIED CIVIL MARRIAGE LICENSE.**
5. **A CERTIFIED DECREE OF CIVIL DIVORCE.**

If neither party is Catholic none of the first three items is needed.

All documents are returned to you at the hearing.

CONCERNING THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Please answer all questions as completely as possible. A completed questionnaire saves valuable time for the Tribunal and assists us in fully serving you. A detailed answer to QUESTION #54 is very helpful in the interview. That answer also helps the Tribunal determine if your case can be handled by the Short Process, or by the Bishop's Process, given by Pope Francis.

2. Please be sure to complete all of the questions, making certain that you have birth, baptismal, and divorce dates filled in.

3. IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE THE TRIBUNAL WITH AN ADDRESS FOR YOUR FORMER SPOUSE. If you are unable to supply us with one, a detailed written record of the efforts you have made must be submitted and accompany your questionnaire. In order for your petition to be accepted, you must attempt to provide us with a means to contact your former spouse, the Respondent; e.g. the address of his or her parents, children, siblings, or place of employment if you are certain. At times this is impossible but the attempt must be made at least through a means such as a Google or whitepages.com search. You, yourself, will not be involved in the contact which the Tribunal will have with your former spouse.

CONCERNING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE TRIBUNAL:

1. ORDINARY PROCESS AND BISHOP'S PROCESS: Most of the cases requiring a declaration of nullity will be handled according to the normal process which begins with the completion of the initial questionnaire and takes about four to eight months. Pope Francis also opened up the possibility of a different process. If both the former husband and wife are seeking a Declaration of Nullity and will sign to such, and if both of their testimonies and reasons for the Declaration of Nullity are in agreement, then it is possible to move the case to the Archbishop for a decision. In his estimation, if the case is proven then he can grant a Declaration of Nullity. If he has any questions about the case or it is not proven to his satisfaction, then the case goes back to the normal process that has always been used and is noted above. Most cases are treated in the ordinary process.

2. TIME ELEMENT: Each case is unique. The time required for a given case is governed by the cooperation of the parties, the witnesses, and the number of cases ahead of yours. Unopposed cases are usually completed in four to eight months.

3. PROOF OF THE GROUNDS: The Tribunal will need proof of your testimony for the grounds for a Declaration of Nullity. In order to obtain this proof, witnesses will need to participate. Usually, witnesses will be relatives, friends, or persons who have been associated with you at least from the beginning of the marriage in question and who are in a position to give pertinent information in writing.

4. TRIBUNAL CONSULTANTS: In many cases, a final decision cannot be reached without the assistance of a psychologist or psychiatrist associated with the Tribunal. Their opinion is usually needed by the Tribunal toward the end of the process. You will be contacted if this meeting is necessary.

5. RIGHT TO APPEAL: The right to appeal is always safeguarded. If someone is opposed to a declaration of nullity, one can always appeal an affirmative decision. If a declaration of nullity is not granted, that decision can always be appealed. An affirmative decision cannot be guaranteed.

6. **COURT COSTS:** Effective December 21, 2015, there are no longer Court fees at the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The Holy Father, Pope Francis, encourages those who are able to make a contribution to do so, in order to offset the expenses of the Tribunal. The administrative cost of the Tribunal is \$800.00 per case. Any contribution toward the Tribunal ministries is greatly appreciated after the completion of the process.

7. **CONTACT WITH THE TRIBUNAL:** In order to protect your privacy and uphold procedures:

No telephone calls (or email) will be accepted requesting any information on the status of any case because there is no way to be certain of the caller's identity. Once a case begins, all requests for information must be **in writing** and sent to the Presiding Judge in your case.

No information will be given to third parties (second spouses, fiancée, parents, etc.). Only the Petitioner or Respondent can seek information on a case and must do so **in writing.**

Please return the completed questionnaire to the following address:

The Tribunal
222 N. 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

If you are in need of any assistance or have any questions about the annulment process, please call the Tribunal at 215-587-3750.

Sincerely,

The Tribunal Staff

N.B.: A person, who needs a declaration of nullity from a prior marriage, cannot schedule a marriage in the Catholic Church until the annulment process is complete.

**ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
THE TRIBUNAL**

Please Type or Print in Black Ink

Please read all instructions before filling in the questionnaire. Please fill in all information about both yourself (PETITIONER) and your former spouse (RESPONDENT).

**PETITIONER
(Yourself)**

**RESPONDENT
(Former Spouse)**

1. Present Name: _____

1. _____

2. Maiden Name: _____

2. _____

3. Present Address:

Street: _____

City, State, _____

Zip Code: _____

3. _____

(MUST have a full address)

4. Phone:

Home: _____

Business: _____

4. _____

5. Occupation: _____

5. _____

6. Date of Birth: _____

6. _____

7a. Father's name: _____

7. _____

b. Father's religion: _____

c. Is he still living? _____

8a. Mother's first name
& Maiden name: _____

8. _____

b. Mother's religion: _____

c. Is she still living? _____

d. Are your parents still married to each other? If not, please explain.

e. Are the Respondent's parents still married to each other? If not, please explain.

9. If you are Roman Catholic:

- a. Church of Baptism: _____
City/Town & State: _____
- b. Exact Date of Baptism: _____
- c. Present Parish: _____

9. If Respondent is Roman Catholic:

10. If you are not Roman Catholic:

- a. Religion professed: _____
- b. If baptized, where? _____
- c. If baptized, when? _____

10. If Respondent is not Roman Catholic:

11. Number of years of formal education in (K-PhD):

- a. Catholic schools _____
- b. Non-Catholic schools _____

11. Number of years of formal education in (K-PhD):

- a. Catholic schools _____
- b. Non-Catholic schools _____

INFORMATION ABOUT MARRIAGE BEING CONSIDERED FOR ANNULMENT
(Marriage between you and your former spouse)

12. What month, date, year were you married to your former spouse, the Respondent?

12. _____

13. Were you married to your former spouse, the Respondent, with a religious or civil ceremony?

13. _____

- 14a. Did you or the Respondent obtain a Catholic Dispensation from the normal Catholic Form of Marriage in order to be married according to Catholic Church Law but by a Minister, Rabbi, or Magistrate? 14a. _____
- 14b. If so, what Catholic Parish and its location was approached to obtain this dispensation? 14b. _____

15. If the marriage ceremony was religious, why did you choose to have a religious ceremony? _____
16. Place (City/Town & State) of your marriage to the Respondent: 16. _____
- 17a. If religious ceremony, please give the name of Church or synagogue: 17a. _____
- 17b. If you, the Petitioner, are Catholic and the marriage to the Respondent was at first outside the Church, please give particulars of Church ceremony or Validation, or Blessing:
1. Exact Date: _____
2. Church: _____
3. City or Town: _____
18. Age at time of the marriage:
- a. Petitioner: _____
- b. Respondent: _____
- 19a. Was your marriage to the Respondent the first marriage for you? 19a. _____
- 19b. Was this the first marriage for the Respondent? 19b. _____

19c. To how many people have you been married in any way, shape, or form? Please list names and dates in the space below.

19c. _____

19d. To how many people has the Respondent been married in any way, shape, or form? Please list names and dates in space below.

19d. _____

20. How long did you seriously date the Respondent before the engagement?

20. _____

21. How long were you engaged to the Respondent?

21. _____

22. Did you and the Respondent have a pre-nuptial agreement?

22. _____

23. After the marriage ceremony, how long did you live together until the final separation?

23. _____

24. What was the date of your final separation, i.e., the date you discontinued cohabitation?

24. _____

25. How many children were born to you and the Respondent?

25. _____

Give the year of birth of each child.

First Child _____

Second Child _____

Third Child _____

Fourth Child _____

26. If children were born of your marriage to the Respondent,
- a. Who has custody of the children? 26a. _____
 - b. In what religion are they being raised? 26b. _____
 - c. Do you pay child support (if you are not the custodial parent)? 26c. _____
 - d. If you are the custodial parent, are you receiving child support? 26d. _____

27. Civil Divorce Information:

- a. Was it obtained by you or the Respondent? 27a. _____
- b. What was the exact date on which it was granted? 27b. _____
- c. Where was it granted? (City or County and State) 27c. _____
- d. Was there any mention of a Church annulment included in the divorce settlement? 27d. _____

28a. Did both you and the Respondent freely enter marriage? If not, please explain.

28b. Was there a premarital pregnancy? If so, how did the pregnancy influence your decision to marry?

29a. Did your former spouse deliberately **keep from you, hide, or conceal** anything before the marriage? (For example, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, sexual deviation, gambling addiction, excessive debt, medical condition, etc.) If so, please explain.

29b. Did you deliberately **keep from, hide, or conceal** anything from your former spouse before the marriage? (For example, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, sexual deviation, gambling addiction, excessive debt, medical condition, etc.) If so, please explain.

30a. At the time of the wedding, did you believe marriage to be permanent that is ended only by the death of a spouse? If not, please explain.

30b. Did the Respondent believe this? If not, please explain.

31a. At the time of the wedding, did you believe in divorce? If so, for what reasons?
(for example: adultery, abuse)

31b. Did the Respondent foresee this possibility? If so, please explain.

32a. At the time of the wedding, did you agree to marry only under certain condition or restriction?
If yes, state the condition or restriction.

32b. Did the Respondent share this view? If not, please explain.

33a. Did you intend to be absolutely faithful to your spouse? If not, please explain.

33b. Did the Respondent share this view? If not, please explain.

34a. Did you want to have children in this marriage? If not, please explain.

34b. Did the Respondent share this view? If not, please explain.

34c. Did you or your former spouse intend or want to delay starting a family for any reason? If so, please explain.

35a. At the time of the wedding or before the wedding, did you firmly set a limit to the number of children which you would have? If so, please explain.

35b. Did the Respondent share these views? Please explain.

36. Was some method of contraception or abstinence used in your sexual intimacy to avoid pregnancy throughout the period of your marriage? If so, please explain.

37a. Prior to the marriage, did you consult a medical doctor, psychiatrist, or counselor for any nervous or emotional problem? If so, when? What was told to you by the doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, or counselor?

37b. During the marriage, did you consult a medical doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, or counselor? If so, when and why?

37c. After the marriage ended, did you consult any of the above about yourself? If so, what was said?

37d. Did either you or the Respondent ever consult a clergyman during your marriage concerning marriage problems? Please explain.

38. What do you know about the Respondent in regard to his/her emotional history prior to the wedding?

39. Please give the name and address of any counselors and time span of consultations.

40. Were there any significant problems in the family background of either you or your former spouse? (For example, alcohol or substance addiction, serious illness, etc.) If yes, please explain.

41. Did the Respondent have difficulty getting or holding a job? If so, please explain.
42. Were finances a problem in your marriage? Please explain.
43. Were you or the Respondent irresponsible with money/finances? Please explain.
44. Did you and the Respondent have different views about finances? Please explain.
45. Did either of you have a problem with gambling? Did the problem begin before or after the wedding?
- 46a. Did either of you have a drinking problem? Please explain.

46b. Did the drinking problem begin before or after the wedding?

47a. Did either of you use drugs? Please explain.

47b. If either you or the Respondent did use drugs, did this begin prior to the wedding?

48. Were there any problems prior to or during the marriage involving abuse of any type (verbal, physical, emotional or pornography)? Please explain precisely.

49. Were there any problems involving in-laws? Please explain.

50. Were there any problems with fidelity prior to and/or during your marriage to the Respondent? If so, please explain.

51. Were there any problems regarding Church or religious beliefs? Please explain.

52. Did either you or the Respondent experience difficulty in dealing with ordinary, everyday problems? Please explain.

53. Was your marriage to the Respondent a partnership? Please explain.

54. Please explain briefly why your marriage to the Respondent was not a successful one.

55. Present marital status of Petitioner:

a. **Single:** _____

b. **Engaged:** _____

If yes,

1. To whom? _____

2. Has this person ever been married before?

3. *If yes, how was this marriage dissolved?

c. **Remarried:**

If yes,

1. To whom? _____

2. Has this person ever been married before?

3. *If yes, how was this marriage dissolved?

55. Present marital status of Respondent

a. _____

b. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

c. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

56. **Have you or your former spouse ever applied for an annulment before? If so, please give the details.**

***If you answered yes, please call the Tribunal to clarify the marital status of the person within the Church**

Signature of Petitioner: _____

Date: _____

Any questions about the form, please call the Tribunal at 215-587-3750