



## ***Petition to the Bishop for consent to Solemnize a Marriage after Divorce or Annulment***

### **Preface**

Required by Title I, Canon 19, sec. 3(c) of the Canons of the Episcopal Church, application for consent of the Bishop shall be made by the member of the clergy who will officiate at the proposed wedding.

Christian marriage is an extraordinary gift of God, in which a couple are called to live in the saving grace of Christ, enriched, guided and sustained by the Holy Spirit, in communion with the community of the Church. The occasion when couples approach the Church with the intention of being married, or seeking blessing of their civil marriage, gives opportunity for inviting them deeper into the life of Christ, and for offering clear teaching and support for their marriage

In that spirit, the following form offers a review of our canonical requirements and diocesan policies as well as pastoral support for those seeking Christian marriage.

**Note: All petitions should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the proposed wedding date and should be addressed to**

The Rt. Rev. José A. McLoughlin  
The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina  
900-B Center Park Dr.  
Asheville, NC 28805

Petition submitted by: The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name and age of both parties to the proposed marriage:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

The Episcopal congregation(s) in which these persons are active baptized members:

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of the former spouse(s):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The date(s) of the final divorce decree(s). *Please provide copies of all divorce decrees with this application.*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If any children of the divorced spouse are minors, state the court-ordered financial arrangements for their support and whether all such payments are current.

Details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In a separate written statement include the following:

- A statement as to why the prior marriage(s) failed
- A statement as to why the couple believes the proposed marriage will be different
- A statement of your understanding of the manner in which the couple intends to place God at the center of their marriage and home
- A statement that you have met with both parties to the proposed marriage, or, if not, a description of the alternative to such a meeting, and that the Declaration of Intention has been signed;
- A statement that the final divorce decree has been seen personally;
- A statement that the minister is satisfied that adequate “continuing concern” is demonstrated for former spouse(s) and for children. (see Title I, Canon 19, sec. 3(b));
- The date and place of the proposed ceremony;

**In the event of a third marriage by either party**, the parties to the proposed marriage must consult with a licensed marriage therapist as to their readiness for a life-long union. The written opinion of the therapist must be conveyed to the petitioning priest and included with the petition to the Bishop.

**Insofar as fourth marriages by either party** are concerned, petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Only a priest can serve as the petitioner in a request for a marital judgement.

Note that if the priest requesting the judgement is not the rector or priest-in-charge of the Church in which the proposed ceremony is to take place, there must also be a letter from that person assuring the Bishop of her or his concurrence with the petition.

I request consent of the Bishop for me to solemnize this marriage.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Clergy

Permission is hereby granted for the performance of a marriage between the above named persons

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Rt. Rev. José A. McLoughlin  
VII Bishop of Western North Carolina