

**Office of Canonical Services for the Diocese of San Bernardino**

**Advocacy Training Application 2026**

**Saturdays April 11, 18, 25 AND May 2 & 9 from 9:00am - 10:30am**

**Classes will be held via Zoom, NOT in person. Attendance on all five Saturdays is mandatory.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Brief summary of formal education \_\_\_\_\_

Brief summary of ministry formation & parish experience \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What languages do you speak? \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a Catholic in good standing? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been a party to an annulment proceeding? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_ In what diocese? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to participate in this ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Recommendation:

I recommend \_\_\_\_\_ for the ministry of Advocate in the Diocese of San Bernardino upon completion of this Advocate training program.

Signature of Pastor or Administrator \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(The recommendation of the Pastor or Parish Administrator is required.)**

Please return this application by email to Sandra Press at [spress@sbdioocese.org](mailto:spress@sbdioocese.org) to the Office of Canonical Services by April 1, 2026.

February 19, 2026

Dear Priest and, Deacons:

I pray all is well with you and your parish ministries.

All of us try to reach out to those who are away from the Church or on the peripheries for one reason or another. One group who often feels far away is those who are divorced and remarried outside the Church. In Pope Francis' "The Joy of Love" he makes mention of many parishioners who would like to receive the sacraments but may not be able to do so because they had a previous marriage and are not married in the Church.

To help our parishioners with the annulment process, the Office of Canonical Services will offer a workshop for the training of new advocates for our diocesan tribunal. An advocate is the canonical representative of a Petitioner for a case brought before the tribunal. He/she helps the Petitioner gather the necessary documents, write a petition, suggest possible grounds, and submit the case. A good advocate accompanies the Petitioner through the whole process.

Ordinarily priests and deacons fulfill this assignment. However, the constraints of time, the growing number of cases, and even the recent changes in the annulment process from Pope Francis make it essential to include other capable individuals in this ministry of reconciliation.

Please consider sending someone from your parish to the workshop to help you – and your parishioners – in this important ministry. There is more work in this area than you might think. As you reflect upon who might be a good advocate in your parish, consider that an advocate should be a person able to devote sufficient time to spiritually accompany the Petitioner during the process and to thoroughly consider the matters assigned. They must be willing and able to ask people specific questions about their marriage which are confidential in nature, but which answers are necessary to determine the motivation of the parties for entering marriage. It is of utmost importance that you have confidence in the ability of the person you nominate to work with you and the tribunal. Legal matters are never simple. An ability to appreciate difficult concepts and to work kindly and patiently with people will benefit anyone attempting to fulfill this ministry.

The workshop, which must be completed before an individual may act as an advocate, will be held on five consecutive Saturdays - April 11, 18, 25 and May 2 & 9, from 9:00am - 10:30am. Separate classes in English and Spanish will be offered each day. Attendance on all five Saturdays is mandatory. The workshops will be via Zoom. There is no cost for this workshop.

Completion of the application and your personal recommendation are requirements for acceptance into the training. Applications must be submitted to the Office of Canonical Services by email to Sandra Press at [spress@sbdioocese.org](mailto:spress@sbdioocese.org) no later than April 1, 2026.

Thank you for all the good work in your do in your parish. If we can be of assistance to you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.

  
Rev. David Andel  
Judicial Vicar