

# TRIBUNAL

Diocese of Bridgeport



W

Case Names:

Case No.:

Your Name:

Please Complete and Return By:

## WITNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

v. VII 2016

Tribunal of the Diocese of Bridgeport

The Catholic Center  
238 Jewett Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06606  
203 - 416 - 1424  
[www.dob-tribunal.com](http://www.dob-tribunal.com)  
[tribunal@diobpt.org](mailto:tribunal@diobpt.org)

Dear Witness,

Thank you for your testifying in the above-mentioned case. One of the parties in the trial requested you as a witness in his or her Marriage Nullity Process in the Tribunal of the Diocese of Bridgeport. They were asked to contact you prior to submitting your name, hence this letter should not be a surprise to you. Your participation in the process will be limited to written statements in the form below. On a very rare occasion, a judge may call you for a brief clarification of your statements. Thank you again for your help.

This questionnaire is similar to the one given to the parties in this case, and will serve to corroborate their own descriptions of their marriage. Please simply answer the questions to the best of your knowledge without consulting either of the parties or other persons. For example, if the question involves what you would know of the time the parties were dating, and you did not know the parties then, please just indicate "I did not know them at that time." Please do not take sides and answer the questions objectively, truthfully and accurately.

Answer the questions concisely, but as completely as you can, and give examples to illustrate your answers. Please also explain how and when you came to know the information, e.g. one of the parties told you during the courtship, you saw or heard the matter yourself, etc. The more facts you are able to provide, the greater assistance you are to the individuals and the Tribunal.

If you need more space, please add additional paper and number the answers accordingly.

Since our Diocese of Bridgeport is blessed with the Faithful of various national backgrounds, using the English language, writing skills, or other situations might become an obstacle for you. In a such a situation, kindly indicate this to the Tribunal (203-416-1424; [tribunal@diobpt.org](mailto:tribunal@diobpt.org)) so we can make special arrangements for you.

Since the forms are part of official evidence in the trial, they are required to be typed. Therefore, you are welcome to download this document from our website at: [www.dob-tribunal.com](http://www.dob-tribunal.com) (see: "For Clergy"). Please indicate case names and number as above. Otherwise, please PRINT very clearly with a blue or black pen only.

Thank you for your assistance!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Very Reverend Arthur Mollenhauer, J.C.L.  
Judicial Vicar

**+The following testimony you are about to give is under the sanctity of an oath+**

**PART A      ABOUT YOU:**

Your Name:

Your Address:

Telephone:

Home:

Cell:

Work:

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Occupation  
(Profession):

Your Religion:

If registered with a parish, please indicate the parish name and place:

Your relationship to the husband and wife (e.g., wife's mother, friend, neighbor):

Did you know the couple before, during, and or after the marriage?

BEFORE:

YES:

NO:

DURING:

YES:

NO:

AFTER:

YES:

NO:

Has anyone coached you in any way regarding the testimony you are about to give?

YES:

NO:

This testimony is to aid the examination of the above-referenced matrimonial case according to the laws of the Catholic Church (canon law) and has no civil effects. Do you clearly understand these facts?

How long and how well do you know one or both of the parties to this marriage?

Would you describe one or both of them as sincere and truthful?

PETITIONER: YES:

NO:

RESPONDENT: YES:

NO:

## PART B THE FAMILY BACKGROUNDS OF THE PARTIES AND PERSONAL COMPARISON

1. Compare the family backgrounds of the husband and wife (whether one or both grew up in a small or large family, in poverty or in comfortable financial circumstances, etc.).
  2. Were there any communication/problem-solving issues, instances of divorce, any physical/sexual abuse, alcohol/drug abuse, that you know of in the families of origin of either or both parties? What was their experience of school?
  3. Compare the personalities of the husband and wife. What impact did this have on their relationship?
  4. Compare the life goals and job history of the husband and wife.

## PART C      COURTSHIP

5. How long did the couple know each other and/or date prior to the marriage? Were there any break-ups or conflict while they were dating?
  6. Please discuss any factors that brought about this marriage. Possible areas to think about are a premarital pregnancy, force or pressure by someone, deception by someone, if one of the spouses entered marriage based on a future condition (example: "I will marry you if and only if you stop drinking," or "I will marry you if and only if you become a Catholic," etc.).
  7. Divorce: Did either spouse believe in divorce as a solution to marital problems? Did either spouse ever say, "If it doesn't work out, we can always get a divorce"?

8. Children: Did the couple make any plans concerning children during the courtship? Did either spouse decide not to have children in the marriage? If so, why? Was any decision made to wait a few years after they were married before having children?
  9. Fidelity: What attitudes did the spouses have about being faithful to each other? During the courtship and/or engagement, did either spouse date or become involved with anyone else?
  10. How was their communication during the courtship? How did the two spouses make decisions together? Were they able to share feelings and ideas well? Were there many disagreements or arguments in the courtship?

11. Did either spouse have any problems with gambling, drinking, or drug use before or during the courtship? Were there any instances of violence? Did either spouse have any problems with handling money? Were there any arrests or imprisonment?
12. Did either spouse have complaints about the other during the courtship? If so, how did they deal with these difficulties?
13. Did either spouse suffer from any psychological or emotional problems before or during the courtship? If so, please describe (example: history of illness, hospitalization, medication, etc.) and indicate how and when you came to know these facts.

14. Did anyone object to the marriage or have any reservations about its success (example: family member, friend, priest/minister/rabbi, etc.)? Did the parties talk with you about their feelings before or after the marriage?

## PART D      MARRIED LIFE

*When you answer the questions, please try to describe the circumstances  
at the beginning, middle and final stage of the marriage.*

15. How did the spouses share feelings and ideas? Was there mutual respect for each other's feelings and opinions? Was decision-making healthy in the marriage? When there were arguments, how were they resolved?
16. How was love and affection expressed between the spouses? Did it seem that there was genuine faithfulness and intimacy in this marriage?

17. Did either spouse or both make a decision not to have children? Was this decision made before or during the marriage? Why were children not wanted? To the best of your knowledge, what means were used to prevent children, and were those means always used? If no children were born to the marriage, why not? Were there any abortions?
18. Please discuss how the marriage was or was not a partnership by reflecting upon the following areas: the raising of children; carrying responsibilities individually and as a couple (job and home); sharing common interests that promote a healthy growth in the relationship; a mutual respect for each other's families (in-laws) and friends, etc. Did they have a healthy partnership in their marriage?
19. Please discuss what may have caused division or a breakdown in their marriage. Areas that could possibly be addressed are: abuse (physical, sexual, emotional), infidelity, use of pornography, money issues, conflicting careers, alcohol or drug abuse, gambling, arrests or imprisonment, etc.

20. Other areas that may be of importance for you to share are: any temporary separations, professional counseling (individual or as a couple, whether both cooperated in counseling, how long the counseling lasted and whether there was any success), details of the final separation, etc. Also please discuss whether either spouse suffered from any psychological or emotional problems. Please include details such as the history of the illness, hospitalization, medication, etc.

21. Is there anything else you would like to add?

**PART E      YOUR SIGNATURE**

NAME of the person giving testimony (PRINT):

Signature of the person giving testimony: \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGN HERE**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

**Authentication:**

Signature of a Priest, Deacon, Ecclesiastical or Notary Public

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SIGN HERE**

If you have received this questionnaire by mail, on this last page, please sign on the line "Signature of person giving testimony." We request that you have your signature witnessed by a Catholic Priest, Deacon, Ecclesiastical Notary or Notary Public. All testimony given by the Petitioner and/or Respondent, as well as their witnesses, can be seen by the Petitioner, Respondent and the Tribunal officials. This right is considered "the right to defense" in case one would like to give additional testimony or a rebuttal. If, because of the sensitivity of the information given, the person would like the information confidential, he/she can give reasons in writing why he/she wishes this information to be kept confidential. The final decision in this matter will remain with the presiding Judge (Canon 1598).

**THE ACTS OF THIS ECCLESIASTICAL PROCESS ARE A RELIGIOUS MATTER  
AND HAVE NO EFFECTS IN CIVIL LAW.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Please return the form to:

Tribunal of the Diocese of Bridgeport

The Catholic Center

238 Jewett Avenue

Bridgeport, CT 06606