



Eparchial Tribunal

St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Chicago

372 S. Prairie Ave.. Elmhurst. IL. 60126-4020

website: <https://stthomasdiocese.org> email: tribunal@syromail.com

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE PROCESS OF NULLITY OF MARRIAGE

What is an annulment?

The annulment is an official declaration by the tribunal that what appeared to be a marriage was in fact, not a true marriage as the Church understands it. After a careful and thorough study through the legitimate procedures, the tribunal issues a declaration of nullity when it is proven that the marriage was invalidly celebrated either due to the lack of valid consent (e.g. proper intention, sufficient psychological maturity, physical and mental capacity, freedom, knowledge etc.), lack of canonical form for the marriage or due to the Canonical Impediments while exchanging consent at the time of marriage.

The annulment process is seven steps:

Step 1: The Petitioner submits a petition to the Tribunal

Step 2: The Respondent is contacted

Step 3: Evidence gathering

Step 4: Publication of the acts and Conclusion of the case

Step 5: Observation of the Defender of the Bond

Step 6: Decision

Step 7: Effects of the decision and appeal

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
VISIT THE WEBSITE

Required Documents

- 1. Application form of Petition**
- 2. Marriage Certificate**
- 3. Dissolution (Divorce) Decree**
- 4. Witnesses** (*Children of Parties Cannot Be Witnesses*)
- 5. Petitioner's Declaration** (*Signed*)
- 6. Statement of Tribunal Policy** (*Signed*)
- 7. Endorsement of the Pastor**

NO DATE for a future marriage may be set until the Tribunal has reached a final decision.

NO ASSURANCE of a favorable decision can be given.



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Details of the Parties

PETITIONER		RESPONDENT
	Full Name	
	Family Name/ Maiden Name <i>(For Female Party)</i>	
	Street Address	
	City/State/Zip	
	Mobile Phone No.	
	Daytime Phone No.	
	E-Mail Address	
	Number of Prior Marriages <i>(If applicable)</i>	
	Age at Time of this Marriage	
	Current Parish and Address <i>(City/State/Zip)</i>	

Marriage information *(CHURCH WEDDING)*

Date	Name of Church	City/County/State/Country of Church

Civil dissolution *[Decree of Civil Divorce]*

Date	City/County/State/Country	Length of Married Life	Length of Separation Prior to Divorce	Number of Children	Custodial Parent (For Minor Child/Children)

Civil wedding *(if any)*

• Yes	• No	(if yes, provide certificate)
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Petitioner's Witnesses:

(NOTE: CHILDREN OF PARTIES CANNOT BE WITNESSES)

I have contacted the following witnesses who have known me before the marriage, during the marriage, and after the marriage and are willing to:

- (1) Provide testimony about my relationship and marriage to the Respondent and understand that they need to prepare the testimony themselves and that I am in no way to assist them in preparing their testimony**
- (2) Send their testimonies within the required 15 (fifteen) working days; otherwise, I will send information of new witnesses**

Note: The Tribunal will send the Questionnaire to the Witnesses

[1] Name:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Phone No:	<i>Mobile</i> <i>Daytime</i>
E-Mail Address:	
Relationship:	
Length of Acquaintance:	
☐ ____ Years Before the Marriage ☐ ____ Years During the Marriage ☐ ____ Years After the Marriage	

[2] Name:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Phone No:	<i>Mobile</i> <i>Daytime</i>
E-Mail Address:	
Relationship:	
Length of Acquaintance:	
☐ ____ Years Before the Marriage ☐ ____ Years During the Marriage ☐ ____ Years After the Marriage	

[3] Name:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Phone No:	<i>Mobile</i> <i>Daytime</i>
E-Mail Address:	
Relationship:	
Length of Acquaintance:	
☐ ____ Years Before the Marriage ☐ ____ Years During the Marriage ☐ ____ Years After the Marriage	



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Petitioner's Declaration

I declare **under oath** that I have read and understand the following with regard to my petition for a declaration of invalidity: **(PLEASE INITIAL EACH STATEMENT)**

____ That the Respondent must be contacted, provided with a copy of my petition and Summary Statement, and given the opportunity to participate;

____ That quality witness testimony is essential for the case to be successfully completed;

____ That both parties and their Advocates have the right to inspect the acts of the case at the Tribunal office;

____ That the fact a case has been accepted for consideration does not mean that a declaration of nullity will automatically be granted;

____ That the Tribunal cannot predict the outcome or timing of the process;

____ That I will not set a date for a new marriage before a decision is rendered, any necessary appeal is concluded, and final notification is sent to the parties.

____ The court may require review of the case by an approved psychologist or other expert, and that associated expenses must be paid by me, the Petitioner.

____ That if a decree of invalidity is granted and circumstances warrant, I, the Petitioner, may be required to undergo additional counseling prior to entering a new marriage.

____ That all of the information contained in or attached to this document is true to the best of my knowledge.

____ A donation fixed by the Eparchial Bishop will be requested to support the Tribunal ministry.

Petitioner's Signature:
Petitioner's Printed Name:
Date Signed:

Important Note: Kindly inform the Tribunal of any change in the Petitioner's and/or Respondent's MAILING ADDRESS and/or PHONE NUMBER and/or E-MAIL ADDRESS.



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Statement of Tribunal Policy

The proceedings of the Tribunal of St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Chicago are exclusively religious in nature and are governed solely by the laws of the Roman Catholic Church. These proceedings are not directed to such matters as property rights, custody of children, or other matters pertaining to the civil courts. The purpose of this investigation is to determine the status of the parties from the point of view of the Catholic Church and their freedom to enter a marriage which will be recognized as valid by the Catholic Church. It is the Tribunal's desire that the proceedings be a healing experience, conducted in a spirit of justice and compassion.

Church law, which is concerned with the rights of both parties in the investigation, requires that the Tribunal seek sufficient information to make a responsible and just decision in this matter. The Tribunal gathers the testimony of the parties themselves and of the witnesses proposed by the parties. The Tribunal may also request, with proper authorization, information such as medical or psychological records.

Because of the sensitive nature of the information gathered in this process and because the Tribunal wishes to promote a spirit of charity, all information gathered in the course of the proceeding is considered confidential and is not made available to anyone except as authorized by Church law. Under that law, it is the Presiding Judge of the Tribunal who has the authority to determine what information is to be given to the parties, balancing the rights of the parties, and the need for confidentiality. Information is not made available to witnesses, to anyone acting on their behalf, or for any civil proceeding. Witnesses may request that their testimony be withheld from the parties for a serious reason. It is the policy of the Tribunal to disclose information only to duly authorized Tribunal officials as determined by Church law. The goal is to afford the parties their rights as well as to preserve the necessary confidentiality of all information gathered in the Tribunal's process of investigation.

I attest that I have read the above statement and by signing agree to be bound by the policies explained therein.

Petitioner's Signature:
Petitioner's Printed Name:
Date Signed:

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Endorsement of the Pastor

This is to state that to the best of my knowledge from what I know or have heard from reliable source,

Mr/Ms..... is

1. a member of this parish Yes / ☐ No

2. a practicing Catholic Yes / ☐ No

3. trust worthy and reliable when
testifies to matters concerning
the marriage case Yes / ☐ No

Remarks if any:

Name and place of the Church

Name and signature of the Parish Priest

Seal

Submission of the Application

- Once the application is completed the petitioner can mail it to the official **Email ID: tribunal@syromail.com**.
- *An Auditor will review the application and a virtual interview is conducted by the auditor, He will help you to fix a ground in which the case can be forwarded.*
- Now the petitioner can make a short summary of your relationship (in your own words, in a paragraph or two, briefly describe the reasons why you believe this marriage was never valid in the eyes of the Church. Please include relevant information about your family circumstances, dating, courtship, and engagement, intentions at the time of consent etc.).
- Once the file is complete, the petition is formally accepted by the Tribunal and the investigation begins.
- The burden of proof is on the Petitioner.