



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

2110 Broadway • Sacramento, California 95818-2541 • 916/733-0225

THE TRIBUNAL

January 3, 2023

TO: Pastors and Parochial Administrators

FROM: Cheryl M. Tholcke, Moderator of the Tribunal Chancery

Parish Advocate Training Program – March 7-8, 2023

Assisting Parishioners in the Annulment Process

Registrations are being accepted for the Tribunal's annual **Introductory Parish Advocate Training**. The program will be held March 7-8, 2023 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Priests, deacons, and lay people are welcome and encouraged to participate.

The Introductory program addresses (1) the job description and role of Parish Advocates, (2) marriage in Church teaching and law, (3) impediments, (4) grounds for nullity, and (5) types of cases and required procedures.

The Advanced program will be held September 19-20, 2023. Only those lay people who have completed the Introductory and Advanced programs may serve as Parish Advocates, along with priests and deacons.

Pastors and Parochial Administrators must approve all participants from their parish. Attached are (1) Parish Advocate Training Flyer, (2) Parish Advocate Job Description, and (3) Parish Advocate Training Registration Form. These may also be found on the Tribunal's webpage: <https://www.scd.org/tribunal/tribunal-training-resources>.

Questions? Contact Cheryl Tholcke, Moderator of the Tribunal Chancery, at 916-733-0231 or ctholcke@scd.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Tribunal Parish Advocate Training



**For Lay Ministers, Priests, and Deacons
Held at the Diocesan Pastoral Center**

2023

INTRODUCTORY—Tuesday, March 7 to Wednesday, March 8

ADVANCED—Tuesday, September 19 to Wednesday, September 20

Registration materials are available on the Tribunal's website:

<https://www.scd.org/tribunal/tribunal-resources>

INTRODUCTORY TRAINING INCLUDES:

Canon Law and Marriage, The Role of the Parish Advocate, Types of Cases and Procedures, Grounds of Invalidity, Forms and Questionnaires, and Case Studies.

ADVANCED TRAINING INCLUDES:

Working with Petitioners and Respondents, Summary Statements, Proving Grounds, Multiple Cases—One Petitioner, Sacramental Registers, Recordkeeping, Special Topics, and Case Studies.

The Tribunal

2110 Broadway
Sacramento CA 95818

Phone: (916) 733-0225
TribunalDept@scd.org

Upon successful completion of both classes, participants are appointed to a four-year term as a Parish Advocate.



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INTRODUCTORY PARISH ADVOCATE TRAINING – REGISTRATION FORM

March 7-8, 2023 – Diocesan Pastoral Center, Sacramento

This is the first of two required courses in order to be appointed a Parish Advocate in the Diocese of Sacramento.

ONE FORM PER PERSON. PLEASE **MAIL** ORIGINAL FORM WITH PASTOR SIGNATURE and PAYMENT. E-MAILS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

COMMUTER OPTION \$75	Includes participant materials, continental breakfast, and lunch on both days.	\$ 75.00
Please make check payable to Tribunal – Diocese of Sacramento		TOTAL \$ 75.00

NAME <i>(first and last name; include title: Mrs., Mr., Ms., Deacon, Fr., etc.)</i>			
NAME TAG <i>(what name shall people call you?)</i>			
PARISH NAME & CITY			
PASTOR'S NAME			
PASTOR'S SIGNATURE <i>(Required for Sacramento Diocese participants)</i>			
PARISH MAILING ADDRESS			
CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE			
YOUR HOME MAILING ADDRESS <i>(include if you wish Tribunal mailings sent to your home address instead of the parish)</i>			
CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE			
PHONE NUMBERS	<i>(home)</i>	<i>(work)</i>	<i>(cell)</i>
YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS <i>(REQUIRED – additional information will be sent via e-mail. This must be your personal e-mail; no shared e-mail addresses are allowed.)</i>			



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Parish Advocate Job Description

DEFINITION OF A PARISH ADVOCATE

In the Diocese of Sacramento, a *Parish Advocate* is a person approved by ecclesiastical authority who safeguards the rights of a party in a canonical process. The *Parish Advocate* is first and foremost a representative of the Church, ministering to people who need the assistance of the Tribunal to determine and clarify their marital status. The *Parish Advocate* accompanies the party throughout the canonical process. The *Parish Advocate* may be a member of the same parish as the party or may be an *Advocate* located in the same deanery as the party.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Using Tribunal guidelines, meet with the party to determine/propose the type of case to submit (Formal, Lack of Form, *Ligamen*, etc.).
- The *Advocate* regularly meets with the party, providing support and advice throughout the process.
- Write a brief assessing the party's circumstances, character, and credibility. The *Advocate's* observations and evaluations assist the Court in understanding the context of information provided.
- Assist the party throughout the process with completing forms, providing quality testimony, procuring witnesses, etc.
- With the party, inspect the Acts (testimony) and review the documents produced by the parties and their witnesses.
- Encourage the party to be active on their own behalf.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

A *Parish Advocate* must be an adult who is a Catholic in good standing. In the Diocese of Sacramento, the position of a *Parish Advocate* requires (1) recommendation of his/her pastor/parochial administrator, (2) attendance at two two-day workshops led by the Tribunal, (3) appointment by the Tribunal (for a term of four years), (4) completion of the Oath of Confidentiality, and for continued service (5) attendance at update workshops once every three years.

PREFERRED SKILLS

- Compassion, intelligence, and integrity
- Organization (capacity to fulfill the procedural functions of the role)
- Ability to keep matters confidential
- Communication and listening skills
- Computer literacy/ability
- The ability to speak and write in Spanish, Korean, or Vietnamese is always an added benefit in many of the Tribunal's cases but is not required.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The Tribunal provides training, support, and resources for *Parish Advocates*. Tribunal staff members are available to *Parish Advocates* to answer questions, consult on cases, and troubleshoot as needed.