



## Comprehensive Testimony

*Instructions:* This document will aid you in narrating the history of your relationship with the petitioner/respondent (your former spouse). Please note that it is only necessary to complete this form if you are participating in a FORMAL case of nullity. If you are unsure as to what this means, please consult your advocate or call the Tribunal. If you are submitting a petition for nullity in a “lack of form” or “*ligamen*/prior bond” case, you do not need to complete this form. Please read the instructions below and follow them in completing the Comprehensive Testimony.

**In order for the Tribunal to arrive at a just decision in each case, and to avoid the necessity of the participants being interviewed in person at the Tribunal, a narrative description of the relationship between the petitioner and respondent is most helpful. The information requested will aid the judge in arriving at a fair and just decision. The responses should be thorough, but not overly verbose. Please do not elaborate beyond the scope of the question. If there is information that you wish to convey that is not included in one of the questions, there is a section at the end of the form for you to include any other pertinent information.**

The information provided through this form will be used confidentially to determine the outcome of your case. However, please be aware that your former spouse will have the right to review the information you provide at the stage in the process referred to as the “Publication” of the case. The judgments of the Tribunal are not moral judgments made about life decisions of either party, however, quite often, personal events, emotions, and other, rather intimate matters are included in the testimony submitted which help the judge to arrive at a final decision.

In general, most comprehensive testimonies range from 10-20 pages (typed and double-spaced) when completed. If the information provided is too brief, it is not helpful; however, full biographies are not necessary for the testimony. **Insufficient testimony may require in-person interviews or further correspondence to supplement the information provided.**

- 1. Please read all of the questions thoroughly.** It is very helpful that you provide the information for each question in the appropriate order.
- 2. Provide (typed) full and complete responses to each question.** Each question requires a thorough response. Please avoid yes/no responses where possible.
- 3. Please use the numbering system provided on this form in organizing your responses.** This will aid the Tribunal in finding specific information.
- 4. Submit your printed responses to this form as an attachment to your petition for nullity.** You do not need to complete this form unless filing a formal case.

## **Section A: Period of Courtship & Dating**

If you are filling this form out as the **petitioner** of this case, please answer all questions giving information specifically about your former spouse listed as the respondent on the petition for nullity. If you are filling this form out as the **respondent**, please do the same, providing information about your former spouse, the petitioner.

### **Beginnings**

- A1. How did you first meet him/her?
- A2. What was your first impression of him/her?
- A3. What led to the beginning of the dating relationship?
- A4. Describe any person or circumstance that influenced your decision to enter a dating relationship with him/her.

### **Family & Friends**

- A5. What was your relationship like with your family (parents/siblings/others) during this time?
- A6. What did your family (parents/siblings/others) think about your dating relationship?
- A7. What was your relationship like with their parents/guardians during this time?
- A8. What did his/her parents/guardians think about your dating relationship?
- A9. What was your relationship like with his/her siblings during this time?
- A10. What did his/her siblings think about your dating relationship?
- A11. What was the dynamic of the relationships you shared with mutual friends?
- A12. How did you relate to his/her friends?
- A13. How did he/she relate to your friends?
- A14. What did any of your friends think about your dating relationship?

### **Dating**

- A15. How much time did you spend together during courtship?
- A16. Were you living in close proximity together (in the same city)?
- A17. Were you living in the same house during the courtship?
  - a. (If you answered "yes") How did this living arrangement come about?
  - b. (If you answered "yes") Was the decision to live together motivated by a desire to leave your previous home?
    - 1.(If you answered "yes") How strong was this desire to leave and what contributed to it?
- A18. If you lived far from each other, why was that the case?
- A19. Describe a typical date with him/her.
- A20. In addition to dates, how did you spend your time together?
- A21. Describe any shared interests, hobbies, or other activities.
- A22. Were you sexually active during the courtship?
- A23. Describe any pressure on either side to engage in sex during the courtship.
- A24. Describe any acts of aggression or violence by either party during the courtship.

- A25. Describe any substance abuse or addiction present during the courtship (including alcohol, prescribed or non-prescribed medications, pornography, impulsive behavior such as shopping, overeating, or internet use).
- A26. If substance abuse or addictions were present for either party, were these being treated by counseling and/or medication? (If so, please provide a description and any documentation possible together with your submission of this form.)
- A27. Describe any breakup periods in the dating relationship. (Please give full descriptions of how and why you broke up and got back together each time.)
- A28. Did either of you have children from other relationships? (How many? How old were they at this time?)
- (If you answered “yes”) Was this known to the other party?
  - (If you answered “yes”) Describe the relationship of him/her with your children and/or your relationship with his/hers.

### **Engagement**

- A29. How long did you date before discussing marriage?
- A30. *Who* first brought up the topic of marriage?
- A31. *How* was the topic of marriage first brought up?
- A32. What was your first reaction to the idea of marrying him/her?
- A33. Describe in as much detail as possible any conversations you had about your future life together. (Plans, dreams, hopes, etc.)
- A34. Describe any conversations you had about children.
- A35. What was the reaction of your family and friends to your decision to marry? (Be as descriptive as possible)
- A36. Describe any outside influences or pressures effecting *your* decision to marry.
- A37. Describe any outside influences or pressures effecting *his/her* decision to marry.
- A38. Please elaborate if you checked anything on questions *I1* or *I2* from the Formal Case Preliminary Testimony (For Petitioners only – see page 6, influencing factors that led to getting married and influences on your decision to marry).
- A39. What part did God play in your relationship, dating, and decision to marry?
- A40. Describe any hesitation, reservations, or concerns that you may have had at any point prior to marriage.
- A41. Describe any instances of infidelity during the dating or engagement phases of the relationship.

### **Marriage Preparation**

- A42. How was the timing of the wedding decided (i.e. setting a date)?
- A43. Identify any pregnancies impacting the date of the wedding or your decision to marry.
- A44. Identify any factors that led to the preparation being rushed or accelerated (e.g. military deployments, relocations, job opportunities, graduations, etc.).

- A45. What was the nature of your relationship with the person(s) who prepared you for marriage?
- A46. Did the same person who prepared you for marriage officiate at your wedding?
- A47. How many times did you meet with the person(s) preparing you for marriage prior to the wedding?
- A48. Describe the content of any preparation that you received for marriage. (*Include whether you participated in an Engaged Encounter, Pre-Cana Retreat, Witness to Love, FOCCUS inventory, Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning training, or any other marriage preparations.*)
- A49. Describe any concerns raised by the person(s) preparing you for marriage.
- A50. Describe any of your own doubts or hesitations about entering into marriage that surfaced during marriage preparation.
- A51. Describe any preexisting conditions or prenuptial agreements made or discussed at this time (If any formal prenuptial agreement was made, please include a copy with the submission of your petition).
- A52. How did your understanding of marriage as a Sacrament develop during your preparation (if at all)?
- A53. What was *your* view on the possibility of divorce prior to entering marriage?
- A54. What was *his/her* view on the possibility of divorce prior to entering marriage?
- A55. Describe any ways in which you were not fully honest with the person(s) preparing you for marriage (e.g. openness to children, commitment to permanence and fidelity)?
- A56. What do you recall learning about marriage during your preparation?
- A57. How did your preparation for marriage effect the way you viewed him/her or your relationship?
- A58. Describe any psychological or mental disability or incapacity (diagnosed or otherwise) present at any point in the courtship or engagement for either party.
- a. If so, when/how did you become aware of this?
- A59. Do you have anything further to add pertaining to this section (your dating relationship and engagement)?

## **Section B: The Wedding & Honeymoon**

If you were civilly married and then had the wedding “convalidated” or later celebrated in the Church, please respond to all of the following questions as pertaining to the **CHURCH CEREMONY** and not the civil ceremony.

### **Prior to the Wedding**

- B1. Was this a “convalidation” (a Church ceremony for a wedding that had already been celebrated civilly)?
  - a. (If so,) What led either of you or both of you to desire marriage in the Church?
- B2. Who was primarily responsible for planning the wedding ceremony?
- B3. Identify any people who were overly involved or overbearing in the planning of the ceremony.
- B4. Describe the level to which you felt freedom as a couple in making the planning decisions for the ceremony.
- B5. Describe any unexpected revelations or events during this time that may have impacted the wedding.
- B6. How involved was the officiant (priest, minister, or otherwise) in the planning of your wedding ceremony?
- B7. What were your feelings toward your future spouse in the days prior to the wedding?
- B8. What were your feelings regarding this particular marriage in the days leading up to the wedding?
- B9. As far as you are aware, what were the feelings of your former spouse toward you and marrying you in the days leading up to the wedding?
- B10. Describe any particular sources of stress or anxiety impacting either of you in the days leading up to the wedding.

### **The Wedding Ceremony**

- B11. Describe your mood on the day of the wedding.
- B12. Describe your impressions of the mood of your former spouse on the day of the wedding.
- B13. Describe the level of family support you enjoyed at the wedding. (Did most or all of your family attend the ceremony? Were they happy for you? etc.)
- B14. Describe the level of family support your former spouse enjoyed at the wedding.
- B15. Were there any family members of either party who voiced reservations or objections to the wedding at this time?
- B16. Describe in detail any force compelling you or fear motivating you to enter marriage at the time of the exchange of vows.
- B17. Had anyone threatened you to get married against your will? If so, please elaborate in full.
- B18. Describe anything unexpected that happened on the day of the wedding.
- B19. What were your thoughts during the wedding ceremony?
- B20. What were your thoughts as you were saying your vows?

- B21. Describe any distractions you may have experienced during the exchange of vows based on second thoughts or personal reservations.
- B22. Were you able to voice the vows as a true expression of your mind and heart at the wedding?
  - a. (If you answered “no” to the previous question) Describe any discrepancy between what you said in your vows and what you intended in your mind and heart.
- B23. How did you feel directly following the vows and wedding about what you had done by entering into marriage?

### **The Honeymoon**

- B24. Did the two of you take a honeymoon?
- B25. Describe the extent to which each of you was involved in planning the honeymoon.
- B26. Was the consummation of the marriage (first sexual intercourse as husband and wife without contraception) delayed for an extended period of time?
  - a. If so, what was the reason for delaying consummation?
- B27. How did you feel about your experience of sexual intimacy on the honeymoon? (Did you enjoy being intimate with one another? Did you continue to feel good about your relationship in marriage?)
- B28. Were you successfully able to engage in intercourse after the wedding?
- B29. How would you describe the attentiveness of him/her to you during the honeymoon?
- B30. Describe anything unexpected that occurred during the honeymoon.
- B31. Describe any emotional or behavioral changes that you perceived in yourself or your former spouse in the days following the wedding.
- B32. Do you have anything further to add pertaining to this section (the wedding and honeymoon)?

### Section C: Married Life & Divorce

An annulment is granted on the basis of some essential element missing or lacking at the time of consent. However, it is often the case that evidence of this missing or lacking element is manifested afterwards. Therefore, it is necessary to provide testimony about your married life.

#### Married Life

- C1. How would you describe the early months and years of your marriage?
- C2. What contributed to your happiness during this time?
- C3. What contributed to any anxieties or stress during this time?
- C4. How did your premarital expectations of married life compare to the actual lived out experience of your marriage?
- C5. Describe any animosity or conflict present in your relationship.
- C6. Describe the development of your relationship over the course of your married life. (For example: We were happy at first, but then something happened, and it fell apart.)
- C7. What impact did children or the lack of children have in your relationship?
- C8. Indicate any ways in which either of you were unfaithful to one another during the marriage.
- C9. If infidelities were present, were any of them long-lasting relationships?
- C10. Were there any children born to either party by other partners during the course of your marriage?
- C11. Describe any ways in which the obligation of being open to children was not lived out in your marriage by either party.
- C12. Describe any ways in which the obligation of being committed to the good of the spouse was not lived out in your marriage by either party.
- C13. What support from people or circumstances did you enjoy in your marriage?
- C14. Were there any major medical or psychological developments in either of your lives during the course of your marriage?
- C15. Describe the balance of domestic responsibilities in your marriage.
- C16. If you had children, how well were you able to share the responsibility and care of raising them?
- C17. Describe any acts of aggression or violence by either party during the marriage. (If any official record of interaction by civil authorities is available, please submit together with this form.)
- C18. Describe your ability to communicate with one another during your marriage.
- C19. How did you feel about your experience of sexual intimacy during the course of your marriage?
- C20. How did the views of either party towards your sexual relationship with one another develop over the course of the marriage?
- C21. Did either of you use birth control or contraceptives prior to or during your marriage?
- C22. Describe any irregular patterns in spending habits by either party during the marriage (e.g. extravagant purchases, secret accounts, etc.).
- C23. How would you describe the relationship you enjoyed with your in-laws and your own parents during your marriage?

## **Divorce**

- C24. When and how did the relationship begin to fall apart?
- C25. How long into the marriage did you notice things beginning to change for the worse?
- C26. Describe any particularly noteworthy, negative external factors contributing to the breakdown of your relationship.
- C27. Why do you believe that your marriage failed?
- C28. In what ways did *you* contribute to the breakup of your marriage and divorce?
- C29. In what ways did *your former spouse* contribute to the breakup of your marriage and divorce?
- C30. In your mind, was this a successful marriage that eventually broke down, or was it flawed from the beginning?
- C31. Were there any temporary separations during the course of your marriage prior to the final divorce?
- C32. Describe any helps or counseling sought to improve your marital relationship.
- C33. At what point did you or your former spouse realize that the relationship was beyond saving?
- C34. Describe the attitude of each party with regard to ending the marriage.
- C35. What was the reaction of your friends and family to the decision to divorce?
- C36. What was the reaction of your children (if any) to the decision to divorce?
- C37. Was your divorce an amicable (agreeable/friendly) one or was it contentious (spiteful/full-of-conflict)? (Please be descriptive.)
- C38. Have you ever believed that there is/was any chance of reconciliation?
- C39. Describe regrets (if any) about divorcing your former spouse.
- C40. Describe any information revealed to you during the divorce process about your former spouse of which you were previously unaware.
- C41. Do you have anything further to add pertaining to this section (your marriage and divorce)?

### Section D: Biographical Information

There are often contributing factors to the grounds for annulment present in the early life of one of the parties. For this reason, it is necessary to provide testimony about the family life, adolescence, and young adulthood of yourself and your former spouse.

#### **Yourself (the petitioner)**

- D1. *Briefly* describe your childhood (happiness, security, etc.).
- D2. *Briefly* describe your relationship with your siblings.
- D3. How did your parents' marital relationship (if they were married) contribute to your own understanding of marriage?
- D4. To what extent do you believe that you were adequately educated by your parents or others with regard to a healthy understanding of sex?
- D5. What was your understanding of sex as a young person?
- D6. Were you sexually active prior to marriage?
  - a. If so, was being sexually active a normal part of your dating relationships?
- D7. Have you ever been diagnosed as sexually impotent?
- D8. Describe your ability to establish healthy friendships in childhood, adolescence and young adulthood.
- D9. Describe any unusual fears or emotional problems present in your childhood.
- D10. Describe any form(s) of abuse or neglect to which you fell victim or witnessed as a child.
- D11. Describe any acts of violence you have carried out towards others or toward your former spouse.
- D12. Were you ever arrested or in trouble with the law (please elaborate)?
- D13. Give a brief listing of the history of your dating relationships (duration, attractions, reasons for breaking up).
- D14. Briefly describe your work history.
- D15. Describe any patterns in your life that led to the loss of employment.

#### **Your Former Spouse (the respondent)**

- D16. *Briefly* describe your former spouse's childhood (happiness, security, etc.).
- D17. *Briefly* describe your former spouse's relationship with his/her siblings.
- D18. How did your former spouse's parents' marital relationship (if they were married) contribute to his/her understanding of marriage?
- D19. To what extent do you believe that your former spouse was adequately educated by his/her parents or others with regard to a healthy understanding of sex?
- D20. What was your former spouse's understanding of sex as a young person?
- D21. Was your former spouse sexually active prior to marriage?
  - a. If so, was being sexually active a normal part of his/her dating relationships?
- D22. Has your former spouse ever been diagnosed as sexually impotent?
- D23. Describe your former spouse's ability to establish healthy friendships in childhood, adolescence and young adulthood.
- D24. Describe any unusual fears or emotional problems present in your former spouse's childhood.

- D25. Describe any form(s) of abuse or neglect to which your former spouse fell victim or witnessed as a child.
- D26. Describe any acts of violence your former spouse has carried out towards others or toward you.
- D27. Was your former spouse ever arrested or in trouble with the law (please elaborate)?
- D28. Give a brief listing of the history of your former spouse's dating relationships (duration, attractions, reasons for breaking up).
- D29. Briefly describe your former spouse's work history.
- D30. Describe any patterns in your former spouse's life that led to the loss of employment.
- D31. Do you have anything further to add pertaining to this section (your biographical information and that of your former spouse)?