

**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION REGARDING MARITAL HISTORY
FOR A PETITION FOR A DECLARATION OF NULLITY PRESENTED TO
THE TRIBUNAL OF THE DIOCESE OF MADISON**

The following questions have been designed to assist you, a party in this case, and the Tribunal staff in a petition for an examination of your former marriage that comes before this court. The questions are designed to help us understand you, your former spouse, and your relationship with one another. The issues that concern the Tribunal most are those issues that brought the two of you together. Subsequent behaviors or actions by you or your former spouse, may have bearing on your case only as they can be traced to this point in time.

We suggest that you use these questions as a **guideline** to prepare a narrative (typed double spaced if possible) about yourself, your former spouse and your relationship. From our experience, we have found that preparing the narrative of your life and the life of the relationship a small portion at a time is most beneficial. For those who may feel it difficult to prepare an overall narrative about themselves, we would encourage you to try to answer these questions individually.

Please be as complete and detailed as possible. Simple "yes" or "no" responses to questions rarely provide useful information for us. Being as open, honest and straightforward as you can provides the best information. The Tribunal is not looking to place blame, but rather to understand you, your former spouse and the relationship.

You may find that some questions do not pertain to your situation. Simply eliminate those questions and proceed to other areas.

When you have completed the narrative to the best of your ability, we suggest that you discuss it with the case sponsor or a local pastor who can help with any revisions that might be needed before you forward the narrative to the Tribunal.

Many times, the Tribunal staff sees the need to explore in more depth some of the areas you have presented in order to assist in the preparation of the case. If this is so, we will contact you for a personal interview.

While the Tribunal staff attempts to assist you throughout this process, it is important to remember that examining the possible nullity of your marriage is considered a trial in Church law, and we are bound to follow judicial procedures concerning the petition. **It is the responsibility of the parties, with the assistance of their sponsors and advocates, to present the proofs for their case before this court.**

A. Your Background

1. Describe the type of family you came from. Describe the personalities of your parents. Were there any difficulties in your family while you were growing up? Describe how you related to siblings and friends.
2. Describe your educational background (i.e., your attitudes toward school, your achievements, your activities, etc.)
3. Describe your social life and work history.
4. Describe your dating experience prior to meeting your former spouse. How did you approach relationships with the opposite sex? Were there any long term relationships?
5. How did you relate to law and authority figures? What was your attitude toward and involvement in Church? Did you ever use drugs or alcohol? Have you ever gambled or had financial problems?
6. Describe your personality. Give your strengths and weaknesses. Describe the areas of maturity, judgment, moodiness, unpredictable behavior, selfishness, anger, etc.

B. Your Former Spouse's Background

It is essential we have **YOUR** viewpoint on the personality and family background of your former spouse. He/She will have the opportunity to provide answers to these questions as the case proceeds.

Please use the same questions listed above regarding your former spouse.

C. Dating and Courtship

1. When, where and under what circumstances did you and your former spouse meet? What were the attractions to one another? Did you date frequently? What kinds of activities made up your dates?
2. While you were dating one another, were there any difficulties, misunderstandings, break-ups, or interruptions in the courtship? Was there anything you did not like about your former spouse while dating? Did either of you date others while dating one another?
3. When and under what circumstances did you first begin discussing marriage? Who proposed? How did your family and friends react to the engagement? Did anyone caution against marrying? If so, who? What were their concerns?
4. Describe any pressures, concerns, or reluctance to marry, placed on either of you that might have been caused by premarital sexual activity, a pregnancy, abortion, or other factors.
5. Describe your communication prior to your wedding.
6. How were wedding preparations carried out?
7. Describe the feelings you and your former spouse had toward raising children. Were there any reservations about having children?
8. Describe your feelings about promising to be faithful.
9. Describe your feelings about promising to be with the other person until death.
10. Describe any discussions about the possibility of a divorce if you were no longer happy with one another or no longer were "in love" with one another. Did you or your former spouse believe that a divorce was a way of solving marital difficulties?

D. Wedding and Honeymoon

1. Describe your feelings and attitudes on the day of the wedding. How did family and friends feel about the wedding? Were there any inappropriate incidents on the day of the wedding or during the honeymoon?
2. When was the marriage consummated? Do you feel both of you were sensitive to one another's needs?
3. Describe your honeymoon. Was it a pleasant experience?

E. Married Life

1. How long did the two of you live together before the final separation?
2. During your time together, how did you relate to one another? During the first year or so of the marriage, were there any serious arguments or disagreements?
3. Describe how the two of you reacted to the responsibilities of marriage. Were either of you surprised by anything in the marriage? Describe your respective roles regarding finances, children, household responsibilities?
4. Describe your communication. How were differences resolved during the marriage? Was there any verbal, emotional or physical mistreatment during the marriage?
5. Was there any significant use of drugs, alcohol or gambling during the marriage?
6. Was your sexual relationship healthy and satisfying? If not, please explain.
7. Was there any undue interference from in-laws?
8. Describe the use of your social time.
9. Describe at what point problems began to arise and indicate their cause. Describe any separations in the marriage. Were there any reconciliations? Assess the involvement and utilization of any counselors and/or psychologists during the marriage.

F. Please provide any additional information that has not already been covered that you think is important.
(e.g., Discuss the changes in your life since this relationship ended.)

G. We suggest you keep a copy of your submission for your records.