



SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Diocese of St. Petersburg

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FINAL

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Introduction

These guidelines are offered as a synthesis of best practices. Suggestions and comments are welcome at communicate@dosp.org.

Guiding Principles

“Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ. In the area of communications too, we need a Church capable of bringing warmth and of stirring hearts.” (Pope Francis, 48th World Communications Day Message)

The Church is called to engage social media in a manner that is safe, responsible and civil and approach social media as a powerful means of evangelization. We are also called to have a prominent role in providing a Christian perspective to digital literacy.

The Church and Social Media: An Overview

Wikipedia defines social media as “... media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques.”

A longer and perhaps more philosophical definition is offered on weblogsky.com: Social Media is a fundamental transformation in the way(s) people find and use information and content, from hard news to light entertainment. It’s an evolution from broadcast delivery of content – content created by a few and distributed to many – to network delivery, where content can be created by anyone and published to everyone, in a context that is “many to many.”

Stated another way, publication and delivery by professionals to mass audiences has changed – now publication and delivery can be by anyone, professional or not, to niche audiences through networks of many channels. This is because the means of production are broadly accessible and inexpensive. As a result of all this, attention and mindshare are fragmented, there’s emphasis on relationship, new forms of media are conversational, and transaction costs for communication approach zero.

Social media offers both opportunities and challenges to Catholic organizations in three primary areas: Visibility, Community and Accountability.

Visibility:

Social networks offer excellent forums for the Church's visibility and evangelization. Careful consideration should be made to determine the particular strengths of each platform (blogs, social networks, apps, text messaging, etc.) and the needs of a ministry, parish or organization. The strengths should match the needs. For instance, a blog post may not be the most effective way of reminding students of an event. However, a text message to all students and their

parents telling them that the retreat begins at 9:00 a.m. may be very effective. Church Personnel should seek to meet people where they are. If your target audience uses Twitter, learn about this tool and be not afraid.

Community:

Social media can be a powerful tool for strengthening community, although social media interaction should not be viewed as a substitute for face-to-face gatherings. Social media can support communities in a myriad of ways: connecting people with similar interests, sharing information about in-person events, providing ways for people to dialogue, etc. A well-considered use of social media has the ultimate goal of understanding the human longing for meaningful community.

Accountability:

Social media provides a tool for building community. Membership in communities also requires accountability and responsibility. Users of social media expect site administrators to allow dialogue, to provide information and to acknowledge mistakes. The explosion of information available to social media consumers has meant that they often only use information from trusted sites or sites recommended by those whom they trust. While not every demand or inquiry can be met, it is important that creators and site administrators of social media understand how different social media is from mass media and the expectations of its consumers. Many communication experts are describing the adaption of social media as a paradigm shift in how humans communicate, as important a development as that of the printing press and the discovery of electronic communication.

Definitions:

The following definitions are used for the purposes of this document.

Blog: A blog (a contraction of the term "web log") is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other content such as graphics or video.

Church Personnel: A bishop, priest, deacon, religious sister or brother, lay employee or volunteer who provides ministry or service or is employed by an entity associated with the Catholic Church.

Cleric: an ordained bishop, as well as a priest or an ordained deacon who is incardinated in the Diocese of St. Petersburg, as well as a religious priest, or a priest or deacon incardinated in another diocese, who is engaged in a ministry under the control or auspices of the Diocese of St. Petersburg or an entity.

Employee: any person who is employed by an entity of the Diocese of St. Petersburg. An employee may be a cleric or a lay person who may also be a member of a religious institute.

Micro-blog: A term which describes platforms such as Twitter, which is limited to a few characters. These platforms are very useful for distributing quick updates, reminders, or a hook with a link to a blog or website with more information.

Ministry Account: A digital channel, such as social media account, website or blog, created by employees, clerics and volunteers for the sole purpose of conducting diocesan/ entity business. Ministry accounts are your "pastoral outreach" and it is important that Church personnel are clearly identified if they are vowed religious and/or members of the clergy by using the appropriate title (Fr., Deacon, Sr., Br., etc.) and including the religious community (CSC, OSB, OSF, SJ, etc.) in the displayed profile name bears witness to that outreach. Photos, especially profile photo; links; and other items included in social media are to be appropriate for ordained ministers and/or vowed religious.

Social Media Network: A Web 2.0 site that is entirely driven by content of its members. Individuals are allowed flexibility in privacy settings, in posting text, photos, video, links and other information, and in level of interaction with other members. Examples include Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Twitter. YouTube and Flickr are often also included in lists of social networking sites, although sometimes YouTube and Flickr are designated as multimedia sharing sites, while Twitter is currently more often designated as a micro-blogging application.

Other Electronic Communication: Electronic communication technologies that are not defined as social media/website (e.g., cell phone, email, texting, etc.)

Personal Account: An Internet tool, such as social media, website or blog created by employees, clerics, and volunteers primarily to share personal communication with friends and family.

Video Conferencing: This refers to technology that enables people to communicate by real-time audio and video from disparate geographic locations. It includes systems that project an image to many locations (one-way video), or those that enable participants at different locations to interact with each other (multipoint conferencing). In addition to the transmission of live camera-generated images, video conferencing includes tools that make it possible to communicate a wide variety of information formats from many sources, such as documents and images.

Volunteer: an adult who works without financial or material gain on behalf of the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities who is not an employee or a cleric (for example, an intern, catechist, scout leader, coach, student teacher and others in similar capacities).

Acknowledgement: The Diocese of St. Petersburg gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Diocese of Orlando and the Diocese of Dallas in granting the use of its social networking policies and guidelines as a resource in the development of this policy.

Catholic Identity

The Diocese of St. Petersburg and its entities recognize that in today's environment, with the increasing prevalence of the Internet, Wi-Fi and mobile devices, church personnel will use the Internet to conduct ministry work and to communicate with associates and friends. The Internet provides various ways for individuals to interact and has changed the way we communicate and share information.

The Diocese of St. Petersburg views the Internet as an important educational and evangelizing tool to promote school and ministerial programs. The Diocese encourages administrators, pastors and principals to support Internet use and to give employees, clerics and volunteers the necessary training and tools to interact safely and responsibly online. The same responsibilities that you have to create a safe environment in your physical space extend to your social media sites including:

- Everything said in social media should be thought of as being said in public.
- Once published, Internet and Web content cannot be taken back. You may remove it, but it is already out there and has been seen and electronically recorded.
- Ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of all information prior to its publication. If you have any doubts about the suitability of an item, seek a second opinion, but it is probably best to leave it out.

Maintaining a Catholic identity is critical to social media interactions. Therefore, information posted on any form of technology in the name of the Church must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Content or information should be appropriate and affirm the teachings of the Catholic Church and its Magisterium.
- The content must be professional, respectful and courteous
- Questions related to Catholic Church teaching or policies should be taken offline for a more personal and meaningful dialogue.
- A supervisor must monitor content on a regular basis.
- There shall be no offensive or disruptive messages, initiated either by the administrator or users.
- Political activity is prohibited – no form of social communications should ever be used to engage in political activity; that is, expressing opinions, support, endorsements or other commentary for candidates seeking political office. Such conduct is strictly prohibited.
- Lobbying is limited. The Church's support regarding political issues and legislation is limited, and must only be done upon approval of the administrator. Any questions should be made to the director of communications for the Diocese.

Among those which are considered offensive include, but are not limited to, messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comment which offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, belief system, national origin or disability.

Furthermore, social communications may not be used by Church Personnel for: 1) conducting or promoting any outside or personal business, 2) defaming the character of any individual or institution, 3) causing embarrassment to the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities or 4) divulging any personal information about children that would jeopardize their safety or well-being in any way.

Communications Integration

Do not pressure or require the use of social media. All announcements or communications made through social media should be available in alternate forms that do not require social media (e.g. website, email subscription, postal mailing)

- Email distribution through a service such as Constant Contact or FlockNote is an ideal method to communicate information to a large number of people as compliance with laws regarding bulk email is handled by the service.

Privacy and Legal Concerns

Respect the privacy of individuals while using social media platforms.

- Written permission in the form of a media release must be obtained before any photos or videos of children may be used. In the case of adults, this permission is implied by the submission of media via email or posting online or by participation in large public events, such as festivals. If church personnel are taking photos, it is suggested that an announcement is made regarding the usage of the photo and adults should be allowed to opt out.
- During large events, signage may be placed around the venue stating:
By entering these premises and attending this event you understand that your likeness and/or voice may be photographed, recorded, filmed or videotaped. Upon entry you consent to the unqualified right to use such pictures and/or recordings and grant to the Diocese of St. Petersburg the perpetual right to use your likeness, image, photograph without compensation for broadcast or exhibition in any medium and to put the finished pictures/recordings to any legitimate use without any limitation and releases the Diocese from any such use and waives any claims that may arise as a result of such use.

Maintain appropriate records of all communications through social media.

- History kept by the social media service such as Facebook will be sufficient.

- Before deleting any entries from social media, a copy should be preserved and the date and time of removal noted within the record by the social media administrator. (e.g. If you use Facebook Inbox to communicate in the course of your employment or ministry, you may not delete any conversations without first creating a record of that conversation).

Monitor your ministry's online presence. Search Google to know if false information is being disseminated.

Consider paid services which do not insert ads or other content into your social media websites to maintain better control over the content of your page.

Social media is not suitable as a means of "official communication" for correspondence such as permission slips or communications with parents of young people. As examples: permission slips may be distributed electronically, but they must still be collected in physical copy. Likewise, a Facebook message is not appropriate as a means of communicating a concern about a child to his or her parent.

Honor copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws. Copying any photographs from a website is prohibited, unless permission of the administrator for that website is obtained.

Confidential and Proprietary Information:

Church personnel are prohibited from disclosing via the Internet information that is understood to be held in confidence by the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities. Employees, clerics and volunteers are prohibited from disclosing via the Internet any information that is proprietary to the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities, except by explicit written permission of the appropriate authority.

Trademarks and Logos:

Church personnel may use diocesan or entity trademarks or logos on ministry websites only in ways that clearly promote or call positive attention to diocesan events, websites or organizations associated with the trademark or logo. Church personnel may not use diocesan or entity trademarks or logos on their personal accounts in any way that could reasonably suggest diocesan or entity sponsorship or agreement with any views expressed.

Inappropriate Language and Images:

The Diocese of St. Petersburg and its entities will not tolerate church personnel who post obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory, defamatory or otherwise potentially scandalous comments, links and/or images which reflect discredit or cause embarrassment to the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities, employees, vendors, partners, agencies, schools and others. Any activity via social media or other electronic communication that contains any of the above and/or reflects negatively on the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities, employees, vendors, partners, agencies, schools, or others is prohibited.

Separate Account for Ministry:

Social media accounts must be formed independently of a person's personal social media account and personal email address. The email address used for the establishment of the account must correspond with an entity email domain. A generic email, such as socialmedia@dosp.org, should be used for this purpose. An exception may be made through the Diocesan Office of Communications for the use of a personal account, which will be limited to individuals deemed to be public figures as determined by the Diocese.

Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults

Minors and Social Media:

Any media can pose dangers to individuals, particularly in a social setting. The technology which allows young people to foster friendships can also lead to cyberbullying and make them vulnerable to predators. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our vulnerable populations. It is suggested that each Diocesan entity educate adults, youth, parents and students about best practices when using social media. This education should remind parents and caregivers to be aware of the online activities of their children and vulnerable adults and to select the highest privacy settings possible.

When posting images of a minor, a signed and written media consent from a parent/ guardian is required and should be included in the basic permission slip for the event or participation in parish and school activities.

- Whenever possible, only first names should be used to identify minor individuals in photos or videos.
- Encourage parents of young people to become active in the social media lives of their children. This will not only inform them of the activities of your ministry but will help improve the on-line safety of their children.

Safe Environment Policies:

Church personnel will comply with all aspects of the [Diocese of St. Petersburg's Safe Environment policies and procedures](#).

Recording/Photography by Family/Friends:

A parish/school/entity of the Diocese cannot be held responsible for recorded materials (e.g. audio, still and/or video) transmitted or placed without its knowledge or permission through electronic or other means or in external media of any type. Parents, guardians, family members and friends who photograph or otherwise record school/parish/entity events should respect the privacy of others and should not identify another child by more than a first name in any transmission (e.g. mail, email or internet website), unless authorized by the parent or guardian of that child.

- In a public space or at a large, open event such as festival, there is a limited expectation of privacy.

Password-Protected Sites or Member Only Sites:

Both ministry accounts and personal accounts may involve the use of a username/password, invitation or other such means to access all or portions of the site, such as a Facebook Group. In the event that church personnel gives a minor access to a website that is not otherwise openly accessible to the public, that same access must also be provided to the child's parent/guardian, if the parent/guardian so desires.

When Communicating with Minors Using Social Media or Other Electronic Communication:

- The primary purpose of such communication shall be for providing information related to a ministry or event and not for socialization or other personal interaction.
- Parents must be notified of the methods of communication which are used in each particular ministry and must be granted access in such communications.

Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries

When using a ministry account, adults must not initiate or accept “friend” requests with minors. Adults must be mindful not to violate boundaries between ministers and youth. There are risks with social communications, especially with blurring boundaries of professional and personal relationships. Appropriate boundaries are essential to all who serve in a ministerial role and are to be observed in regard to social media as well. Therefore, the following guidelines must be followed:

- The role of ‘minister’ is distinct from ‘counselor’, ‘friend’ and ‘parent’. One ministering with young people should never take on the role of ‘surrogate parent’. For this reason, ministers should not ‘troll’ social media with the intent of seeking personal details of a young person’s life. While online statements are not private, it is the parents’ role to monitor their child’s behavior, and a minister is not to usurp this role. Intentionally monitoring where youth have shared intimate thoughts violates privacy in the same way that it would to read a journal.
- Any information encountered within social media that creates a pastoral concern in regard to a minor should be immediately reported to appropriate authorities. Parents are to be informed immediately and legal authorities should be contacted as necessary.
- Healthy boundaries between youth and adults are essential. To be a ‘friend’ to a youth in a ministerial role is to be ‘friendly’ but is not to establish a peer relationship. A minister serves as a mentor and guide, walking with a young person on their journey in faith.

Transparency

It is essential to the nature of ministry that parents/guardians are fully aware of all media being used to keep in contact with their young person for ministerial purposes. Social media networks and other tools that do not allow transparency because posts are instantly deleted, such as Snapchat, are prohibited.

The intent of any communication policy is to give witness to the Good News in such a way that we create a safe environment for all vulnerable populations. This environment is open, transparent and involves the parents/guardians of the young people as partners. It is important that ministry is not used to establish private one-on-one relationships with youth and our methods of communication must reflect this.

Unusual circumstances of a pastoral nature should be documented and shared with the pastor or one's supervisor as soon as feasible. The documentation of any such circumstance should involve a copy of any applicable communication from all types of communication medium.

When communicating to a minor through any correspondence such as regular mail, email, text or other technological opportunities for correspondence, such as educational programs, etc., the correspondence must be accompanied with a corresponding copy to the parent.

All correspondence must be professional in nature and appropriate for the ministry from which it was sent

As a general rule, neither personal nor ministry accounts should be used to interact with minors individually, such as through instant message. In those unusual cases where one-on-one communication is needed, Church personnel should maintain copies of all such messages.

Acceptable hours for communication with minors via other electronic communications shall be between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Communication outside of the acceptable hours may be used only in emergency situations or to communicate time sensitive information related to the ministry or ministry related event.

On line "chatting" with minors is not permitted unless it is part of the Student Information System Platform.

Profile names should clearly identify the individual, no anonymity or pseudonyms are permitted.

For trips off of church property it is appropriate that minors be given the cell phone numbers of the adult leaders to have in case of emergency, e.g. on an excursion to a theme park. It is also appropriate that, after parents/guardians have been informed, youth cell phone numbers are collected for use that day to ensure safety, following the guidelines of transparency.

Text messaging to minors should follow the guidelines applicable to other forms of communication, including integrating the principles of transparency. Ministry leaders and ministry team members should avoid private text communication with any minors. Communicating with minors regarding a ministry event should include copying a text message to the parent/guardian or forwarding the text message to the parent/guardian of the youth through email. Communicating with a group of youth through text messaging may be done as long as parents/guardians are included in the text recipients or are sent an email with the content of the text message, e.g. sending out a reflection or scripture of the day to all youth or providing information on an upcoming event.

It is suggested that you subscribe to a text messaging service such as Flocknote or Remind which hides the personal cell phone numbers of the adult ministers.

Procedures

Personal Account:

In the event an employee or cleric identifies himself/herself as, or is manifestly understood to be, an employee or cleric of the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities on a personal blog (or other account such as social media or website with a similar purpose), to help reduce the potential for confusion, the employee is required to put the following notice in a reasonably prominent place on the account:

“The views expressed on this account are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Diocese of St. Petersburg (or other employer if an entity).”

Intellectual Property:

All contacts, content, and media developed by Church Personnel and engaged in social media ministry accounts are the intellectual property of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

Approval:

Church personnel must obtain approval from a pastor, principal, or appropriate supervisor prior to the creation of any and all social communication accounts to be used as part of your ministry. Instructions and support may be needed to help these supervisors properly access social communications. There must be at least two adults with administrative rights for each ministry account and one must be an employee of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

Facebook Groups:

The use of a group allows for communication with and association with people without “friending” them. This allows for the social media relationship to better reflect the ministerial relationship without diminishing the power of Facebook as a communication tool. Groups are recommended for particular ministries or organizations within a parish, school or diocesan community.

- All groups must have moderated membership, i.e. an administrator must approve the request of an individual to join the group and gain access to the content of the group’s social media.
- Care should be taken in deciding whether to permit non-administrators to write or post content on the wall, and administrators must monitor any posted content for appropriateness and remove content as necessary.

Pages:

Public persons, such as a school administrator or radio talent, may decide that a “fan page” is a more appropriate presence for them on Facebook. Fan pages allow for the public presence of an individual to be separated from the personal profile and not open the profile to the entire community. The personal profile of an individual with a public figure page must be hidden from search.

Use of Inbox or Chat in Place of Email:

Many people use Facebook Messenger instead of email as a regular means of electronic communication. Your diocesan or entity provided mail account (e.g. @dosp.org) is not to be replaced by Messenger for regular communication.

Events:

Events are to be hosted by your group or your page, not by an individual member of the group or administrator of the page.

Managing Comments:

For blogs, YouTube Channels, and other social media platforms care and consideration should be taken in determining whether user-generated content will be permitted. As the two-way dialogue is intrinsic to the nature of social media, it cannot be completely excluded. Therefore:

- Comments, wall posts, and similar tools must be moderated if published. If comments are not to be published, they should nonetheless be permitted, reviewed, and answered as appropriate through return e-mail or in general in future posts.
- When possible, select the option to moderate comments before they are posted.
- There should be a comment policy on the social media site that explains what is allowed in terms of commenting. An administrator should block anyone who violates the comment policy or displays any inappropriate conduct. If there is an option to have comments or notification or alerts sent to your email, choose this so you will be aware of comments in a timely manner.
- Comment monitoring means that you check your social media site on a regular basis and if someone has left a comment, you formulate a response and reply.
- If there is a legitimate and critical concern that is raised via a person's comment, the administrator should provide a phone number and contact name for the individual to address their concerns offline.
- If there is an inappropriate comment, you may remove it and depending the severity of the offense, you may block the user (per your comment policy).
- You can also filter certain keywords and block profanity on Facebook. Instructions can be found [here](#).

Diocese of St. Petersburg Comment Policy:

The purpose of any a social media page is to provide an interactive forum where readers can gather and discuss information about the wide range of issues addressed by the work and mission of the Catholic Church, specifically through the Diocese of St. Petersburg. Followers are encouraged to post questions, comments and concerns, but should remember this is a moderated online discussion hosted by the Diocese of St. Petersburg. The Diocese of St.

Petersburg appreciates healthy, constructive debate and discussion; that means we ask that comments be kept civil in tone and reflect the charity and respect that marks Christian discourse. Comments that may be deleted include those that contain:

- Personal attacks/inflammatory remarks against a person or group
- Content/comments off topic
- Spam
- Links to sites that contain offensive material or attack the Church's hierarchy and its mission
- Promotion of services, products, political organizations/agendas
- Information that is factually incorrect
- Vulgar Language

The Diocese of St. Petersburg reserves the right to remove posters who violate this policy. All sites must state that "Comments left by others on this page do not necessarily reflect the views of the Diocese of St. Petersburg."

Related Content

- Restrict related content that is displayed to other content which you have published when possible.
- When restriction is impossible (e.g. YouTube), disable related content display.

Social Media Associations:

Some public social media sites allow you to follow others as a form of social engagement. Ministry accounts should exercise care in choosing who to follow as this association is an implied endorsement. They should not link to other online sites that support or oppose candidates or political parties. Consult with the diocesan attorney or the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops before posting any political content or links to political content on web or social media sites. It is acceptable to follow other accounts that are not in conflict with the teaching and the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. Acceptable links fall into these three main areas:

- Official Church sites, such as the Vatican, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, state conferences, archdioceses and dioceses;
- Parts of the Diocese such as parishes, schools and ministries operated by the Diocese or approved resources associates with those ministries; and
- Those under the oversight of a bishop or religious congregation or listed in the *Official Catholic Directory*. Church leaders should use prudence in evaluating links to other commercial opportunities on its site. It is the entity's responsibility to evaluate its hosts' advertisers and sponsors on a regular basis

Ministry websites are requested to follow diocesan social media accounts such as:

Facebook:

- Bishop Gregory Parkes: <https://www.facebook.com/bishopparkes/>
- Diocese of St. Petersburg: <https://www.facebook.com/DioStPete/>
- Evangelization and Lifelong Faith Formation: <https://www.facebook.com/DOSPEvangelization/>
- Good Samaritan Project: <https://www.facebook.com/DOSPgoodsamaritan/>
- Life, Justice & Advocacy Ministry: <https://www.facebook.com/DOSPLife/>
- Ministerio Hispano: <https://www.facebook.com/hispanicministrydosp/>
- Pastoral Juvenil: <https://www.facebook.com/DOSPpastoraljuvenil/>
- Young Adult Ministry: <https://www.facebook.com/dospyoungadult/>
- Youth Ministry: <https://www.facebook.com/dospyouth/>

Twitter:

- Bishop Gregory Parkes: <https://twitter.com/BishopParkes>
- Diocese of St. Petersburg: <https://twitter.com/DioStPete>
- Good Samaritan Project: <https://twitter.com/goodsamproject>
- Lay Pastoral Ministry Institute (LPMI): <https://twitter.com/LPMIDOSP>
- Life Ministry: <https://twitter.com/DOSPLife>
- Vocations: <https://twitter.com/DOSPVocations>
- Young Adult: <https://twitter.com/DOSPYoungAdult>
- Youth Ministry: <https://twitter.com/DOSPYouth>

Instagram:

- Bishop Gregory Parkes: <https://www.instagram.com/bishopparkes/>
- Diocese of St. Petersburg: <https://www.instagram.com/diostpete/>
- Good Samaritan Project: <https://www.instagram.com/goodsamproject/>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/diostpete/sets/>

Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/dioceseofstpete/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/dioceseofstpete>

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/dosp/videos>

Enforcement:

The Diocese of St. Petersburg, its entities and their respective administrators intend to enforce the policy set forth here and expect church personnel to comply. Supervisors shall be responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy among those over whom they have charge. Furthermore, the creation of a public social media presence and/or the disclaiming of a

personal opinion or statement does not in any way limit or restrict the ability of the employing entity to discipline or terminate an employee or volunteer based on the content of personal social media. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of the Social Media Policy may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination, for an employee or cleric, or removal from position, if a volunteer. The Diocese of St. Petersburg and its entities reserve the right to make changes to this policy at any time and at its sole discretion and interpret and administer the policy in light of changing circumstances and events.