



DIOCESE OF EL PASO
TRIBUNAL

Dear Petitioner:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assist you in the initial step of presenting your case to the Tribunal. You are petitioning the Tribunal of the Diocese of El Paso to undertake an investigation of your marriage and to make a judgment as to whether or not the Catholic community considers you free to enter another marriage. We ask you to please complete this questionnaire as carefully and as completely as you possibly can. All the documents and information requested from you are important to the Tribunal, since it will be used to determine if your case can be accepted and what type of case you have.

Keep in mind that your submission of this form does not guarantee an automatic declaration of nullity of your marriage. If, however, a declaration of nullity is eventually granted, it will have no bearing on such things as the legitimacy of children, custody of children, child support, alimony, or visitation rights. These are natural and civil elements of marriage, and **this process deals exclusively with the religious and sacramental elements.**

The Tribunal process is governed by a detailed and strict procedural law of the Catholic Church. Most cases are completed in approximately 1 to 2 years, we don't guarantee that a particular case will be completed at a certain time nor that an affirmative decision will be handed down. If problems arise in getting testimonies or if we lose contact with you, your case may possibly be delayed. **DO NOT SET A DATE FOR FUTURE MARRIAGE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** while the Tribunal procedure is pending. These uncertainties often bring frustration and doubt that requires great patience. Please understand, however, that our painstaking attention to technicalities and the details required in the process are a sign of our great respect for marriage.

It is of utmost importance that you provide the Tribunal with the current and complete address of your former spouse, the **Respondent**. Since marriage involves two people and the Tribunal's decision will affect both parties, we cannot begin a case without information concerning both spouses. The Church's law requires that your former spouse be notified of these proceedings and be invited to participate as an equal participant. If we are unable to learn the current address of your former spouse, we may not be able to accept your case. If you do not provide the Tribunal with the correct and current address of the Respondent, this may possibly delay your case. Hence, it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS PETITIONER TO PROVIDE A COMPLETE NAME, CURRENT ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER** of your former spouse.

THE FOLLOWING MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION:

1. All information given in reference to your case is strictly confidential.
2. Please type or **LEGIBLY PRINT** your answers. **Use black ink and do not use a pencil.**
3. Each party has the right to read and comment on each other's written statement so long as they both have submitted written statements to the Tribunal.

4. It is your responsibility to find at least three (3) witnesses, and to **OBTAIN THEIR CONSENT** to receive a questionnaire. They must answer it properly and return it to this office within the time period allowed to them. Their answers will be treated with utmost confidentiality.
5. If the judge finds that more information is needed, you will be asked to come to the tribunal for an interview or be physically present at a formal hearing held in the Tribunal court room on the date and hour designated.
6. If at any stage of the process you feel that your rights to a fair process have been violated, please contact the Judicial Vicar immediately. If for any reason you do not want for this Tribunal to process your petition, you may refer your case directly to the Roman Rota.

THE FOLLOWING MUST BE SUBMITTED TOGETHER WITH THE PETITION:

1. Recent Copy of Baptismal certificate. (Within the last 30 days.).
2. An authentic copy of marriage license (original or court certified).
3. Recent **court certified copy** of divorce decree. An original stamp/ seal and/ or signature from the county court office is required.
4. Agreement to Tribunal Policies and Release of Liability.
5. A Photo of the couple. (Optional)

Finally, whenever you call our office, always refer to your case with the last name or maiden name of the petitioner (yourself) and the respondent (*e.g.* SMITH -DOE # 034-2020). In order to safeguard the demands of confidentiality, only the petitioner and the respondent can inquire as to the status of the case. If you need assistance in answering the questionnaire, please call the Tribunal so that we can connect with your parish Advocates.

***Please return the complete
Petition and Questionnaire to:***

**THE TRIBUNAL
499 St. Matthews St.
El Paso, TX. 79907
(915) 872-8402**

**AGREEMENT TO TRIBUNAL POLICIES
AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY**

1. I understand that, if the Tribunal accepts my case for consideration, it cannot and does not guarantee that an affirmative decision will be given. I also understand that the Tribunal will not promise or guarantee that the case will be concluded by a certain date. Because of this, I agree to wait until I receive a final decree in writing from the Tribunal before I set a definite date for remarriage within the Catholic Church.

2. Since I am petitioning assistance in personal matters from the Tribunal of the Diocese of El Paso, I, the undersigned, understand that it is necessary that personal information affecting me be made available to the Tribunal.

3. I understand that the Tribunal of the Diocese of El Paso, in the investigation of the case, may employ the services of a psychological professional or other expert witness and I hereby authorize the Tribunal to disclose complete information concerning my case to such professional for case review. I also understand that if the nature of my case demands the employment of such experts, I will be responsible for their professional fees. Upon completion of the case, I also authorize the Tribunal to release at its discretion information regarding the case to a psychological expert, counselor, priest or deacon for follow up counseling as well as for pre-marital preparation presently or in the future. It is understood that otherwise all contents of this investigation will be kept confidential, reserved exclusively to the parties to the case and to the staff of the Tribunal, according to the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church.

I hereby release all persons whom I have listed as witnesses or sources of information which the Tribunal requires, as well as all persons whom the tribunal may contact on its own initiative, from any liability to me or to any other person arising by reason of disclosure to the Tribunal of personal information or opinions affecting myself.

4. I understand that the Tribunal will take reasonable measures to preserve the confidentiality of any sensitive information disclosed hereunder. Accordingly, I agree to keep confidential any information that I shall learn in the course of the proceeding. Because all testimony in this case is given for the possible ecclesiastical annulment of my marriage, and because my interest is solely to present my case to the Tribunal, I agree not to use information that I may learn through the case in any other forum or for any other purpose. I also understand that neither the Tribunal nor the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso, Texas shall in any manner be responsible to me or any other person for any unauthorized dissemination of information which may occur.

I further agree to indemnify the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso, Texas against any and all liabilities costs, or expenses which may be incurred by, or claimed against, the Diocese as a result of any disclosures I may make, or cause to be made, related to my petition in personal matters herein.

Signature _____ Date _____

Ecclesiastical Notary _____



*DIOCESE OF EL PASO
TRIBUNAL*

***Petition for Marriage Nullity Case
in Formal Process***

I, *(full name)* _____, respectfully petition the Tribunal of the Diocese of El Paso to investigate, according to the canon law of the Catholic Church, the canonical validity of

my marriage to *(Respondent's full name)* _____,

which was contracted on *(date of marriage)* _____,

in the Church of *(Name of the Church)* _____,

at *(city and state)* _____.

I claim that this marriage was invalid according to canon law of the Catholic Church, on the following ground: DEFECT OF CONSENT.

In support of this claim, I name the following as knowledgeable witnesses able to and willing to provide testimony regarding the ground I propose. I attest that I have contacted or will soon contact each witness listed, to obtain their personal consent to be contacted by the Tribunal as witnesses in my case. (Please print full names of at least three (3) witnesses.)

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Signature of the Petitioner: X _____ **Date:** _____



*DIOCESE OF EL PASO
TRIBUNAL*

R:10/1/2015

QUESTIONNAIRE

PETITIONER

RESPONDENT

Name: _____
(maiden & married name)

Name: _____
(maiden & married name)

Address: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

City/ State/Zip _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Occupation: _____

Occupation: _____

Religion: _____

Religion: _____

Baptism Date: _____

Baptism Date: _____

Church: _____

Church: _____

Birth Date: _____

Birth Date: _____

City/Country of Birth: _____

City/Country of Birth: _____

Name of Parents: _____

Name of Parents: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Information on the Courtship/Marriage

Age at time of dating [Pet] _____ [Resp] _____

Length of married life: [Church] _____ [Civil] _____

Length of courtship: _____

No. of separations: _____

Age at time of Engagement: _____

Date of final separation: _____

Age at time of marriage: [Pet] _____ [Resp] _____

Date of Divorce: _____

Date of Church Marriage: _____

City/County/State: _____

Church: _____

No. of children: _____ Who has custody? _____

Date of Civil Marriage: _____

Who initiated the divorce? _____

City/ County of Ceremony: _____

Who pays the child support? _____

Concerning Previous Marriage(s)

Were you previously married? _____ Please list the name(s) of previous spouse(s) and indicate whether it is civil or Church ceremony.

Name: _____

Concerning the Respondent

Was your ex spouse previously married? _____ Please list their name(s) and indicate whether it is civil or Church ceremony.

What is his/her present name: _____

YOUR PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

1. DESCRIBE YOUR CHILDHOOD i.e. where you grew up; no. of family members in the home; which persons influenced you while growing up.

2. DESCRIBE YOUR TEEN YEARS i.e. life at home; who disciplined; what were school years like; life at work (if you held a job).

3. WHEN WERE YOU ALLOWED TO DATE? AT WHAT AGE? GIVE DATING HISTORY.

4. HOW WAS THE SUBJECT OF DATING TREATED IN THE FAMILY?

5. HOW WAS THE SUBJECT OF SEXUALITY DISCUSSED OR TREATED IN THE FAMILY?

Continued - **YOUR PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND**

6. DESCRIBE YOUR FAMILY, i.e. what were they like. WHAT ACTIVITIES DID YOU DO AS A FAMILY?

7. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EVENTS IN YOUR GROWING UP THAT MAY HAVE AFFECTED YOUR DEVELOPMENT.

8. WHAT DID YOU **LIKE/DISLIKE** ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?

9. HOW DID YOU GET ALONG WITH YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS? HOW MANY WERE YOU? WHAT IS YOUR PLACE IN THE BIRTH LINE?

Continued - **YOUR PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND**

10. HOW DID FAITH/RELIGION FIT INTO YOUR FAMILY? HOW WAS IT PRACTICED?

11. WERE THERE ANY PROBLEMS WITH YOU OR YOUR FAMILY RELATED TO GAMBLING, PHYSICAL ABUSE, SEXUAL ABUSE OR MOLESTATION, DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE? (If the answer is yes, please explain.)

12. HOW DID YOU HELP OUT IN YOUR HOME AS YOU WERE GROWING UP? WHAT GOALS DID YOU HAVE FOR YOURSELF?

13. WHAT TYPE OF PERSON WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF TO BE *BEFORE* THE WEDDING?

14. WHAT TYPE OF PERSON WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF TO BE *AFTER* THE WEDDING? WHAT TYPE OF PERSON ARE YOU NOW?

PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF YOUR EX-SPOUSE.

15. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU KNOW OF YOUR EX-SPOUSE'S CHILDHOOD. i.e. where they grew up; no. of family members in the home; which persons influenced him/her while growing up.

16. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU KNOW OF YOUR EX-SPOUSE'S TEEN YEARS. i.e. life at home; who disciplined; did they hold a job; what were his/her school years like?

17. AT WHAT AGE WAS YOUR EX-SPOUSE ALLOWED TO DATE? GIVE THEIR DATING HISTORY.

18. HOW WAS THE SUBJECT OF DATING TREATED IN THAT FAMILY?

19. HOW WAS THE SUBJECT OF SEXUALITY DISCUSSED OR TREATED IN THE FAMILY?

Continued - **PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF EX-SPOUSE**

20. DESCRIBE YOUR EX-SPOUSE'S FAMILY. WHAT WERE THEY LIKE? WHAT DID THEY DO AS A FAMILY?

21. DESCRIBE WHAT **POSITIVE** OR **NEGATIVE** EVENTS MAY HAVE AFFECTED YOUR EX-SPOUSE'S DEVELOPMENT WHILE GROWING UP.

22. WHAT DID YOUR EX-SPOUSE **LIKE/DISLIKE** ABOUT HIS/HER PARENTS?

23. HOW DID YOUR EX-SPOUSE GET ALONG WITH HIS/HER BROTHERS/SISTERS? HOW MANY WERE THERE? WHAT IS YOUR EX-SPOUSE'S PLACE IN THE BIRTH LINE?

Continued - **PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF YOUR EX-SPOUSE**

24. HOW DID FAITH/RELIGION FIT INTO HIS/HER FAMILY? WAS RELIGION PRACTICED IN THE HOME? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

25. WERE THERE ANY PROBLEMS WITH YOUR EX-SPOUSE OR HIS/HER FAMILY RELATED TO GAMBLING, PHYSICAL ABUSE, SEXUAL ABUSE OR MOLESTATION, DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE? (If the answer is yes, please explain.)

26. HOW DID YOUR EX-SPOUSE HELP OUT IN THE HOME AS HE/SHE WAS GROWING UP? WHAT GOALS DID HE/SHE HAVE FOR HIMSELF/HERSELF?

27. WHAT TYPE OF PERSON WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EX-SPOUSE TO BE *BEFORE* THE WEDDING?

Continued - **PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF EX-SPOUSE**

28. WHAT TYPE OF PERSON WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EX-SPOUSE TO BE *AFTER* THE WEDDING? WHAT TYPE OF PERSON ARE THEY NOW?

COURTSHIP

29. **WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW** DID YOU AND YOUR EX-SPOUSE MEET?

30. WHEN ON A DATE, DID YOU GO ALONE OR WITH OTHERS? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

31. WHAT WERE YOUR ACTIVITIES DURING YOUR DATES?

Continued - **COURTSHIP**

32. WHAT **REACTION** DID YOUR FAMILY AND HIS/HERS HAVE WHEN YOU STARTED DATING?

33. WHAT **REACTION** DID YOUR FRIENDS HAVE WHEN YOU STARTED DATING?

34. WHAT PROBLEMS EXISTED WHILE YOU TWO WERE DATING, i.e., arguments, jealousies, abuses, etc. PLEASE EXPLAIN.

35. WAS THERE PRESSURE FOR SEXUAL ACTIVITY WHILE DATING EACH OTHER? HOW WAS IT RESOLVED?

36. WERE THERE ANY **BREAKUPS OR SEPARATIONS** DURING THE DATING/ COURTSHIP? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Continued - **COURTSHIP**

37. WHAT DID YOU **LIKE /DISLIKE** ABOUT YOUR EX-SPOUSE AT THE TIME OF DATING?

38. DID **EITHER** OF YOU **DATE** ANYONE ELSE WHILE **DATING EACH OTHER?** PLEASE EX-PLAIN.

WHAT WERE THE ATTITUDES OF EACH OF YOU TOWARD THE FOLLOWING? WHAT DID YOU DISCUSS OR DECIDE ABOUT EACH PRIOR TO GETTING MARRIED?

39. PERMANENCE/MARRYING FOR LIFE

40. MARITAL FIDELITY

41. INTENTION OF HAVING CHILDREN AND THE USE OF BIRTH CONTROL

Continued - **COURTSHIP - ATTITUDES ON:**

42. **DIVORCE** - (WAS THERE DIVORCE IN EITHER ONE OF YOUR FAMILIES OR FRIENDS?)

43. **PLANS** FOR THE FUTURE, PERSONAL AND FAMILY.

44. **PROFESSIONAL CAREERS** (finishing studies, job, military duty, etc.)

ENGAGEMENT

45. **HOW LONG BEFORE THE WEDDING DID YOU DECIDE TO MARRY IN THE CHURCH? WHO PROPOSED AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES**, i.e. pregnancy, moving, an ultimatum, etc.?)

46. **IF THE DECISION TO MARRY WAS TO MARRY BY CIVIL COURT OR TO LIVE IN COHABITATION, PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY YOU DID THIS. (THE LAST SHEET OF THIS PACKET HAS MORE REGARDING THIS TYPE OF SITUATION. PLEASE ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS ALSO.)**

MARRIED LIFE

47. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE PRE-MARITAL PREPARATION YOU RECEIVED FROM THE CHURCH. (FOCCUS, Engaged Encounter, sponsor couple, meetings with priest, etc.)

48. IN GENERAL, HOW WAS THE **FIRST YEAR** OF YOUR MARRIAGE? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

49. WHEN DID YOU **FIRST** REALIZE THAT THERE EXISTED SERIOUS PROBLEMS? (Beginning, middle, last part of marriage.) PLEASE EXPLAIN.

50. SPECIFICALLY, WHAT WERE THOSE PROBLEMS?

51. WERE THERE SIGNS OF THESE PROBLEMS **BEFORE** MARRIAGE? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Continued - **MARRIED LIFE**

52. WHAT DID YOU DO TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS AND WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

53. WERE THERE ANY **OUTSIDE INTERFERENCES** THAT WERE THE CAUSE FOR THESE PROBLEMS? IF THERE WERE, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

54. WAS THERE ANY PARTICULAR GREAT DISLIKING BY EITHER ONE OF YOU TOWARD ANY ONE OF YOUR OWN OR THE OTHER'S FAMILY?

55. HOW WELL DID YOU TALK THINGS OUT? WHAT COULD YOU **NOT** TALK ABOUT? (Did you experience any type of problem in your sexual intimacy? Please Explain.)

Continued - **MARRIED LIFE**

56. WHO MADE THE MAJOR DECISIONS, YOU OR YOUR EX-SPOUSE? GIVE EXAMPLES.

57. WHAT TYPE OF SOCIAL LIFE DID YOU TWO HAVE? (i.e., together, separate, with friends, alone) PLEASE EXPLAIN.

58. WERE YOU **ABLE** TO SHARE AFFECTION WITH EACH OTHER? PLEASE EXPLAIN. (In public; only in private.) WERE YOU EMBARRASSED BY THE SHOW OF AFFECTION?

59. WAS THERE INFIDELITY IN YOUR MARRIAGE? IF SO, **WHEN AND BY WHOM?**

Continued - **MARRIED LIFE**

60. WERE THERE ANY PROBLEMS RELATED TO DRUGS, ALCOHOL, VERBAL, PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE? WHEN DID THEY BECOME EVIDENT? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

61. WERE THERE ANY TEMPORARY SEPARATIONS IN THE MARRIAGE? (i.e. military service, job related, or because of arguments, etc.) PLEASE EXPLAIN.

62. WERE CHILDREN BORN AS PLANNED? **OR IF NOT**, WAS BIRTH CONTROL PRACTICED? IF SO, AT WHOSE INITIATIVE? WHAT TYPE OF BIRTH CONTROL WAS USED?

63. IF APPLICABLE, GIVE THE NAMES AND BIRTH DATES OF THE CHILDREN BORN OF THIS UNION.

Continued - **MARRIED LIFE**

64. DID THE PREGNANCY AND BIRTH OF YOUR CHILDREN **CHANGE** YOUR MARITAL RELATIONSHIP? IF APPLICABLE, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

65. HOW DID YOU AND HOW DID YOUR EX-SPOUSE CARE FOR THE CHILDREN? PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES: who bathed them, rides to the park, fed them, helped with homework, etc.

66. DESCRIBE YOUR SHARING OF THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES AND MAINTENANCE.

67. WHO FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED THE HOME AND FAMILY?

Continued - **MARRIED LIFE**

68. HOW DID YOU LIVE YOUR **RELIGIOUS FAITH** IN THE HOME AND OUTSIDE THE HOME?

69. DID THE MUTUAL LOVE AND RESPECT INCREASE, DISAPPEAR, OR DID IT EVER EXIST?

70. WHAT WERE THE MOST SERIOUS DISAGREEMENTS ABOUT? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

71. WHAT WERE THE OPINIONS OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS REGARDING YOUR MARRIAGE BEFORE THE SEPARATION?

Continued - **MARRIED LIFE**

72. AT WHAT POINT IN TIME DID YOU REALIZE THAT YOU HAD MADE A MISTAKE IN MARRYING?

73. DID EITHER ONE OF YOU SEEK MARITAL COUNSELING? WHO DID? WHAT HAPPENED?

74. WHO MENTIONED DIVORCE FIRST, WHO DECIDED TO FILE, AND WHO ACTUALLY FILED?

75. WAS THERE ANY ATTEMPT AT RECONCILIATION AFTER THE DECISION TO DIVORCE?

CONCLUSION

76. WHAT TYPE OF COMMUNICATION IS THERE BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR EX-SPOUSE TODAY?

DO YOU WISH TO ADD ANYTHING ELSE?

OATH

DO YOU SWEAR BEFORE GOD AS YOUR WITNESS, THAT ALL STATEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE ON THESE PAGES ARE TRUE? YES _____ (Affixing your signature below will affirm your testimony.)

Signature of Petitioner

Date

WITNESS PAGE

I HAVE **CONTACTED AND RECEIVED THE CONSENT** of the following persons, who know the facts of the marriage and **THEY ARE WILLING** to answer a Tribunal questionnaire.

Witness #1

Name: _____ Complete Address: _____

(Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.)

Relationship: _____ To whom? _____ City _____ State _____ ZC _____

Language preferred: English _____ Spanish: _____ Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

How long & how well has this witness known you? _____ Your ex-spouse? _____ **(Check all which apply.)**

- courtship wedding early life together end of life together
 problems in life together personalities of the parties my life and family back-ground
 my ex-spouse's background

Witness #2

Name: _____ Complete address: _____

(Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.)

Relationship: _____ To whom? _____ City _____ State _____ ZC _____

Language preferred: Eng. _____ Sp. _____ Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

How long & how well has this witness known you? _____ Your ex-spouse? _____ **(Check all which apply.)**

- courtship wedding early life together end of life together
 problems in life together personalities of the parties my life and family back-ground
 my ex-spouse's background

Witness #3

Name: _____ Complete address: _____

(Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.)

Relationship: _____ To whom? _____ City _____ State _____ ZC _____

Language preferred: Eng. _____ Sp. _____ Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

How long & how well has this witness known you? _____ Your ex-spouse? _____ **(Check all which apply.)**

- courtship wedding early life together end of life together
 problems in life together personalities of the parties my life and family back-ground
 my ex-spouse's background

BLESSING OF MARRIAGE AFTER MARRYING BY THE COURT

1. Describe how the topic arose of renewing the marriage vows before the Catholic Church.
2. What was your reaction to the idea of renewing the marriage vows before the Catholic Church?
3. What was your ex-spouse's reaction to the idea of renewing the marriage vows before the Catholic Church?
4. Were there any **pressures** applied ON EACH OTHER or BY OTHER PERSONS to have the marriage blessed by the Church? PLEASE EXPLAIN.
5. What was **your** motive in going through the Catholic ceremony? (e.g. solve problems, baptism sponsor, etc.)
6. What was your **ex-spouse's** motive, at the time, in going through the Catholic ceremony?
7. Which problems in the marriage, if any, had already begun to appear before the Church ceremony?
8. At the time of the Catholic ceremony, did either party already have serious doubts about whether the marriage would last? PLEASE EXPLAIN.