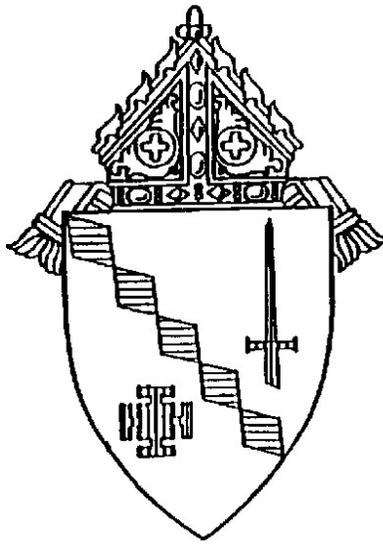


**Diocese
of
Birmingham
in Alabama**



Marriage Tribunal

**APPLICATION
FOR FORMAL CASE
FOR ANNULMENT**
(Rev. 12/2015)

**NOTICE: DO NOT PRINT ON FRONT AND BACK OF PAPER
ONE SIDE ONLY**

INSTRUCTIONS TO PROCURATOR-ADVOCATE

1. Have the person read the pamphlet, **FORMAL ECCLESIASTICAL DECLARATION OF NULLITY**, (Rev. 12/2015), (found on website) before beginning the annulment process. This pamphlet explains many terms, answers many questions, and outlines the process of annulment.
2. Go over with the petitioner the **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS** (found on pages 4 and 5) which must be obtained.
3. **When you assist the person to fill in the PETITION, it is imperative that the Petitioner clearly state the major reasons upon which the validity of the marriage bond is being questioned. The Petitioner should explain the major reasons in their own words for the breakdown of the marriage. DO NOT LEAVE THIS BLANK.** A copy of the PETITION will be sent to the former spouse when he/she is notified at the beginning of the annulment process.

A full treatment of the grounds for nullity cannot be given here. The following are only some brief thoughts about grounds. The person may be incapable of giving valid consent on the day of the wedding for a variety of reasons such as: severe mental illness, severe immaturity, psychological or social pressure, force and fear demanding that the wedding take place, pressure resulting from premarital pregnancy, alcohol/drug abuse, grave defect of judgment resulting from lack of freedom or pressure, and prior family circumstances such as alcoholism of parents or other acute family problems which affect the petitioner's judgment concerning the rights and duties of marriage which are to be mutually given and received.

Likewise, a person may be incapable of living out the essential responsibilities of marriage due to: sexual disorders, personality disorders, severe alcohol or drug abuse, chronic irresponsibility.

Finally, a person may have an explicit or implicit positive intention against marriage, or one of the goods of marriage consisting of the good of the spouses (community of life), openness to having and educating children, fidelity, and permanence.

4. Carefully read over and fill out the **MANDATE OF PROCURATOR-ADVOCATE** with the petitioner.
5. Carefully read over and make sure the petitioner has filled in completely the **AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE PROTECTED HEALTH CARE INFORMATION** and make sure one is completed for each medical/counseling professional we are to contact. It is helpful if the petitioner notifies the professional that our request for records will be forthcoming.
6. Encourage the petitioner to take time to develop the Autobiographical Essay. Go over some of the questions with them, especially in the area of **COURTSHIP**. Support them. Let them know that it will take a number of sittings to finish the essay.

DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM
THE MARRIAGE TRIBUNAL
P. O. Box 12047
Birmingham, Alabama 35202-2047

Dear Petitioner (Person initiating Annulment Process):

In order to present your case to the Tribunal, we ask you to complete the following pages. This form should be filled out with the pastoral minister handling your case who will also become your Procurator-Advocate. In approaching the Tribunal, you are asking us to examine thoroughly a marital relationship and to make a judgment as to whether or not this relationship may be declared null (invalid) in the community of the Catholic Church.

Since marriage involves two people and the decision of the Tribunal judges will affect both parties, we must invite the participation of your former spouse. We will ask for information similar to that which we now ask of you. Therefore, to prevent ill feelings, if you have contact with your former spouse please inform him/her that you are beginning this process. The purpose of the annulment process is not to place fault or blame on any party but rather to investigate the existence of a bond of marriage between the couple.

If, through this process, a Declaration of Nullity is granted, it will not affect the natural and civil obligations created by this marriage, such as the legitimacy of children, child support, visitation rights, or alimony. This process is conducted exclusively to determine the validity of the religious dimension of your marriage in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel and the Roman Catholic Church.

In order to handle our heavy caseload, it is necessary for the Tribunal to maintain an efficient office staff. We request a fee of two-hundred dollars (\$200), even though the total cost to process a case is in excess of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1500). The Diocese and Parishes make up the difference. Please understand, however, that no one is ever turned away from this Tribunal because of their inability to pay a fee for our professional services. If you have a serious difficulty in paying the fee discuss this with your Procurator-Advocate who will request the Bishop to lower or dispense with the fee.

Before filling out this form for a Declaration of Nullity, please read the form in its entirety with your Advocate. Study each question carefully and think how you will answer the question. Please don't panic when you see the questions. The various types of questions are very important to make a proper assessment of your former marriage. Please give serious thought to each question and answer as fully as possible. This will help your case.

Thank you for your cooperation in all these matters.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Please submit the following documents along with this form. **You must send an original or official document and not photocopies.** An original or official document is one provided to you from a proper source, certified, and either is imprinted with a seal and/or an original signature of a proper authority testifying to its authenticity. **No photocopies of originals or official documents can be accepted.** Keep a copy for your file. Failure to comply will delay the acceptance of the case.

- () A recent Certificate of Baptism of any **Catholic party**. [Obtainable from the parish of baptism; the certificate must be issued within the last **six months.**]
- () Civil Marriage Certificate **for all marriages including Catholic** [Obtainable from the county which issued the original document. In Alabama, may be obtained from any County Health Dept.)
- () **Catholic Church Marriage Certificate** [If marriage was convalidated (blessed) in the Catholic Church, a Church marriage certificate from the Church of marriage is needed.]
- () Signed Divorce Decree [Obtainable from the county which issued the original document.] In Alabama, "Divorce Certificate" may be obtained from any County Health Department

Also include:

- () Completed Autobiographical Essay **SEE APPENDIX p.18**
- () The names of at least **3 witnesses** to the marital relationship, with their complete addresses. These witnesses should be persons who knew you and your spouse **before, during, and after** the marriage. Examples of such persons could be the parents, older brothers and sisters, close friends and relatives of either spouse; usually children of the couple **do not** make good witnesses. Please use the witness form provided. It is your responsibility to see that your witnesses respond in due time. Failure of witnesses to respond promptly causes case delays.

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- () The names of any counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists whom you consulted concerning this marital relationship or for any other emotional problems which existed before, at the time of, or during the marriage. **Please call your counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists that you visited requesting a copy of your records.** You will probably be asked to sign their release to obtain these records. Enclose the records with your Petition. **In addition,** please complete and sign the enclosed "Authorization to Release Protected Health Care Information" (**HIPAA**) for each professional witness on your list.
- () Any other original documents which could have a bearing on this case:
- Letters or diaries
 - civil court records, agreements
 - medical or police records
- () Small photo of yourself.
- () Fee of \$200 made payable to The Tribunal, Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama.

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THE MARRIAGE TRIBUNAL OF THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM

STATEMENT OF THE PETITIONER

It is my duty to provide the Tribunal with all required documents as well as a complete, current, and accurate list of all my witnesses. I agree to inform them that the Tribunal will contact them. I will make myself available to give personal testimony and to complete a personality assessment.

If the Tribunal is able to decide this case, there is no guarantee that the final determination will be favorable to me. I also understand that no guarantee can be given to me about when the annulment process will be completed.

I understand that I may not set a date for any future marriage in the Catholic Church until, and unless, an affirmative decision is given. I understand that no Priest/Deacon/Advocate may provide me with even a tentative date for a future marriage in the Catholic Church.

A decision depends wholly on the merits of the case, the evidence, and exact reasons which the Church recognizes as grounds for nullity. I understand that if an affirmative decision is reached, that (a) either the Defender of the Bond or my former spouse may appeal it; and (b) stipulations against a subsequent marriage may be placed on me, pending an assessment of my readiness to live out a sacramental marriage. Either of these may delay my ability to set a date for a forthcoming marriage in the Catholic Church.

Because of the sensitive nature of the information gathered in this process and because the Tribunal wishes to promote the spirit of Christian Charity, all the information gathered in the course of this investigation is considered to be the exclusive property of the Tribunal of the Diocese of Birmingham. This information is never made available except as required by Catholic Church Law for inspection by the Petitioner or the Respondent or their Procurator/Advocate. The judge may curtail the availability of the information, even to the Procurator/Advocate, for special reasons that the judge may determine, to avoid harm to a party. The information is not made available to the witnesses or for any civil proceeding.

I will inform the Tribunal of any future change in my name, place of address, or civil marriage status.

I AGREE TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH THE TRIBUNAL AND TO BE BOUND BY THE POLICIES IN THE ABOVE STATEMENT. I SWEAR THAT THE TESTIMONY WHICH I SUBMIT WITH THIS PETITION IS THE WHOLE TRUTH.

Signature of the Petitioner

Date

DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM
THE MARRIAGE TRIBUNAL
P.O. Box 12047
Birmingham, Alabama 35202-2047

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Please print clearly. It is important that each item have a response. If a question is not applicable to your situation, write "NA." If you do not know an answer, write "Unknown." If items are left blank, this Data Sheet may be returned for completion. RESPONDENT'S ADDRESS REQUIRED!

Petitioner
(You)

RESPONDENT
(Former Spouse)

PRESENT LAST NAME _____

MAIDEN NAME _____

FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

APARTMENT NUMBER _____

CITY _____

STATE/ZIP _____

() HOME TELEPHONE () _____

() CELL PHONE () _____

EMAIL _____

OCCUPATION _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

PLACE OF BIRTH _____

EVER BAPTIZED? _____

RELIGION OF BAPTISM _____

DATE OF BAPTISM _____

CHURCH OF BAPTISM _____

ADDRESS OF CHURCH _____

CITY _____

STATE/ZIP _____

PRESENT RELIGION _____

AGE WHEN MARRIED _____

MARRIAGE BEING STUDIED

Total Time: when you began dating until the wedding day _____

The time of Engagement to Wedding Date _____

Date of Wedding on **Civil** Marriage Certificate: _____

Location of Wedding: _____
City County State

Name and Address of Place of Wedding: _____

(Church, Synagogue, Courthouse, Home, Other)

Witnessed by: a) Catholic Priest b) Non-Catholic Minister
(Circle one) c) Civil Official

If the wedding was not a **Catholic ceremony**, was it ever validated
(blessed) in the Catholic Church? _____

If so, Date: _____ Name of Church: _____

Street City State Zip

Before whom: _____

Date and Place of Divorce: _____
Date

City County State

Who filed for the divorce? ____ I did; ____ The Respondent did

State the major causes leading to the divorce: _____

Were there any separation(s) before the divorce? _____

How many: ____ Who initiated it? ____ I did; ____ The Respondent did

Give approximate date and length of each separation:

THE DATE you **stopped living together** before the divorce: _____

CHILDREN

How many children were born of this marriage? _____

How many children were adopted in this marriage? _____

Names and dates of birth/adoption:

Who has principal custody now? _____ I do; _____ The Respondent
_____ Joint; _____ Other

Are all civil duties of child care/support being fully met? _____
If **NO**, please explain.

OTHER MARRIAGES

List any other marriages (**before and after this marriage being studied**) you or your former spouse entered. Please identify the previous spouses and give the dates and locations of those weddings and dates and places of divorce, or death of spouse. **If you have not previously applied for a Declaration of Nullity, you must submit a case for these other marriages.**

Have you ever presented a marriage case to this Tribunal or any other Church court? _____ No; _____ Yes Date: _____
Month Year

TRIBUNAL: _____
City County State

LIST OF WITNESSES

Please list persons who have knowledge of your marital relationship. These persons must be willing to share detailed and honest information with the Tribunal about you and your former spouse. **You must contact them before presenting them.** Remember, the best witnesses are those persons who knew you and your spouse before, during, and after the wedding. Examples of such persons could be the **parents, older brothers and sisters, close friends, and relatives of either spouse; usually children of the couple do not make good witnesses.** Please make an effort to include witnesses from your former spouse's side. **Please print clearly.** Use additional sheet if necessary.

NAME (Mr. Mrs. Ms.) _____ RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP _____

DID THIS WITNESS AGREE TO TESTIFY? _____

NAME (Mr. Mrs. Ms.) _____ RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP _____

DID THIS WITNESS AGREE TO TESTIFY? _____

NAME (Mr. Mrs. Ms.) _____ RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP _____

DID THIS WITNESS AGREE TO TESTIFY? _____

NAME (Mr. Mrs. Ms.) _____ RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP _____

DID THIS WITNESS AGREE TO TESTIFY? _____

PROFESSIONAL WITNESSES

Please list the names and addresses of Professionals: Doctors (visited for mental health and/or medication) NOT family doctor, Counselors, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Priests, Ministers, or Agencies, either you or your former spouse saw before, during, or after the marriage. Also, see note on page 5 under Required Documents where we request that you contact your helping professionals for a copy of your records to be sent in with the Application.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

DATES VISITED _____

WHICH PARTY? _____ I did _____ The Respondent

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

DATES VISITED _____

WHICH PARTY? _____ I did _____ The Respondent

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

DATES VISITED _____

WHICH PARTY? _____ I did _____ The Respondent

Were either of you hospitalized for any nervous/mental difficulty before, during, or after the marriage? Please list.

NAME OF HOSPITAL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

DATES VISITED _____

WHICH PARTY? _____ I did _____ The Respondent

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE PROTECTED HEALTH CARE INFORMATION

TO: _____ RE: _____
Person or Organization Name of Patient

_____ DOB: _____
Address

_____ SSN: _____

Dates visited: _____

Pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Regulations, 45 CFR §164.508, I hereby authorize the release to the **Marriage Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama**, P.O. Box 12047, Birmingham, Alabama 35202-2047 or any of its representatives:

XX all records regarding mental health, psychiatric, chemical dependency.

The purpose of this authorization and request is to obtain ALL medical information pertaining to the patient and his/her physical and/or psychological condition, which may be relevant as it pertains to certain annulment proceedings. This authorization expires three (3) years from the date of the signature. The aforementioned expiration date has not passed, as this matter is ongoing. A photo static copy of this authorization shall be as valid as the original.

I hereby authorize a free copy of the medical records pursuant to KRS 422.317 be sent, to the extent I have not already requested the one free copy.

I understand that I have the right to revoke this authorization in writing by providing a signed, written notice of revocation to the above-named provider and to the Tribunal office of the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama. Medical providers may not condition treatment or payment on whether the above-listed patient executes this authorization. The information disclosed pursuant to this authorization may be subject to re-disclosure and no longer protected by the privacy regulations promulgated pursuant to the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

I understand that I have a right to receive a copy of this authorization.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE PROTECTED HEALTH CARE INFORMATION

TO: _____
Person or Organization

RE: _____
Name of Patient

Address

DOB: _____

SSN: _____

Dates visited: _____

Pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Regulations, 45 CFR §164.508, I hereby authorize the release to the **Marriage Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama**, P.O. Box 12047, Birmingham, Alabama 35202-2047 or any of its representatives:

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I understand that I have a right to receive a copy of this authorization.

SIGNATURE : _____

DATE : _____

THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP IS IRREPARABLY BROKEN

Before a Decree of Nullity is granted it must be proven that the marriage has irreparably failed and conjugal living cannot be restored.

The priest, deacon, or lay advocate preparing the case must discuss with the petitioner the reasons that the marriage cannot be saved.

Some indications may be:

1. Respondent is currently **re**-married and has children with the new spouse
2. Petitioner is currently **re**-married and has children with the new spouse
3. Divorce has existed for many years
4. **Re**-marriage of either spouse has existed for many years

At the time of the final separation and divorce did the couple seek or engage in any of the following:

- Attempted Counseling
- Meeting with clergy or pastor
- Was incarcerated
- Serious addiction habits
- Mental or physical abuse
- Other indications worthy of note

Space is provided below for the responses. This form must be signed by the petitioner and advocate.

PETITIONER

PRIEST, DEACON, LAY ADVOCATE

Date

Rev. 12/2015

MANDATE OF PROCURATOR-ADVOCATE

I, the undersigned, do hereby nominate and constitute the person herein indicated to act as my Procurator-Advocate with the power of acting for me in my name before the Tribunal of the Diocese of Birmingham and of doing all things that may be useful and necessary for the furthering of my cause before this Tribunal of First Instance.

By means of this document, I also empower my Procurator-Advocate to be notified of the joinder of issues, the publication of the acts, of the conclusion of the case, and of the publication of the sentence.

I further nominate the same person to act as my Procurator-Advocate before the Tribunal of Second Instance if that court should permit him/her to act.

I hereby request the undersigned person, _____, to serve as my Procurator-Advocate in these proceedings. I understand that my Procurator-Advocate will represent me with full authority to the best of his/her ability. I also authorize the Tribunal to appoint and/or substitute such person to process this case as may be necessary.

Date

Signature of Petitioner

I, the undersigned, accept the Mandate and appointment of the above-signed petitioner, and I agree to act as Procurator-Advocate in these proceedings.

Signature of Procurator-Advocate

Church of Advocate

Date

Mailing Address of **Advocate**

City State Zip

Area Code & Telephone Number

APPENDIX

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY OUTLINE

Please develop **an autobiographical essay** using the following statements and questions as a guideline. **It is important to attempt to address each of the statements and questions by developing your answer in sentence and paragraph form.** There are eight major topic areas which we would like for you to cover as you write your essay. A descriptive answer containing specific examples will be most helpful in the annulment investigation. **Yes and No answers are not helpful. Please type or print legibly on one side of 8-1/2-by-11-inch paper. If possible, limit your essay to 15 typed double spaced pages.**

I. YOUR FAMILY BACKGROUND AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH YOU GREW UP

- Describe in general terms your home situation as a child.
- If you were reared outside of your family home, please explain.
- Were both parents natural parents? If no, please explain.
- Describe the personalities of your parents and their relationship to one another.
- What was the religion of your parents and to what extent did they practice it?
- Were there any divorces, separations, or remarriages in your immediate family? If yes, please explain.
- Describe the socio-economic background of your family.
- Did your family move during your childhood? If so, how often?
- Describe the use of alcohol/drugs in your family. (*For example, by parents, grandparents, siblings.*)
- Did anyone in your family ever have legal problems which affected you personally or the family? If yes, please explain.
- Describe how emotion was displayed in the family, how conflict was resolved, and how affection was communicated.
- Was there evidence of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse in the family? If yes, please explain.
- Describe any serious health problems, recurring illnesses, or emotional problems or difficulties you or members of your family may have had while you were growing up. How old were you?
- Was psychiatric/psychological care ever required by your parents or your brothers and sisters? If yes, please explain.
- How many brothers and sisters did you have? What was your numerical position? How well did you get along with them and what is your present relationship with them?
- How would you describe your role in the family?
- Did you feel rejected at any time? Please describe.
- Were you given independence and allowed to make your own decisions? Please give examples.
- Did anything about your home situation influence your decision to marry? Please explain.
- How well did your family background prepare you for marriage?

II. YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- To what extent did you practice your religion?

- At what age did you begin dating?
- How was the topic of sex treated in your family?
- How did you learn about sex?
- How did you relate to people of the opposite sex? The same sex?
- How did your parents feel about your dating patterns?
- How old were you when you began to develop serious relationships? Please elaborate on the nature of these relationships.
- Were you ever involved in a serious relationship prior to meeting your former spouse? How was it terminated?
- What life goals did you develop during your adolescent period?
- What was the highest grade level of education you completed? If you did not complete high school, please explain the reasons why.
- Describe any problems you may have had with gambling, alcohol, or drug use or with law enforcement agencies.
- Describe your job history between age 16 and your marriage.
- Were you in military service before marriage? If yes, describe your duties and assignments. When and why did you enter? When and why did you leave? What type of discharge did you receive?
- Please write about any other pertinent issues from your family or personal background that have not been addressed in the preceding statements or questions.

III. THE FAMILY BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENT OF YOUR FORMER SPOUSE

The following questions and statements are meant to comprehensively address issues in your former spouse's background. Please respond to the best of your ability.

- Describe in general terms your former spouse's home situation as a child, his or her parents' personalities, and their relationship to one another.
- If your former spouse was reared outside of the family home, please explain.
- Were both parents' natural parents? If not, please explain.
- What was the religion of your former spouse's parents and to what extent did they practice it?
- Were there any divorces, separations, or remarriages in your former spouse's immediate family? If yes, please explain.
- Describe the socio-economic background of your former spouse's family.
- Did your former spouse's family move during his/her childhood? If so, how often?
- Describe any problems with gambling, alcohol or drugs, or law enforcement agencies that your former spouse or any members of your former spouse's family may have had.
- Describe how in your former spouse's family emotion was displayed, conflict resolved, and affection communicated.
- Was there evidence of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse?
- Describe any recurring family problems such as chronic illness or unemployment. How old was your former spouse when these occurred?
- Was psychiatric/psychological care ever required by your former spouse or his/her parents or siblings? If yes, please explain.
- How many brothers and sisters did your former spouse have? What was your former spouse's numerical position? How well did your former spouse get along with them and what is your former spouse's present relationship with them?

- How would you describe your former spouse's role in the family?
- Did your former spouse feel rejected at any time? At what age(s)? Please describe.
- Was your former spouse given independence and allowed to make decisions? Please give examples.
- Did anything about your former spouse's home situation influence the decision to marry? Please explain.
- Do you believe your former spouse's family background adequately prepared him/her for marriage? Please explain.

IV. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR FORMER SPOUSE

- Did your former spouse have any serious health problems or recurring illnesses? Please explain.
- To what extent did your former spouse practice his/her religion?
- Did your former spouse experience any emotional difficulties while growing up?
- At what age did your former spouse begin dating?
- How did your former spouse's parents feel about his/her dating and/or dating patterns?
- In general terms, how did your former spouse relate to people of the opposite sex? With the same sex?
- Was your former spouse ever involved in any other serious relationship prior to meeting you? How was it terminated?
- How was the topic of sex treated in your former spouse's family?
- How did your former spouse learn about sex?
- As your former spouse progressed through adolescence, what life goals did he/she develop?
- What was the highest-grade level of education your former spouse completed? If your former spouse did not complete high school, please explain the reasons why.
- Describe any problems your former spouse may have had with gambling, alcohol or drug use, or law enforcement agencies.
- Describe briefly your former spouse's job history after age 16 and before marriage.
- Was your former spouse in military service before your marriage? If yes, please describe his/her duties and assignments. When did your former spouse enter and what type of discharge did he/she receive? When and why did your former spouse leave?
- Please include any other pertinent comments you would like to make about your former spouse's family or personal background before your marriage?

V. COURTSHIP

- How and when did you meet your former spouse?
- Were either of you on the rebound from another relationship?
- How often did you date and what did you do on the dates?
- What attracted you to each other?
- At the time, what attitudes did each of you have toward premarital sex in your relationship?
- Was there a premarital sexual relationship and, if so, to what extent did it affect your relationship?
- Did you feel any pressure to maintain or continue the relationship during the courtship?
- Describe your communication with each other during the courtship? Give examples.

- What did you see in this person that motivated you to choose him/her as a marriage partner?
- Who brought up the topic of marriage? How long did you know your former spouse before discussing marriage?
- At the time of your marriage, did each of you feel that you could commit yourself to each other for the rest of your lives? If not, please explain.
- Was there any indication that either of you thought lightly of fidelity prior to the marriage? If yes, please explain.
- Were either of you involved with anyone other than your former spouse during the courtship? If yes, please explain.
- Did either of you have a history of broken relationships prior to meeting each other?
- Is there a history of infidelity in either of your family backgrounds? What about with close friends of either of you?
- Did either of you ever discuss the possibility of giving each other the freedom to see others during the marriage?
- Did either of you ever envision a set of circumstances which, if they came to pass, would end the marriage? For instance, spousal infidelity (If she ever cheated on me, I'd divorce her.), or spousal abuse (If he ever hit me, I'd be out the door.).
- Was divorce ever discussed as a solution for future unhappiness?
- During the courtship, did any relative or friend get a divorce? What attitudes/feelings were expressed at that time?
- Do you see a difference in "hoping" your marriage will last forever and "intending" your marriage to last forever? Did you "hope" or "intend" permanence in your marriage? What about your former spouse?
- Did either of you enter this marriage with the attitude "if this doesn't work out, we can always get divorced?" If yes, please explain.
- Did you discuss any plans about having children? If yes, what were your plans?
- Prior to the marriage, did either place any condition on the marriage such as "I will only marry if..." or "I will remain married to you provided that..." If yes, please explain.
- Was there any quality about the other person that, had you been aware of it, you would never have entered the marriage? If yes, please explain.
- Was there any force or fear used by anyone such as threats, physical harm, etc., to make either party marry? If yes, please explain.
- Were there any conflicts related to careers, future family goals, and expectations? If yes, please explain.
- What were you and your former spouse's career goals? Were they realized prior to your marriage?
- Was there ever a pregnancy involved before marriage? If yes, how did it affect the decision to marry?
- Did any other factor hasten your decision to marry?
- Were there any premarital instructions given by a priest or minister? Did you attend any Pre-Cana program? Did either occasion cause any questions or problems?
- Were there any arguments during the courtship? Over what issues? How did these conflicts affect the relationship?
- Describe any emotional, sexual, or physical abuse.
- Were there any interruptions or breakups during the courtship? If yes, please describe them.

- Did you have any concerns about your former spouse during the courtship? Please explain your answer.
- Did either of you express a concern or doubt about the impending marriage? If yes, please explain.
- What were your families' reactions to your engagement?
- Did you and/or your former spouse sign a prenuptial agreement? If YES, what did it cover and why was it necessary? Can you furnish us with a copy? If so, please enclose.
- What was your respective use of alcohol/drugs during the courtship? Please describe.
- What was the attitude of each of you toward the practice of religion? Was there any conflict about this?
- Describe any significant physical, emotional, psychological, or psychiatric problems either of you may have had during the courtship. How were they treated?
- Did either of you enter military duty during the courtship? If yes, when and why? How did this affect the relationship?
- During your courtship, do you think you were both sufficiently mature and emotionally stable to enter into marriage? If not, please explain.
- Do you think you both had an adequate understanding of what married life entailed? If not, please explain.
- Are there any other pertinent issues about the courtship you would like to mention that have not been expressed in the previous responses?
- How long did you date before getting engaged? Who proposed? When? How long were you engaged before your marriage?

VI. WEDDING AND HONEYMOON

- In what ways did you and your former spouse share in the planning of your wedding?
- Did either of you have any second thoughts in the final days leading up to the wedding? If yes, please explain. Was this discussed with anyone?
- Did anyone express concerns or doubts to you as the wedding day approached? How did you respond?
- Has anyone told you since about their doubts before the wedding?
- What was your attitude during the wedding ceremony?
- Were there any unusual incidents during the day?
- Did you have a honeymoon? If yes, what was its duration?
- Were there any unusual incidents during the honeymoon? If yes, please explain.
- Was the marriage consummated at this time? If not, why? If not, when was the marriage consummated?

VII. MARRIED LIFE

- How would you describe your initial adjustments in the marriage?
- Was your married life what you both expected it to be?
- Discuss when you first became aware of serious problems?
- Describe your mutual ability to communicate and share affection.
- How were major decisions reached in the marriage?
- Describe your respective relationship with friends during the marriage. Did either of you see these as a problem?
- Describe your jobs and how they may have affected your marriage.
- Did either of you have hobbies or outside interests that kept

- you away from each other and caused a problem?
- Did you do things together? Please explain.
 - How did parents and in-laws influence the marriage?
 - Describe the usage of alcohol/drugs by each party during the marriage. Did either of you see the other's use of alcohol or drugs as a problem? Please explain.
 - Were either of you ever hospitalized or treated for emotional or psychological problems during the marriage? If yes, please explain.
 - Was gambling or financial irresponsibility evident during the marriage? Please explain.
 - Describe any marital infidelities that may have occurred.
 - Were either of you possessive, jealous, or mistrustful of the other person? If yes, please explain.
 - Describe and discuss any major disagreements in the marriage.
 - Did pregnancy and/or children adversely affect your marriage?
 - If you had children, how many and how well were they accepted and cared for by each of you?
 - If you did not have children, why not?
 - If you agreed to postpone children, please explain why and when this decision was made. Was it a mutual decision?
 - Describe to what extent contraceptives (birth control) were used in the marriage.
 - Did both of you act responsibly for the upkeep of the home and the family? If not, please explain.
 - Describe and discuss any emotional, sexual, or physical abuse.
 - Were there any sexual problems? Please explain.
 - Was the use of pornographic material by either of you ever a problem in the marriage? If so, please explain.
 - Did either of you exhibit any homosexual tendencies/behaviors during the marriage?
 - List the major problems, which, in your opinion, led to the marital breakdown.
 - How did you or your former spouse contribute to the marital breakdown?

VIII. SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

- How many separations occurred during the marriage?
- What was the cause of the final separation? Who left whom?
- Were you convinced the marriage was over?
- Describe any attempts at reconciliation and who made them?
- Is there any possibility of reconciliation? Please explain.
- Please feel free to mention anything else about your marriage that has not been expressed in your essay.

IX. ALL OTHER ATTEMPTS TO MARRY

If you attempted marriage by a civil official, minister or other official or live in a common-law marriage, please answer the following questions concerning each and every marriage you entered into. **Include present spouse if remarried civilly.**

- How and when did you meet?
- When did you become engaged and civilly married?
- How long were you married?

- How did the relationship differ from the marriage currently being examined?
- Why was this marriage terminated?

SPECIAL SECTION FOR CATHOLICS

X. CONVALIDATION (MARRIAGE CONTRACTED CIVILY THEN LATER VALIDATED (mistakenly called "blessed") IN CATHOLIC CHURCH)

If the **civil marriage** was **later convalidated** (i.e, Marriage in the Catholic Church), include the following questions in your Autobiographical Essay.

- At the time, you entered your **civil marriage** did you give a full, free consent to marriage?
- After the **civil marriage**, did you consider yourself, at that point, truly married?
- Why did this **civil marriage** take place outside the Catholic Church? Please give reasons in detail.
- Was the time between the **civil marriage** and the convalidation (Catholic Marriage) a happy marriage? Please explain your answer.
- Were there any major problems between the two of you at the time of this Catholic marriage? Please explain.
- Why did you and your spouse go through a Catholic ceremony?
- Who suggested it and why?
- Were any other members of your family in sacrament preparation or desiring the reception of a sacrament (e.g., baptism, confirmation, first communion) at the time you decided to have your marriage convalidated/blessed?
- Did this fact influence your decision to have your marriage blessed? How?
- What was your own personal feeling about this blessing in the Catholic Church?
- Did you already believe that you were truly married when you had married civilly? If so, why did you go through another ceremony in the Catholic Church?
- Did your spouse feel that he/she was already married to you in the non-Catholic ceremony? If so, why did he/she go through this marriage in the Catholic Church?
- At the Catholic ceremony did both you and your spouse feel that you were marrying for the first time, or did you feel that you were merely renewing your marriage promises of the first marriage which had taken place outside the Catholic Church?
- Was there any opposition to this "Catholic marriage"?
- Please describe any discussion or preparation that took place with the priest in arranging this marriage in the Catholic Church.
- What do you remember about how the priest explained what you were doing?
- Were either one of you practicing any religion at the time of the marriage in the Catholic Church?
- What date did you celebrate as your wedding anniversary?