



# SCOTTISH CATHOLIC INTERDIOCESAN TRIBUNAL

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## WITNESS CONSENT SCHEDULE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give my consent to be a witness for

\_\_\_\_\_, who has asked me to be interviewed in the context of the marriage nullity petition being investigated

My relationship is: \_\_\_\_\_  
*[eg: mother of John, cousin of Mary, friend of John and Mary]*

To arrange the interview, I may be contacted at: \_\_\_\_\_ *[Landline]*

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Mobile]*

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Email]*

My full mailing address is: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read and accept the Notes on the reverse side of this form. I understand that a representative of the Tribunal will contact me to arrange for my one-to-one interview. In accordance with Canon Law and Civil Law my interview must remain confidential.**

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

Witness Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Party Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTES FOR WITNESSES

*These indications are intended to put witnesses at their ease and to explain their role in the marriage nullity process.*

1. You have been asked to be a witness because the person who nominated you [the wife or husband of the marriage under investigation] believes that you can honestly and openly describe the upbringing, courtship, and/or married life of one or both of the spouses. The spouse who introduced the case is known as the Petitioner, the other party is known as the Respondent.
2. What you tell us will be read by both of the spouses [if both are taking part], and by Church personnel, but will be confidential and not shared with anyone else [unless anything raised in the interview causes a safeguarding concern, in which case we may have to share it with the statutory authorities]. Please tell us only what you know, but tell us all of it and how you came to know it [eg first-hand knowledge, commonly held opinion, a rumour etc].
3. The aim of the nullity process in which you have agreed to participate is to establish whether, or not, at the time the marriage took place, there could have been some reason why the exchange of consent was inadequate. It has nothing to do with any civil legal procedure and has no effect upon it as regards either the couple's civil status or the civil legitimacy of any children.
4. A marriage will only be declared null if the information provided by all who participate in the case actually proves that nullity. The Tribunal therefore seeks pertinent information about various areas of interest: a party's family background; their childhood, adolescence and early adulthood; their personality and character; their ability to enter into sound relationships; behavioural traits and attitudes; life of faith; the courtship period; the immediate period around the wedding; how the marriage unfolded etc. A witness may be able to speak only to one or two of these categories, but that is often sufficient if the evidence is reliable.
5. Thus, when you are interviewed, we already know that something is "wrong with" the marriage, otherwise no nullity would be being sought. We probably already have an idea of the unfortunate circumstances which caused the marriage to break down, so do not be afraid to tell us what you know of the marriage or parties, even if it is unpleasant. The fact that you have been asked to be a witness probably means that a party expects you to say what you know.
6. Your testimony will be taken in a one-to-one interview with a representative of the Tribunal, usually a "Lay Auditor". Usually this is done in person, but since lockdown we have begun experimenting with video-conferencing and telephone interviews [but only if you are comfortable with using these methods]. In view of the numbers of cases being processed, it can take some months from the time you agree to be a witness until you are contacted to arrange the interview. After you have finished the interview – it can take a short time or a longer time depending on the questions and on your association with a party – you will be given the chance to review the testimony. You can add, change, remove or correct anything you wish. Once you have approved the final draft of your testimony, and the auditor has also signed, the interview is complete and the signed record becomes an official document of the Church.
7. You are asked to keep both the questions asked and the answers you gave in strictest confidence.
8. Thank you for agreeing to take part. Your testimony will help the Judges of the Tribunal to decide about the validity of the marriage and your evidence is important. If you have any questions about any of this, please ask the Auditor when they contact you to arrange the interview, or email our office [admin@scitribunal.org.uk](mailto:admin@scitribunal.org.uk).