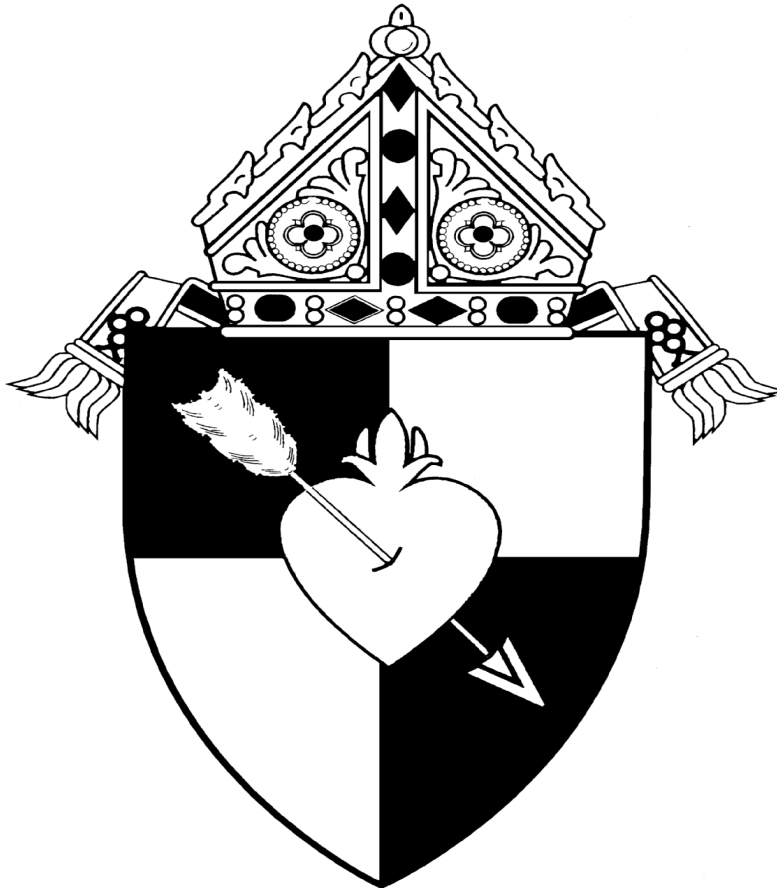


**PETITION FOR A DECLARATION OF  
INVALIDITY OF MARRIAGE**



**THE DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE  
TRIBUNAL**

**11625 OLD ST. AUGUSTINE ROAD  
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32258  
(904) 262-3200**

Priest: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of times Petitioner has been married: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of times Respondent has been married: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please type or print your responses.**

**PETITIONER** (yourself)

**RESPONDENT** (former spouse)

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

(Work) \_\_\_\_\_

(Work) \_\_\_\_\_

(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Church of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Church of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Church: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

If convert to Catholicism, date & place of reception:  
\_\_\_\_\_

If convert to Catholicism, date & place of reception:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Address if Living: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Address if Living: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Age at time of marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Age at time of marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNULMENT PETITION

The constant and traditional teaching of the Catholic Church throughout the centuries holds that any marriage properly entered into by the spouses is to be considered valid and binding. All children of a valid or a putative marriage are considered legitimate and this legitimacy once conferred can never be taken away by any power (canon 1137).

In petitioning for a declaration of invalidity of your marriage you are asking an ecclesiastical Tribunal to make a formal statement that your former marriage, although entered into with sincerity by both parties, lacked some of the essential requisites necessary for a sacramental marriage. The church reluctantly admits petitions of invalidity since it is called to be faithful to Christ's teaching: "What God has joined let man not separate." This is why each individual petition is judged on its own merits.

## ANNULMENT PROCESS

The annulment process is designed to facilitate growth and healing. It does not seek to fix blame or find a guilty party. Its purpose is to acquire an understanding of the personalities of the spouses, the courtship, and the subsequent marriage.

As an initial step in the process, you are asked to submit a printed or typed report that has been composed according to the following questions. Writing this report may be a painful task. Yet the very discomfort should lead to your personal growth and spiritual betterment.

## DOCUMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED

- Marriage Certificate (church and civil)
- Civil Divorce Decree
- Baptismal Record for both parties

## GROUND S

The process is adjudicated in a legal setting to assure fairness and objectivity. Since a declaration of invalidity is NOT a dissolution or divorce, nor is it a mere permission to remarry, there must be serious reasons before a petition can be accepted. Marriage comes into being by the free and reasoned consent of the parties. Our task is to carefully examine whether or not any of the essential requisites necessary for the sacramental marriage, were lacking.

## RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT

Since marriage always involves two persons, it is essential that we notify the other party of your petition, inform them of the grounds on which you seek the decree of invalidity, and invite their cooperation. If they so choose, they may come to the Tribunal to testify and even to read the documents and written materials submitted by you. These are universal requirements of the law of the Catholic Church which if not complied with automatically render a decree of invalidity null and void. Should the other party choose not to participate, we will not bother them anymore. However, they must be offered the right to participate.

## EXPENSES

It is necessary for us to charge a fee toward helping pay the expenses associated with processing your petition. Professional services, secretary salaries, telephone services, mailing costs, etc., all add up at the end of each month. Your parish priest will give you a copy of the various fees. Please make your check payable to the **Diocese of St. Augustine**. Your fee is tax deductible. The Diocese of St. Augustine, in order to help you in your relationship with the Lord, is already paying a substantial amount of the actual cost of processing the case so as not to burden you. If you are unable to pay the fee please speak with the pastor of your parish who will work with you.

1. Was this the first marriage for both parties? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, please complete the following for each previous marriage:

**Previous Marriage(s) of Petitioner (yourself)**

a With Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

a Religion of other party: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage take place in the Catholic or Orthodox Church: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage end in death: \_\_\_\_\_ Did the marriage end in divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of death or divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Has this marriage been declared null by the Catholic Church: \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please provide the decree.

b With Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

b Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

b Religion of other party: \_\_\_\_\_

b Did the marriage take place in the Catholic or Orthodox Church: \_\_\_\_\_

b Did the marriage end in death: \_\_\_\_\_ Did the marriage end in divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

b Date of death or divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

b Has this marriage been declared null by the Catholic Church: \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please provide the decree.

**Previous Marriage(s) of Respondent (former spouse)**

a With Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

a Religion of other party: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage take place in the Catholic or Orthodox Church: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage end in death: \_\_\_\_\_ Did the marriage end in divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of death or divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Has this marriage been declared null by the Catholic Church: \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please provide the decree.

b With Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

b Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

b Religion of other party: \_\_\_\_\_

b Did the marriage take place in the Catholic or Orthodox Church: \_\_\_\_\_

b Did the marriage end in death: \_\_\_\_\_ Did the marriage end in divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

b Date of death or divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

b Has this marriage been declared null by the Catholic Church: \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please provide the decree.

**2. In regard to the marriage for which you are presently petitioning to have declared invalid:**

Date of this marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of this marriage (i.e., name of church, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

City and State: \_\_\_\_\_

In front of (check one): Priest/Deacon \_\_\_\_\_ Minister \_\_\_\_\_ Rabbi \_\_\_\_\_ Civil Official \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you court before you married: \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you live as husband and wife: \_\_\_\_\_

How many children were born of this union: \_\_\_\_\_ Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Who has custody of the children: \_\_\_\_\_

Are the natural obligations toward the children and former spouse being met: \_\_\_\_\_ If not, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of final separation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of final divorce decree: \_\_\_\_\_

County and State of final divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Have you since married another person: \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please complete the following:**

a With Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

a Religion of other party: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage take place in the Catholic or Orthodox Church: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage end in death: \_\_\_\_\_ Did the marriage end in divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of death or divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Has this marriage been declared null by the Catholic Church: \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please provide the decree.

**4. Are you presently engaged to marry or do you plan to marry in the Catholic Church? If so, please complete the following:**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**Important: Under NO circumstances may a date for a Catholic wedding be set until a final Declaration of Invalidity is issued.**

5. **Has your present spouse or fiancé been married before: \_\_\_\_\_ if so, please complete the following:**

a With Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

a Religion of other party: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage take place in the Catholic or Orthodox Church: \_\_\_\_\_

a Did the marriage end in death: \_\_\_\_\_ Did the marriage end in divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Date of death or divorce: \_\_\_\_\_

a Has this marriage been declared null by the Catholic Church: \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please provide the decree.

### WITNESSES

Church law requires that allegations be proven not only by the statements of the parties to a marriage, but also by the testimony of reliable witnesses. The witnesses should have direct knowledge of you and/or your former spouse before, during, and after marriage. It is best to have witnesses who know both parties, such as family members. Children of your marriage are not ordinarily witnesses. Please list below the names, addresses and zip codes of witnesses, and their relationship to the parties.

a Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

b Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

c Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

d Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### ATTESTATION OF PETITIONER

I, the undersigned Petitioner, ask for a Declaration of Invalidity of this marriage. I also swear to the truthfulness of all information. I pledge to almighty God not to discuss the facts of this case or possible questions and answers with the witnesses. I understand that all information submitted will become the property of the Tribunal. I understand that a date for a marriage in the Catholic Church **cannot** be set until a final Declaration of Invalidity is issued.

Signature of Petitioner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# PETITIONER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

**DO NOT ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THIS FORM. PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSES ON SEPARATE PAPER. A SIMPLE "YES" OR "NO" IS NOT SUFFICIENT.**

## **I. Regarding Your Own Character and Personality**

1. Describe your father and/or stepfather. What are his strengths and weaknesses? How are you like/different from your father?
2. Describe your mother and/or stepmother. What are her strengths and weaknesses? How are you like/different from your mother?
3. Describe your parents marriage? How did they get along with each other, express their love, fight, etc.?
4. Describe the type of family from which you came, indicating any unhappiness in childhood and adolescence which stemmed from family circle (i.e., unstable marriage of parents, dominance of one parent over the other, divorce, infidelity, over-strictness, significant deaths or illnesses or unhappy experiences, emotional or physical difficulties). How was the home atmosphere (warm, cold, distant, unstable, etc.)?
5. Were there any problems with the law, alcohol, drugs, verbal, or physical abuse in your family? If so, please explain.
6. Describe to what extent religion was a significant part of your upbringing (i.e., frequency of church attendance, formal religious education, etc.).
7. Briefly describe your beliefs and thoughts about God, Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Matrimony, prayer and church involvement.
8. Describe your brothers and sisters. Are they older/younger? What are their strengths and weaknesses? How are you like/different from them? How did you interact with each other and your parents?
9. Are your brothers, sisters, or close friends divorced and remarried? How does their experiences impact on your own life?
10. Describe how you did in school and other activities. Describe your experience in the military? Were you consistently employed? Describe your relationships with co-workers and supervisors.
11. Describe your own maturity and emotional stability at the time of the wedding and during the marriage.
  - What were your strengths and weaknesses?
  - How did you handle responsibility?
  - How did you control anger?
  - Were you able to pass up immediate rewards in favor of long term goals?
  - How did you handle discomfort and defeat?
  - How were you able to make decisions and follow through?
  - How did you handle times of crisis?
  - How did you handle drugs, alcohol, gambling, sex, etc.
  - What were your goals in life?
12. How were you responsible in financial matters? How did you consult your former spouse in financial matters? Did you buy expensive items to the detriment of the family unit?
13. Before or during the marriage, did you have any mental, emotional, nervous disorders? If so, did you ever receive psychiatric or psychological treatment? Please provide, names, addresses, diagnosis, results, etc.

## **II. Regarding the Character and Personality of Your Former Spouse**

14. Describe his/her father and/or stepfather. What are his strengths and weaknesses? How is he/she like/different from their father?
15. Describe his/her mother and/or stepmother. What are her strengths and weaknesses? How is he/she like/different from their mother?
16. Describe his/her parents marriage? How did they get along with each other, express their love, fight, etc.?

17. Describe the type of family from which he/she came, indicating any unhappiness in childhood and adolescence which stemmed from family circle (i.e., unstable marriage of parents, dominance of one parent over the other, divorce, infidelity, over-strictness, significant deaths or illnesses or unhappy experiences, emotional or physical difficulties). How was the home atmosphere (warm, cold, distant, unstable, etc.)?
18. Were there any problems with the law, alcohol, drugs, verbal, or physical abuse in his/her family? If so, please explain.
19. Describe to what extent religion was a significant part of his/her upbringing (i.e., frequency of church attendance, formal religious education, etc.).
20. Briefly describe his/her beliefs and thoughts about God, Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Matrimony, prayer and church involvement.
21. Describe his/her brothers and sisters. Are they older/younger? What are their strengths and weaknesses? How is he/she like/different from them? How did they interact with each other and their parents?
22. Are his/her brothers, sisters, or close friends divorced and remarried? How does these experiences impact on his/her life?
23. Describe how he/she did in school and other activities. Describe his/her experience in the military? Was he/she consistently employed? Describe his/her relationships with co-workers and supervisors.
24. Describe his/her maturity and emotional stability at the time of the wedding and during the marriage.
  - What were his/her strengths and weaknesses?
  - How did he/she handle responsibility?
  - How did he/she control anger?
  - Was he/she able to pass up immediate rewards in favor of long term goals?
  - How did he/she handle discomfort and defeat?
  - How was he/she able to make decisions and follow through?
  - How did he/she handle times of crisis?
  - How did he/she handle drugs, alcohol, gambling, sex, etc.
  - What were his/her goals in life?
25. How was he/she responsible in financial matters? How did he/she consult with you in financial matters? Did he/she buy expensive items to the detriment of the family unit?
26. Before or during the marriage, did he/she have any mental, emotional, nervous disorders? If so, did he/she ever receive psychiatric or psychological treatment? Please provide, names, addresses, diagnosis, results, etc.
27. Please add any information that has not already been covered which you think is important.

### **III. Concerning Your Courtship.**

28. When (approximate date) and where did you become acquainted with your former spouse and how often after this did you date?
29. Describe each party's dating experience before you met (i.e., approximate number of different persons dated, any serious relationship, and the reason for its/their break-up).
30. When did you become engaged? At whose suggestion? How long were you engaged? Please describe any unusual circumstances which influenced your decision to marry.
31. During the time of your courtship, did either of you date anyone else? If so, under what circumstances?
32. During the time you were dating one another, did you encounter any difficulties or misunderstandings serious enough to cause an interruption or break in the courtship? If so, describe these difficulties and the manner in which they were resolved.
33. Did relatives or friends characterize your relationship as one of infatuation? Did they have doubts or concerns? If so, please explain.
34. Describe any problems with excessive jealousy, possessiveness, moodiness, shyness during the courtship.

35. Was there premarital sex? If so, did this influence your decision to marry your former spouse (i.e., guilt, shame, commitment, etc.)? Please explain.
36. Did you live together before marriage? If so, for how long? Was there any pressure from anyone to persuade or influence you to marry? If so, who, why, and how?
37. Was there a pre-marital pregnancy? If so, in what way did this pregnancy influence your decision to marry? Were other alternatives discussed? What was the reaction of your former spouse, friends, and families?
38. Before marriage, did you receive marriage preparation? What were the reactions to these instructions? What significant issues arose? Did you both take an active interest in the wedding preparations?
39. Prior to marriage, did you both communicate well? Did you discuss and take into consideration the impact of any significant cultural, racial, religious, social, educational, family and personality differences? Describe the results of these discussions.
40. Were there any significant differences in outlook regarding marriage from a religious point of view? Were both of you actively practicing your faiths?
41. Prior to the wedding, were there any discussions or agreements in regard to children (i.e., timing, number, spacing, religion, discipline, etc.)? What would have happened if one party insisted on having a child soon after the wedding?
42. Did either of you have any specific philosophy regarding being faithful in marriage? In entering marriage did both of you intend to be faithful to each other for life?
43. Did you consider what would end the marriage (i.e., infidelity, physical abuse, drugs, lack of love, etc.)?
44. Describe the attitudes of you and your former spouse toward divorce. Was divorce considered a viable solution to an unhappy marriage? After divorce, were the spouses free to enter another marriage?
45. Describe any serious doubts or reservations you or your former spouse may have had concerning the marriage. Did anyone advise against the marriage? How were those doubts resolved?
46. Describe any conditions either of you may have had about each other prior to the ceremony. Was there a prenuptial agreement? If so, what were the details?
47. Describe any significant conflicts just before the wedding and/or on the wedding day.

#### **IV. Honeymoon**

48. Did you take a honeymoon trip? Where and for how long was the trip? If not, why not.
49. Was the marriage consummated (sexual relations) on the honeymoon? If not, why not.
50. Describe any significant conflicts on the honeymoon.

#### **V. Concerning the Marriage**

51. Was the marriage entered into with mutual love? If not, please explain.
52. Was the marriage contracted freely? If there was any force or fear or ultimatum, please explain in detail? Describe any factor(s) that you think propelled you into this marriage.
53. If this was a “blessing” of your civil marriage in the catholic Church: What did the first ceremony mean to you and your former spouse? Did either of you feel that the first ceremony was valid? Why did you have your civil marriage blessed? Were you having marital problems at the time? What were they? Did either party feel pressured? When did you celebrate your anniversary?
54. Describe your daily married life before you began to have problems in the marriage.

55. Describe how well you and your former spouse were able to communicate throughout the marriage? Did you effectively communicate your needs, desires, goals, dreams, anxieties? Did you listen to one another?
56. How did you handle disagreements? Did you walk away and/or argue? Describe any significant physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual mistreatment during your marriage.
57. Describe any personality traits, reactions, negative characteristics that you became aware of in your former spouse during the first year or so of marriage which were not apparent during the period of your courtship.
58. Describe how educational, career, and/or other commitments handicapped you or your former spouse from establishing and maintaining a functional marital relationship.
59. How did the use and/or abuse of alcohol or drugs affect this marriage? Describe significant issues with law enforcement agencies.
60. Were there any problems experienced in your sexual relationship? If so, please explain.
61. How many children were conceived? How many children were born? Please provide the dates (month/year) of births, miscarriages, abortions.
62. If children were postponed, who decided to postpone them and for what reason? How were they avoided?
63. If children were born, were you and your former spouse both responsible and nurturing parents during the marriage and after the divorce?
64. If children were born to this marriage and are still minors, what provisions have been made or are being made for their proper care? Are the prescriptions of the civil courts being observed?
65. Were both of you faithful to each other? If not, please give details about the infidelity, when it began, how long it continued, etc. How did it affect your relationship?

#### **VI. Concerning the Termination of the Marriage**

66. When and over what issues did the first conflicts arise?
67. After the wedding, when and why were the statements first made about a possible divorce?
68. What were your main complaints regarding your former spouse as husband/father or as wife/mother?
69. What were your spouses main complaints about you as a spouse and parent?
70. Describe any separations that took place in your marriage (i.e. approximate dates, duration, cause, and manner of reconciliation).
71. When and why did the final separation take place? Describe any attempts at reconciliation.
72. During the marriage did you discuss your marital problems with professional persons? What were the results? If possible, please provide counselor's name, agency, and address.
73. Who initiated the divorce proceedings (civil action) and why?
74. Briefly explain why you think and feel this marriage failed and to what extent and in what manner were you responsible for the difficulties that were encountered in your marriage.
75. Please add anything else that you believe is pertinent regarding this marriage.