




1

Meeting #1

o If you do not know the Petitioner, spend a few minutes getting to know him/her.

- o What is the Petitioner looking for?
- o Ask the Petitioner to tell you his/her story.
- o Get some initial information/Ask these questions:
 - o Where were you married (specifically)?
 - o Date of marriage? If civil, was marriage convalidated? If yes, when and where?
 - o Is your former spouse Catholic? If no, was your former spouse baptized? If yes, when and into which denomination?




2

o Explain/Talk about:

- o Why the Church gets involved in marriage cases of non-Catholics, civil marriages, etc.
- o What is meant by "Marriage enjoys the favor of the law."
- o What a declaration of nullity is

o What the Petitioner can expect in the process:

- o That the burden of proof is on the Petitioner to prove the case
- o To be informed of what is happening each step of the process
- o To tell their story in detail by responding to questionnaire or personal interview




3

What Petitioner should bring to second meeting:

- o Baptism certificate, issued within 6 months, with notations (if Catholic)
- o Marriage license (original, certified)
- o Divorce decree – Notice of Entry of Judgment and Judgment (original, certified)
- o Summary Statement (signed and dated)
- o Deposit fee of \$150 for formal case (or full fee for other types of cases)
- o List of witnesses (names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses)


Review checklist for the particular type of case to be sure Petitioner knows what documents to bring.



4


Meeting #2

- o **Collect documents and review to make sure everything is complete.**
- o **Read and review the Summary Statement.**
 - o Does the Petitioner tell enough of the story so that grounds may be set by the Judicial Vicar?
- o **Complete the appropriate case application form with the Petitioner. Sign and date where indicated.**



5

- o **Ask the Petitioner to talk with his/her witnesses and let them know they will be contacted by the Tribunal.**
 - o Remind witnesses that this is not about assigning fault to one party or the other.
 - o Ask witnesses to be truthful, answer questions as completely as possible, and to return their questionnaire within the timeframe given.
 - o Give their witnesses “permission” to tell the story from their perspective, without worry of hurt feelings, etc.
- o **Encourage the Petitioner to call you with his/her questions and concerns.**
- o **Write your Advocate’s Brief to submit with the case paperwork. (See Binder Tab 1, p. 22.)**



6



- ∅ Stay in touch with your Petitioner. You are the first and best person for him/her to talk with about their case.
- ∅ Each case is assigned a Tribunal staff member (Auditor). The Auditor is the best person to speak with regarding specific questions of your case.
- ∅ If the assigned staff member is not available, any one of us can assist you.
- ∅ If you have any questions, please call, e-mail, or come in to see us!