



## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

### Office of the Tribunal

215 N. Westnedge Street, Kalamazoo MI 49007-3760; 269-903-0215

### **RESUME OF THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE**

*For use in Ordinary Process or Process before the Bishop*

**Instructions:** Please read the entire questionnaire before you begin to answer. Then answer the questions as completely as possible. Brief, uninformative answers will only delay the process. Most helpful to the tribunal are truthful responses that shed light on the problems or issues that might have negatively impacted the marriage in question. Type or write your answers on separate sheets of paper. If it is not possible for your responses to be typed, then please write clearly, **in black ink only**, on one side of normal sized paper. Please **number your responses** according to the questions you are answering (e.g. A1, A2).

**Please sign and date the last page of your testimony signifying that your answers are true, accurate and complete. Do not respond on this form or sign this form.**

#### **A. Your Family Background**

1. How many siblings do you have? What is your place in the birth order?
2. Summarize how you and your family of origin handled anger, disappointments, and criticism.
3. Summarize the character and personality of your parents, and style of discipline they used in raising you.
4. Describe any difficulties faced by parents, siblings, and extended family (including any financial problems, chronic illness, psychological/mental illness, alcohol or drug use/abuse, trouble with the law, any verbal/physical/sexual abuse or molestation, premature deaths, abortion, divorce, or infidelity).
5. Did your family practice any faith? How did religion influence your beliefs and behavior?
6. Summarize how your parents viewed and lived marriage? How did they solve problems?
7. How did you get along with others in school? What level of education did you complete?
8. Were there any serious or traumatic events in your childhood/adolescence that affected you in any way? **If yes**, please explain.

#### **B. Your Former Spouse's Family Background**

1. How many siblings does your former spouse have? What order was your former spouse in birth?
2. Summarize how your former spouse and his/her family of origin handled anger, disappointments, and criticism.
3. Explain what you know in regards to the upbringing of your former spouse (e.g. style of discipline used, character and personality of parents etc.).
4. Summarize any difficulties faced by parents, siblings, and extended family (including any financial problems, chronic illness, psychological/mental illness, alcohol or drug use/abuse, trouble with the law, any verbal/physical/sexual abuse or molestation, premature death, abortion, divorce, or infidelity).
5. Did your former spouse's family practice any faith? How did religion influence your former spouse's beliefs and behavior?
6. Describe how your former spouse's parents viewed and lived marriage? How did they solve problems?
7. How did your former spouse get along with others in school? What level of education did your former spouse complete?
8. Were there any serious or traumatic events in your former spouse's childhood/adolescence that affected him/her in any way? **If yes**, please explain.
9. In answering these questions about your family background and your former spouse's family background, do you recognize significant differences between the two families? If yes, please explain.

**C. Regarding the Understanding of Marriage**

1. At the time you were dating your former spouse, how would you have described or defined “marriage”?
2. Would both of you have described marriage in this way? Please explain any differences.
3. When you entered the marriage, what were the views of each of you about how marriage would be different than living together?
4. What did you see as the responsibilities of marriage?
5. What did your former spouse see as the responsibilities of marriage? How do you know this? (i.e. from experience, from a view actually spoken by your former spouse.)
6. What marriage preparation meetings/classes did you attend before getting married? What was your attitude and your former spouse’s attitude towards participation in marriage preparation classes? Did the information learned change your understanding of marriage? How? Did it have an impact on your former spouse? How?

**D. Motivations for Marriage (Dating and Courtship)**

1. Summarize your sense of self-esteem, self-worth, ability to motivate yourself, ability to relate to others, and ability to handle responsibilities before marriage.
2. Summarize your former spouse’s sense of self-esteem, self-motivation, ability to relate to others, and ability to handle responsibilities before marriage.
3. When and under what circumstances did you first meet your former spouse? How old were you both at the time?
4. When (month and year) did you begin to date each other? Did you date anyone else previously? **If yes**, please explain.
5. How often did you see each other and what were some of the activities you did on your dates?
6. How did you get along with each other? Were there any serious quarrels or breakups during courtship? **If yes**, please explain.
7. During the time you were dating, was one of the parties more dominant? Please explain.
8. How long did you date each other before you became engaged? Describe the circumstances surrounding the engagement (e.g. who proposed?).
9. Did you have the same or different reasons for deciding to get married? Please explain.
10. Was the engagement ever broken or threatened to be called off? **If yes**, why? When? By whom?
11. How long were you engaged?
12. How was your decision to marry received by parents, family, and friends?
13. Did any person caution or advise against the marriage? Please explain.
14. What attracted you to your former spouse? What attracted your former spouse to you?
15. Describe any reservations, doubts, or concerns on the part of either of you about getting married.
16. Describe the discussions or decisions you shared regarding your future together (e.g. your goals etc.)
17. Describe your ability to communicate to each other before marriage.
18. If you and your former spouse were sexually involved prior to marriage, when did you begin (how many months into the courtship)? **If yes**,
  - a. At what age did you become sexually active? What about your former spouse?
  - b. How many sexual partners did you have before your former spouse? How many sexual partners did your former spouse have?
  - c. Did any difficulties develop as a result of you and your former spouse becoming sexually active? Please explain.
19. If there was a pre-marital pregnancy,
  - a. Before the pregnancy was discovered, had the two of you been planning to marry? Please explain.
  - b. How did the discovery of the pregnancy affect you and your former spouse emotionally?
  - c. How did members of both families deal with the pregnancy?
  - d. Did you consider alternatives? Please explain.

**E. Marriage from the Beginning – the common life lived out**

1. Were there any unusual occurrences at the wedding itself, or at the reception, or during the honeymoon which led either of you to have “second thoughts” about having married? **If yes**, please explain.
2. Did either you or your former spouse experience excessive home sickness? **If yes**, please explain.
3. After marriage, did you and your former spouse practice your faith? Please explain.
4. For how long and in what way was the marriage satisfactory to each? Please explain.
5. Do you feel that both of you were working together to make the necessary adjustments to married life or, in the alternative, did you simply let married life develop on its own, hoping that it would become a life-long commitment?
6. How did you and your former spouse handle conflicts/anger in the marriage? Did this change over time?

**F. Problems in the Marriage**

1. When and why did problems first arise in the marriage? Please explain the kinds of problems that arose and how or if they were resolved. (i.e. financial, sexual, emotional, infidelity, in-laws, dependence on parents, raising of children, pornography, physical/emotional/sexual abuse, religious difference, etc.)
2. What were your main complaints about your former spouse as a spouse?
3. What were your former spouse’s complaints about you as a spouse?
4. Marriage involves love, equality, and treating your spouse with respect and dignity. Did your marriage involve a full sharing of your lives together, or did you and your former spouse merely share the same house? Please explain.
  - a. Did either of you appear to be living like a single person despite the fact of being married? How?
  - b. Did either of you spend excessive amounts of time away from each other? **If yes**, please explain. When did these behaviors begin? How soon after the wedding?
  - c. What kind of judgment did each of you show in regard to financial dealings and household matters?
5. Were you and your former spouse able to live out other responsibilities in life, i.e. toward family, friends, work? **If not**, please explain.
6. Were there any sexual difficulties in the marriage? Of what nature? When did this begin?
  - a. Did both of you see sexual intercourse as an integral part of the marriage and also a way of showing true love for each other as opposed to just using each other?
  - b. Was there ever any surgery that may have affected the sexual aspect of the marriage? Why was this done? How did this affect the marriage?
  - c. Did either withhold affection or intimacy? Why? Did this occur often?
7. Did you or your former spouse suffer from any emotional or mental problems before or after marriage? Please explain. Did this condition require treatment or hospitalization?
8. Were there any use and/or abuse of drugs (prescription/pain killer, marijuana, illegal) or alcohol? **If yes**, please answer the additional questions in the next section “G,” otherwise skip that section.

**G. Alcohol and/or Substance Abuse** (e.g. prescription drug misuse, pain killer addiction, marijuana, illegal drug use) Skip this section if there was no abuse of alcohol or substances in the history of either you or your former spouse.

1. Please describe in detail any patterns of drinking (or substance abuse) which you, your former spouse, or both of you had. When did use/abuse begin? Please describe the frequency, amounts, occasions, etc.
2. Please explain whether or not the amount of alcoholic intake (substance abuse) increased over time.
3. Please explain any impact the use of alcohol or drugs had on behavior and the ability to fulfill responsibilities at work or at home.

**H. Separations, Counseling and Divorce**

1. Give the history, dates, and a description of any separations that occurred during the marriage.
2. During any period of separation, did either try to talk the other into coming back home and “trying again”? **If yes**, please explain. Did any family members encourage reconciliation or were they in favor of the separation?
3. How long did the two of you actually live together **after** the wedding, until the final separation?

- a. Who left? (own initiative? asked to leave?)
- b. Why?
4. Did either receive any marriage counseling or professional counseling of any kind? **If yes**, please describe the nature of treatment, name of doctor, and address of the facility. Was there any opposition to counseling?
5. When did the discussion / threats of divorce begin? When was it decided to actually seek a divorce? Who filed for it and when?
6. Why did the marriage last as long as it did?
7. What would you consider to be the fundamental cause of the breakdown of this marriage?

I **Children:** Please answer the set of questions in this section that applies to your situation.

**If children were born from this marriage:**

1. What was your reaction (and your former spouse) to the news of becoming parents? Did either party express concerns? **If yes**, please explain.
2. Were you and your former spouse actually united in your approach to child rearing (e.g. religion, education, discipline and other values, etc.)? **If not**, please explain.
3. Did either party show any jealousy or seem to be in competition with the children?
4. Did either party receive primary physical custody of the minor children in the divorce?
5. If the court ordered child support and/or alimony, are these obligations being met? **If ordered but not met**, please explain.
6. Are you and your former spouse presently involved in civil litigation concerning the custody of your child or children? **If yes**, please explain.

**If children were NOT born from this marriage:**

1. Were there fertility problems? **If yes**, describe the problems and the treatments that were attempted.
2. Before or at the time of the marriage was any decision made by either or both of you to delay or not to have children?
  - a. What was the reason for deciding to not have any children? How were they avoided?
  - b. Who made this decision, you, your former spouse, or both of you together? Was it a permanent or temporary decision? When was this decision, the intention against children made (before or after the wedding)?
  - c. What would have been (or was) the reaction if one of you had changed his/her mind about having children, or if it was found out that you were expecting a child? What were your views and your former spouse's views on abortion, adoption? Did an abortion occur? **If yes** please explain.
  - d. Describe the belief you shared with each other concerning having children and the role of children in a marriage? Describe any changes in this belief while dating, while engaged, or after marriage?

**J. Regarding Matrimonial Consent**

1. Before or at the time of the marriage did either of you feel it was all right (for people in general, for those dating/engaged) to have sexual relations outside marriage? **If yes**, answer a-c.
  - a. Did either of you "cheat" on anyone you dated prior to marrying? Please explain.
  - b. Describe your own and your spouse's attitude and understanding regarding complete fidelity to one's marriage partner. What was the philosophy of each of you regarding fidelity in marriage?
  - c. Relate any conversations or incidents which indicate a lack of commitment to fidelity in the marriage.
2. Before or at the time of the marriage did either of you feel it was all right to get a divorce if the marriage didn't work out as planned? In other words, did you just **hope** your marriage would be permanent, or **intend** it to be permanent no matter what (good times and bad)? Did either party believe strongly that some action by the other party could be so totally unacceptable, a kind of "unforgivable sin," that it would justify divorce? Would it also give either party a right to re-marriage? **If yes**, answer a-c.

- a. Describe the attitude and understanding of each of you regarding the absolute permanence of marriage.
- b. Relate any conversations or discussions you had prior to the wedding regarding what would happen if the marriage did not work out. Describe any talk of the possibility of divorce, “unforgivable sins” or totally unacceptable actions. When did this first occur?
- c. Was any mention of permanence in marriage dropped or eliminated from your marriage vows?
3. Before or at the time of the marriage was there any kind of pressure, force or fear which caused either of you to enter this marriage? **If yes**, answer a-b.
  - a. Describe the pressure or force or fear which affected your decision to marry.
  - b. What was the source of this pressure, force or fear? How strong an impression did it make on you? To what extent were you able to resist it? What would you have done if it were not present?
4. Before or at the time of the marriage was there any kind of fraud, deceit, cover-up or false information present which, if it were known, would have kept either of you from entering the marriage? **If yes**, answer a-c.
  - a. Describe the nature of the deceit or fraud. Who was responsible for it? How did it affect your relationship to your spouse (later in marriage)?
  - b. Did you have some suspicions? Did others? Were you warned by others about any such deceit?
  - c. How significant was this deceit to you? How did it affect your decision to enter this marriage? What would you have done if you had known the truth?
5. Before or at the time of the marriage were there any conditions (a requirement for the giving of your consent) placed on the marriage or on either of you, which, if not fulfilled, would have kept either of you from entering the marriage? **If yes**, answer a-b.
  - a. Describe the condition that was placed on the marriage. Was the condition important enough that the marriage would not take place unless fulfilled?
  - b. Describe whether the condition was fulfilled or not. If it was not fulfilled, what was the response?
6. After the wedding did you fail to physically consummate the marriage? **If yes**, answer a-b.
  - a. Did anything prevent the marriage from being consummated? **If yes**, please explain why the marriage was not consummated?
  - b. Describe your living arrangement together after the wedding.
7. If one or both of you were Catholic and the marriage was not originally celebrated in the Catholic Church, was your civilly recognized marriage ever later celebrated in the Church? **If yes**, answer a-c.
  - a. How soon after the civilly recognized marriage was it canonically celebrated in the Catholic Church? What was the reason for doing so? Whose idea was it for you to undergo the canonical ceremony in the Catholic Church? Describe the instruction and preparation you received for this canonical celebration of marriage.
  - b. Describe the health, stability and security of your civilly recognized marriage at the time of the canonical celebration of marriage in the Church. Describe any problems prior to the Church celebration. Was this used to try to overcome existing problems (i.e. a last attempt to “save” the marriage)?
  - c. How did you understand the validity of your marriage prior to the canonical celebration in the Church? What did you understand you were doing in exchanging consent (vows) in the way the Church requires? What did you feel was the difference between your civilly recognized marriage and canonical Church marriage? Which date did you use to celebrate your wedding anniversary?

**K. Regarding Future Plans**

1. Are you involved in an RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program to become Catholic?
2. **If you have you remarried, attach a copy of the marriage certificate for all subsequent marriages including your present marriage. If any of these parties were Catholic please provide a recent baptismal certificate for them (issued within the last 6 months).**
3. Has your former spouse remarried or does she/he intend to remarry?
4. How well do you and your prior spouse get along since the final separation and divorce?

**L. If you are the petitioner**

Have you told your former spouse you are petitioning for a declaration of invalidity?

1. **If yes**, what was your former spouse's reaction to this news? Will your former spouse consent to your petition by signing the application?  
(**If yes**, be sure to have **section 8** of the application completed. It is titled **Consent of the Respondent**. Your former spouse is, in fact, urged to complete this questionnaire as well for submission with the application. The procurator advocate can supply a copy of it to your former spouse.)
2. **If not**, how do you think your former spouse will react to finding out you petitioned the tribunal for a declaration of invalidity?

**Conclusion:**

**Please sign and date the last page of your testimony signifying that your answers are true, accurate and complete. Return this questionnaire with your resume.**

Please make arrangements to meet with your procurator and advocate so that the two of you may review your responses to the questions together. At this meeting you can complete the application process, affix proper signatures to the forms, make the appointment, and make the final preparations to send your case to the tribunal.

The procurator and advocate should make a copy of everything sent to the tribunal, and keep those copies until your case is finished, at which time they can be either returned to you or destroyed.

Please tell the witnesses that you have given their names to the tribunal as witnesses in your marriage case and that you would appreciate the prompt return of the questionnaires which they will receive. Be advised, that telling the witnesses what to say is considered tampering with the evidence.