

**Introductory Procedure
for
Ligamen (Previous Bond) Case**

1. The *Ligamen* is based on the fact that if a person married a person who had been married before and divorced, the first spouse is non-Catholic and still living, and there has been no declaration of invalidity by the Church of that first bond of marriage, that marriage was not valid because a first bond existed. If the marriage in question ends in divorce, the Petitioner may have that bond declared invalid because a previous bond existed. Thus he or she is now free to contract a true marriage bond. Example:
 - John marries Mary;
 - John was previously married to Agnes and they divorced;
 - Agnes was still alive when John married Mary;
 - John and Agnes's marriage was not declared null by the Church;
 - John and Mary get a divorce;
 - Mary wants to marry Edward;
 - Mary proves that John was not free to marry her because he still had a bond recognized by the Church to Agnes;
 - Mary is now free to marry and thus marries Edward.

2. The *Ligamen* is a documentary case. The documents needed are:
 - A marriage certificate of that first marriage (John and Agnes)
 - A decree of divorce of the first marriage (John and Agnes)
 - A marriage certificate of the subsequent marriage (John and Mary)
 - A decree of divorce of that marriage (John and Mary)

3. Witness statements are needed:
 - Those who knew about the marriage and can testify that:
 - The first spouse was still alive after the divorce and through the marriage (Agnes was still alive when John married Mary.).
 - The John that married Agnes and the John that married Mary are one and the same person.

4. Regarding the Form – **Petition on Grounds of Ligamen (Prior Bond)**
 - The name and address of the former spouse are required because:
 - The Tribunal of the Military Archdiocese must get competence (permission) from the (arch)diocese in which the Respondent (former spouse) lives.
 - The Tribunal must contact the former spouse to request statements and participation.

5. When the Petition is accepted and the (arch)diocese of the Respondent grants competence, the Tribunal will send out questionnaires to the Petitioner and Respondent, and finally to the witnesses whom the Petitioner will name in his/her questionnaire.
6. Judgment will be based on the documents, witness statements, and the animadversions of the Defender of the Bond.

Please note:

- ❖ All Documents mentioned are, generally, public documents and available (usually for a fee) from the County in which the marriage and/or divorce took place.
- ❖ It is necessary to have the name and address of a priest or deacon with whom the Petitioner is working the case.

The usual fee for the *Ligamen* is \$200.00

ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES

Telephone: 202-719-3603
Fax: 202-269-9651



Post Office Box 4469
Washington, D.C. 20017-0469

PETITION ON GROUNDS OF LIGAMEN (PRIOR BOND)

I, the undersigned Petitioner, _____, hereby petition
FIRST NAME AND LAST NAME OF PETITIONER (INCLUDING WOMEN'S MAIDEN NAME)

the Tribunal of the Archdiocese for Military Services, USA on the grounds of ligamen (prior bond) to declare
null my marriage contracted with _____, which took place on
FORMER SPOUSE'S [MAIDEN] NAME

_____ with _____ in _____.
DATE TYPE OF OFFICIAL/DENOMINATION CITY AND STATE

The contact information for _____ is:
FORMER SPOUSE

Present Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____

I hereby maintain that _____ was previously married
FORMER SPOUSE

_____ times; the names of his/her former spouse(s) is/are: _____
NUMBER NAMES

_____. Furthermore, I maintain
NAMES (CONTINUED)

that he/she was still alive when _____ contracted marriage
FORMER SPOUSE

with me. In support of my petition, I submit whatever baptismal, marriage, and civil divorce documents are
required by the Tribunal as well as the names and addresses of two knowledgeable witnesses willing to
proffer testimony in these proceedings.

"I reaffirm before God that I have answered truthfully and to the extent of my knowledge."

SIGNATURE OF PETITIONER

Date: _____

Place: _____