Archdiocesan Policy for Speakers & Sacramental Assistance

Throughout their lives, Catholics are invited to grow in knowledge of their faith to deepen their relationship with Christ and his Church. One of the best ways to accomplish this is through talks and presentations made by speakers who are hosted by parishes, schools, Catholic Center departments and other Catholic entities. However, to ensure orthodox teaching and provide safe environments, especially for our children, youth and young adults, the following policy is to be observed throughout the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and is in effect immediately.

Please note that speakers should not be publicized until they have been approved as described below. Speaker approval does not constitute endorsement by the Archdiocese or permission to present at any parish in the Archdiocese – explicit permission must still be given by the Pastor of the Parish.

A  Diocesan Priests, Deacons, and Laity from outside the Archdiocese of Santa Fe

The following requirements apply to regional, national, and international speakers who are invited to offer instruction via virtual platforms or by in-person presentations and are hosted/sponsored by parishes, Archdiocesan offices, and other Catholic entities:

• A Letter of Recommendation from the speaker’s Ordinary (Bishop or Archbishop) or his designate (i.e., Vicar General, Chancellor) is required.
• The letter should not be from a pastor or acquaintance of the speaker and must be addressed to Archbishop John C. Wester, 4000 St. Joseph’s Place NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120.
• The letter must state when, where and by which method the speaker will be giving his/her presentation. It must state that their teaching is orthodox, and they have no allegations of sexual abuse against them.
• All speakers are asked to submit the electronic form through the Archdiocese of Santa Fe website (Please use this JotForm for speaker application: speaker application) The Speaker’s application is available in English and Spanish.
• A copy of a current Virtus certificate (within 5 years) or other proof of Child Protection Training/ Safe Environment is required.
• A copy of the clear criminal background check with a date of participation is required.
• Once received, all items will be reviewed by the Speakers Approval Committee, and a decision will be made to grant approval by Archbishop or his Designate.
• The hosting entity will be notified of Archbishop’s decision and the information entered on our database at the Executive Office of the Pastoral Ministry Division.
• At any time during the process, the hosting entity is welcome to call Denise Frias, Administrative Assistant to the PMD executive office at 505-831-8165

B  Order Priests, Deacons, and Religious Brothers and Sisters from Outside of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe

A letter of recommendation from the Religious Superior is required. If the Religious Superior grants delegation to one of his/her staff (i.e., Vice Provincial) to write on his/her behalf the letter will be accepted; but the letter should not be from a pastor or acquaintance of the speaker. The letter should
be sent directly to Archbishop Wester stating when and where the speaker will be giving his/her presentation and state that their teaching is orthodox, and they have no allegations of sexual abuse against them. Once the letter is received it will be reviewed by Archbishop Wester and he will decide whether the speaker is approved or not. The hosting organization will be notified of the archbishop's decision and the information entered on our database. You are welcome to call Denise Frias, Administrative Assistant to the PMD executive office at 505-831-8165 to verify if the speaker you are planning to invite is on the approved list.

C Deacons and Laity Residing in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe

All deacons and laity who are asked to speak outside of their own parish, even within the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, should be on the Archdiocesan Approved Speakers List maintained by the Pastoral Ministries Division. This involves an application process and letters of recommendation from their Pastor as part of the application. Archbishop or his designate makes the final decision as to whether they will be granted approved speaker status. Laity and deacons need the approval of the Pastor in whose Parish they wish to speak. Please contact Denise Frias, Administrative Assistant to the PMD executive office at 505-831-8165 or dfrias@archdiosf.org to verify if the speaker you are inviting has been approved.

D Speakers Residing in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Addressing Non-Theological Subjects

Speakers may be invited to talk on subjects such as music, health, gangs, drugs, child raising, etc. are required to provide their birth date and social security number to the Victims Assistance Coordinator for a criminal background check. Proof of Virtus compliance is also required to assure a safe environment in compliance with the Dallas Charter. A letter from their Pastor is not needed as they should not be speaking on the Catholic Faith. Please contact the Victims Assistance Coordinator at 505-831-8144 to inquire if the speaker you are planning to invite has been approved.

E Non-Catholic Speakers

There may be times when the best speaker is not of our Catholic faith. These speakers should not be speaking about the Catholic faith and most times would be addressing the topics such as those listed in Section D. The process outlined in Section D for background checks and Virtus compliance is to be followed.

In Catholic High Schools, the Archbishop has directed that anyone speaking about different faith experiences for ecumenical reasons should be a convert to the Catholic faith. This will ensure that the students learn about various faiths and have the Catholic perspective readily at hand.

F Speakers Raising Funds

If anyone (priests, religious, deacons, laity – Catholic or non-Catholic) requests to make a presentation that involves fund-raising of any kind, please ask for their letter of permission from Archbishop Wester. If they are not able to provide one, direct them to contact the Archbishop's Office at 505-831-8120. The Archbishop’s Office receives numerous requests from groups to approach parishes to take up second collections, to sell products, or to share their special projects and encourage donations to be mailed to their organizations. The Archdiocese tries to keep this type of activity to a minimum so that
the laity is not constantly solicited for donations. This also protects parishes and schools so that stewardship can be developed for local needs.

G  **Speakers Promoting Themselves in the Archdiocese**

Sections A-F describe the process for speakers who have been invited to make a presentation to a Parish, Catholic School, or Catholic Center Department. We have had several lay speakers and religious orders that come into the Archdiocese and look for Catholic entities who will host them. These speakers have not been extended an invitation by anyone, but they are seeking speaking opportunities.

In this case the same letters of recommendation, background check and Child Protection/Safe Environment listed above are needed. However, the permission for this type of presenter will only be given to the individual parish or school that has decided to host the speaker, not for the entire Archdiocese. Advertisement for their presentation is limited to the specific parish or school.

H **Priests from outside of Archdiocese of Santa Fe coming to celebrate Sacraments only and not serving as speaker, presenter or giving Missions (Missions are considered presentations.**)

Many times, priests from outside the Archdiocese of Santa Fe are invited by family or friends to celebrate sacraments. This, of course, requires the delegation of the Pastor where the Sacraments are celebrated. The letters of good standing described in Sections A and B are required. When these letters are received, they will be given to the Vicar General. The Vicar General will notify the Pastor when the letter of good standing has been received so that the Pastor can grant delegation at his discretion.

Sometimes priests are “passing through” town and want to celebrate Mass. They can concelebrate by showing the celebret. However, if they are to be the celebrant, they must provide the required letters described in Sections A & B so that the Pastor is notified ahead of time.

I **Deacons from outside of Archdiocese of Santa Fe coming to celebrate Sacraments only or serving as Deacon of the Word or Deacon of the Altar and not serving as speaker, presenter or giving Missions. (Missions are considered presentations.**)

Many times, deacons from outside the Archdiocese of Santa Fe are invited by family or friends to celebrate sacraments. This, of course, requires the delegation of the Pastor where the Sacraments are celebrated. The letters of good standing and other items as described in Sections A and B are required. When these letters are received, they will be given to the Vicar General. The Vicar General’s Office will notify the Pastor that the letter of good standing has been received so that the Pastor can grant delegation at his discretion.

Sometimes deacons are “passing through” town and want to assist at Mass, however, they must fulfill the requirements as described in Sections A & B prior to their arrival so that the Pastor can be notified. Unlike priests, deacons do not carry celebrets, so the items listed are required ahead of time.

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- Reviewed and Approved by Presbyteral Council on July 7, 2015
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