



1

Meeting #1

- **If you do not know the Petitioner, spend a few minutes getting to know him/her.**
 - ✓What is the Petitioner looking for?
 - ✓Ask the Petitioner to tell you his/her story.
 - ✓Get some initial information/Ask these questions:
 - Where were you married (specifically)?
 - Date of marriage? If civil, was marriage convalidated? If yes, when and where?
 - Is your former spouse Catholic? If no, was your former spouse baptized? If yes, when and into which denomination?

2


- **Explain/Talk about:**
 - ✓Why the Church gets involved in marriage cases of non-Catholics, civil marriages, etc.
 - ✓What is meant by "Marriage enjoys the favor of the law."
 - ✓What a declaration of nullity is
- **What the Petitioner can expect in the process:**
 - ✓That the burden of proof is on the Petitioner to prove the case
 - ✓To be informed of what is happening each step of the process
 - ✓To tell their story in detail by responding to a questionnaire or personal interview

3

▪ **What Petitioner should bring to second meeting:**

- ✓ Baptism certificate, issued within 6 months, with notations
- ✓ Marriage license (original, certified)
- ✓ Divorce decree – Notice of Entry of Judgment and Judgment (original, certified)
- ✓ Summary Statement (signed and dated)
- ✓ Deposit fee of \$150 for Formal case (or full fee for other types of cases)
- ✓ 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

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




5

- ◊ **Ask the Petitioner to talk with his/her witnesses and let them know they will be contacted by the Tribunal.**
 - ◊ Remind witnesses that this is not about assigning fault to one party or the other.
 - ◊ Ask witnesses to be truthful, answer questions as completely as possible, and to return their questionnaire within the timeframe given.
 - ◊ Give their witnesses “permission” to tell the story from their perspective, without worry of hurt feelings, etc.
- ◊ **Encourage the Petitioner to call you with his/her questions and concerns.**
- ◊ **Write your Advocate’s Brief to submit with the case paperwork. (See Binder Tab 1, p. 11.)**




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!



7



8
