

DECLARATION OF INVALIDITY (Annulment) Q and A

First of all, if this process applies to you, we are very sorry to hear about your situation. May God give you strength and graces in this time of need.

Second, at the current moment, this is the procedure for applying for an annulment:

- 1- Wait until the divorce has been finalized; we will need a copy of the divorce decree. Depending on the situation in a given marriage and especially if there has been abuse of any kind, we advise the person to obtain counselling (if needed), this will just help prepare the person for participation in a declaration of invalidity. If one has not begun the healing process then the annulment may be too difficult and/or stressful to begin.
- 2- Talk with your parish priest about the difficulties faced in the marriage; the priest is a spiritual guide. If you feel more comfortable with another priest, then please feel free to contact him. This is a spiritual process and it may be helpful to take part in a prayer group or retreat, etc. to remind you that the Lord does indeed walk with you and has not abandoned you. If you have a fiancé(e), invite him/her to journey with you; this can be a great source of support.
- 3- Once you are ready to initiate the process, fill out the application form; either party can be the one to apply. The person applying is called the Plaintiff, the other party is the Respondent.
- 4- The pope has recently initiated a new short form for the process, however, this short form can only apply if the former spouse is NOT opposed to an affirmative decision. If he/she is opposed, then we have to do the long form. The short form can take about 2 months, the long form about 6 months.
- 5- Cost. The fee for both forms is presently \$650.00; the remainder of the cost is absorbed by the eparchy to which the person applying belongs. The fee is paid by the person applying and it is sent to the tribunal office, payable to "Marriage Tribunal."
- 6- The former spouse does not have to participate.
- 7- For the short process, 1 witness is required; for the long process 3 or 4 are required.

Hope this was helpful. Again, please remember that the Church is there to support you and to help both parties through this difficult time.

With prayers,

Fr. Andrei Kachur, Judicial Vicar, Inter-eparchial Marriage Tribunal