

How do I begin?

The way to begin the annulment process is to contact your local parish and speak with a priest or an annulment companion in your area. An annulment companion assists you throughout the process in determining the type of annulment that is necessary as well as assisting you in preparing the documents necessary for the process.

How long does it take?

Each annulment case is unique, so it is impossible to predict the length of time because of a number of variable factors. One case may take several weeks, while another case may take a year or longer. Most annulments are completed in 10-12 months if all parties participate in the process.

“Going through the annulment process brought me great healing! It allowed me to recognize many things about myself and brought me back to my Catholic faith after feeling apart from it for so long.”

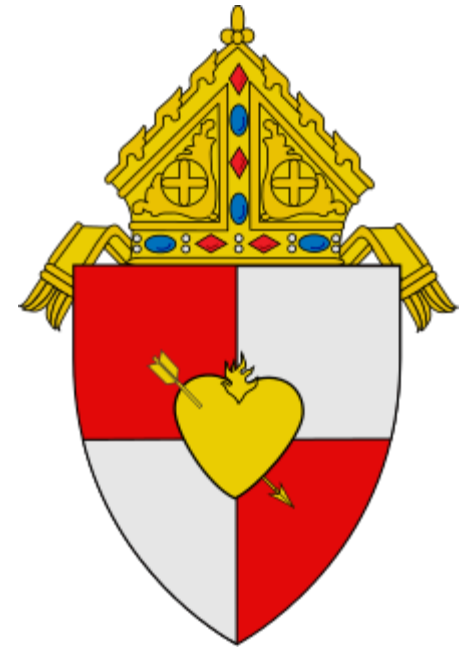
How much does it cost?

The Tribunal of the Diocese of St. Augustine is subsidized by the faithful of the diocese. Pope Francis has requested that petitioners may file for annulment without cost. Currently, in the Diocese of St. Augustine, there is no fee for a formal case; however, if a petitioner or respondent files an appeal, fees for the appellate court will be charged to the one filing the appeal.

Donations may be made to the Tribunal to help defray the cost of an annulment petition.

When is remarriage allowed in the Church?

When a marriage is declared invalid and the decision is not appealed, and if there are no restrictions attached to it, the usual procedure of preparing for marriage in the Catholic Church may be started with your local parish priest or pastoral minister. No wedding dates for future marriage can be made before that time.



WHAT IS AN ANNULMENT?

Diocese of St. Augustine
Office of the Tribunal



What is marriage?

The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is a permanent and exclusive partnership for the mutual giving and receiving of love to one another and the procreation and education of children. For the baptized, a valid marriage is also a sacramental marriage. Marriage is a sacred bond for the whole of life where a man and a woman commit themselves to the good of the other.

The Church believes that every valid sacramental marriage is indissoluble based on the teachings of Christ found in Matthew 19:1-12. Therefore, all marriages between two baptized partners are presumed to be valid and a sacrament until the opposite is proven with moral certainty. The Church also recognizes each and every marriage between a man and a woman (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Civil, etc.) to be a valid and permanent marriage.

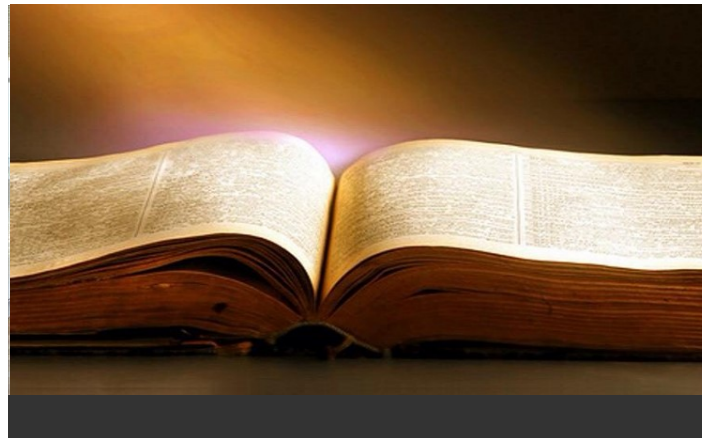
What is an annulment?

An annulment (or more formally a Declaration of Nullity) is a formal decision by a Catholic Tribunal that a particular union is neither a sacramental nor a valid marital union as understood by Catholic Church law.

It recognizes that there was a common life, but there was some defect in the consent or the ability of one or both partners which did not allow the marriage to become a partnership of life and love as described in Church law.

An Annulment is not...

- An annulment is not a Catholic divorce.
- An annulment does not mean the marriage never took place.
- An annulment has no bearing on any children born during the marriage.
- An annulment does not change any of the terms of the civil divorce decree..
- An annulment is not a moral judgment of the parties. It does not assign blame.



What about my former spouse?

Church law and basic human justice require the Tribunal to notify the other party, known as the “Respondent,” to process a submitted application. Every reasonable effort must be made to locate the former spouse. The Respondent has the same rights as the Petitioner in the process and the participation of the Respondent is strongly encouraged.

When both parties are willing to participate in the filing of a petition, a briefer process may be followed under certain conditions.

An affirmative decision frees both parties for a new marriage recognized by the Catholic Church if they should so choose.

The annulment process does not require that the former spouses have any direct contact with each other. All officials of the Tribunal are bound by oath to keep materials relative to the annulment process confidential. The parties are also asked to keep information confidential.

Contact Us

Diocese of St. Augustine

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