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## Office of the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Anchorage - Juneau

### PETITION FOR A CHURCH DECLARATION OF NULLITY

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In this Petition Form you will find an outline of information needed by the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Anchorage-Juneau to begin the process of reviewing a marriage for a possible declaration of nullity. Please note the following instructions:

1. Complete every question. Make sure facts and dates are as complete and accurate as possible. Throughout this form the **PETITIONER is you**. The section entitled **RESPONDENT** is for information regarding **your former spouse**.
2. In order to proceed with your case, photocopies of your civil marriage certificates and civil divorce should accompany this application. Please do not submit any information to our office until your civil divorce is granted. All Petitions must be submitted with the necessary documentation.
3. **All** former marriages must be considered. Therefore, if you have been married more than once, a separate application form must be submitted for **every** marriage you have had. This would not be necessary if your former spouse(s) is/are deceased. However, a Certificate of Death may be required.
4. It is necessary that you provide a current address for your former spouse if at all possible. Church law requires us to contact your former spouse and offer him/her a chance to participate in the review process.
5. In preparing your statement, please be aware that the Tribunal keeps all information received in this investigation as confidential as possible within the confines of Church law. But understand that this law allows that both parties at least be made aware of the general reasons for questioning the validity of the marriage put forth by the other in reference to the marriage. This information is communicated at the discretion of the judge.
6. In submitting this application, keep in mind that there are **no civil effects** to a Church declaration of nullity. This process pertains to Church matters only. Thus children born of the former marriage remain fully legitimate under both civil and Church law.
7. Provisions of Church law, which must be observed, govern this judicial process. Once you receive a letter from the Tribunal Office stating that your Petition has been accepted, your case will be processed as quickly and efficiently as possible. If you would like this case considered for the briefer process, please initial the signature page in the space indicated.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask your parish priest, deacon, or parish administrator. You may also call the Tribunal directly at the number listed above. Please mail or deliver this completed petition and the required documents (see page 7) to the address above.

Please type or print clearly.

**Petitioner** (Your Information)

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (circle one)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Last (Current) Maiden name, if applicable

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing City State Zip

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Work Cellular

Private E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
City State

Date of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church of Baptism City State

Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion (at time of marriage): \_\_\_\_\_

Present Parish (if Catholic): \_\_\_\_\_

If you have changed religion, when did this occur: \_\_\_\_\_

**Respondent**

(Your ex-spouse's information – some type of contact information is absolutely necessary)

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (circle one)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Last (Current) Maiden name, if applicable

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing City State Zip

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Work Cellular

Private E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
City State

Date of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church of Baptism City State

Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion (at time of marriage): \_\_\_\_\_

Present Parish (if Catholic): \_\_\_\_\_

If he/she has changed religion, when did this occur: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you approached any priest, deacon or other parish minister for assistance?  yes  no  
If yes, who?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Marriage

Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Name of church or other location

\_\_\_\_\_  
Officiant City State

If either party was Catholic, did this marriage take place outside the Catholic Church?  Yes  No

If so, was there a Catholic Ceremony later?  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Officiant Church City State

## Children born or adopted in this marriage

Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
How many? Birthdates

## Divorce

Civil Judgment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Borough / County Court State

Grounds cited in civil judgment: \_\_\_\_\_

In the space provided in this booklet **briefly** answer each of the questions on pages 3-7.  
The information you provide **here** is used for the initial evaluation of your case.  
Your interview at the Tribunal **later** will provide opportunity for you to give more details.

## Introductory Questions

1. Was this your first marriage (whether in church, civilly, or by common law)?
2. **If not, please list all of your marriages**, including names, wedding date and religion of each former spouse. Otherwise, proceed to question 3.
3. Was this your former spouse's first marriage (whether in church, civilly, or by common law)?
4. **If not, please list your former spouse's marriages prior to the marriage in question**, including wedding dates and religion of each former spouse.

## Facts

### 1. Dates and time spans:

- a. When did the two of you first meet? (approximate date)
- b. How soon after meeting did you begin to date?
- c. How long did you date before the engagement? (years & months)
- d. How long were you engaged before the wedding? (years & months)

### 2. Characteristics of the Courtship and Engagement:

- a. Describe any problems during the courtship and engagement such as instability, arguing, breakups, drug/alcohol abuse, or premarital pregnancy, etc.
- b. Describe any psychological or emotional problems during the courtship and engagement.
- c. Describe any indications that you, or your ex-spouse, might be unfaithful before or after the wedding.
- d. As you look back, describe any circumstances under which either or both of you would have considered divorce. (For example: infidelity, impotence, lack of security, etc.)

- e. Describe any conditions either of you might have required to get married or to stay in marriage. (For example: "I'll marry you only if ..." or "I'll stay with you only if ...")
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- f. Describe the attitude each of you had toward having children in the marriage.

3. Wedding: Ages on day of the wedding:      Petitioner: \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent \_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe anything unusual or abnormal that happened shortly before or on the wedding day, or during the ceremony, reception, or honeymoon.

5. Marriage:

- a. When did problems begin in the marriage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What were the problems and what caused them?

6. Separation:

- a. Explain any separations before the final one (with appropriate dates). Why did you get back together each time?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. When (month and year) and why did the final separation occur?

7. Counseling

If there were any attempts at marital or psychological counseling, please give the **names and addresses** of the counselors or therapists. The opinions and observations of counselors may be helpful in our deliberations. If so, you will be asked to sign a release for these records. (Use a separate sheet of paper if more space is needed.)

8. Conclusion:

- a. Are all moral and civil obligations, including child support, being met by both of you? If not, describe briefly.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Did you tell your former spouse about your plan to ask for this Church process? If so, how did your former spouse react?
9. After reviewing the booklet “Petitioning for a Declaration of Nullity” and reviewing the list on pages 6-8 of reasons commonly cited, which of the grounds for nullity do you see as applying to your case? On a separate sheet of paper, list each ground individually and write a detailed paragraph explaining why you believe it applies to your case.

Please be aware, this will be included as part of your testimony and it may be shared with your former spouse (Respondent) when you both are notified that the case has been accepted.

## Witnesses

Please list **a minimum of three witnesses** whom you feel would have valuable information about your courtship and marriage and are willing to share that information with the Tribunal. Please contact each person you name and inform them that they will be contacted by the Tribunal by mail; however, do not tell them how to respond to the questionnaire. For each witness, indicate whether they are a relative, friend, or acquaintance of the petitioner or respondent. Note: If there are not at least three witnesses who can speak to the marriage in question, witnesses who can testify as to your honesty and good character are acceptable.

1. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State / Zip

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State / Zip

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State / Zip

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State / Zip

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Essential Documents that must accompany this Petition:

- A copy of your Baptismal Certificate or other proof of baptism
- A photocopy of the civil marriage license for this marriage
- A photocopy of the final civil divorce decree.

Please contact your parish minister or the Tribunal if you need assistance obtaining these documents.

## Other Evidence

Please include with this Petition any other pertinent evidence to support your case. These could include letters, texts, emails or electronic communications, police reports, videos of the wedding day, counseling records, or any other documents.

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## Special requests for Instructions

Are there any considerations that you would like the Tribunal to take into account as this process is begun? (For example: confidentiality of present address, special appointment times, need for translators, etc.)

Please read the following petition carefully and completely. By signing this document you are consenting to all its contents. When this Petition, and all accompanying documents, are accepted by the Archdiocesan Tribunal, the processing of your case can begin.

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## Formal Petition

After careful thought and reflection, and after reviewing the materials provided to me, I believe that the marriage identified and described in this Petition is null insofar as the Catholic Church understands marriage. I, therefore, petition the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Anchorage-Juneau to declare the nullity of that marriage.

I contend that the marriage is null as a result of a defect of consent of either of the parties of this marriage. In support of this Petition I offer the testimony that I will give, as well as that of witnesses I have named in this Petition and other relevant evidence that may come to light.

The addresses of both parties to the challenged marriage are in this Petition.

By virtue of my signature affixed below:

1. If requested or required, I agree to whomsoever the Tribunal may appoint as my Advocate or Procurator and authorize him/her to do all that is necessary in my interest.
2. I understand that my former spouse may be made aware of the general content of my Petition, and that my former spouse will also be allowed to exercise the right provided in Church Law to review all the testimony presented if he/she chooses to do so.
3. I understand that professional counseling or special instructions may be mandated before permission to remarry will be granted. I further understand that all financial obligations imposed on me by the civil courts toward my former spouse and children, if any, must be current before I can remarry.
4. **I understand that I may not set a date for any future marriage until, and only if, a declaration of nullity, without restriction, is given.** I understand that no priest, deacon, or parish director may provide me with even a tentative date for a future wedding in the Catholic Church until this process has been completed. **I understand that marriage preparation for a wedding cannot be initiated until a final Declaration of Nullity is received.**
5. I understand that whether or not I make a contribution to assist with the expense of processing my marriage nullity case, it will not affect the outcome of the case.

I testify that I am presenting this case in good faith and I am fully committed to this process. The statements in this application are true and complete. I agree to cooperate fully with the Tribunal and to be bound by the policies established by that Office in accordance with the law of the Church.

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