COURAGEOUSLY Living the Gospel

INTRODUCTION

WHY A SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY?

"The social networks are one way to experience ... the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ."

Pope Francis, June 1 2014World Day of Communications



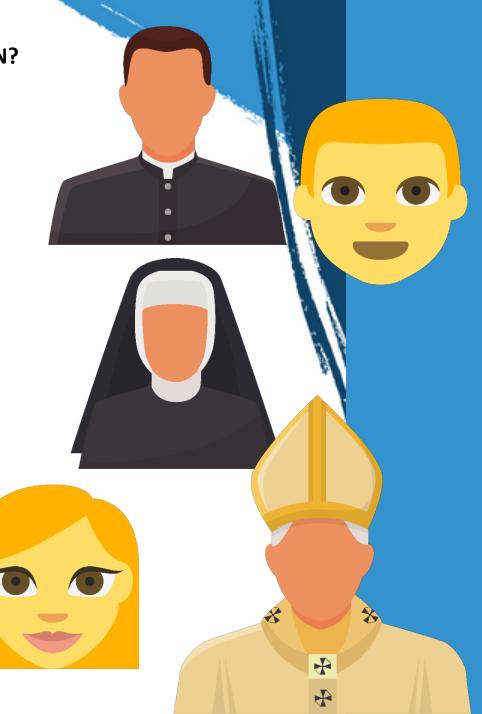




WHO DOES THIS POLICY CONCERN?

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.





DEFINITIONS

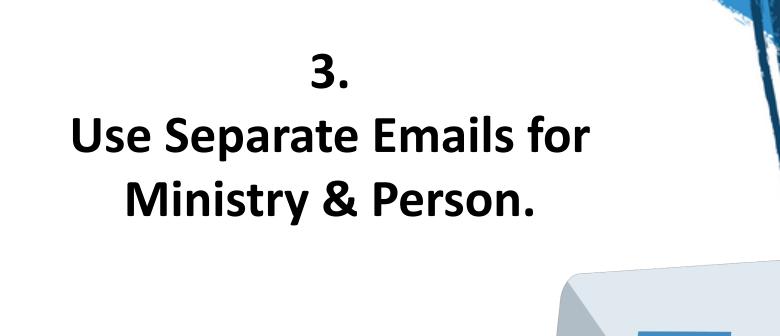
MINISTRY ACCOUNT

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.

DEFINITIONS

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

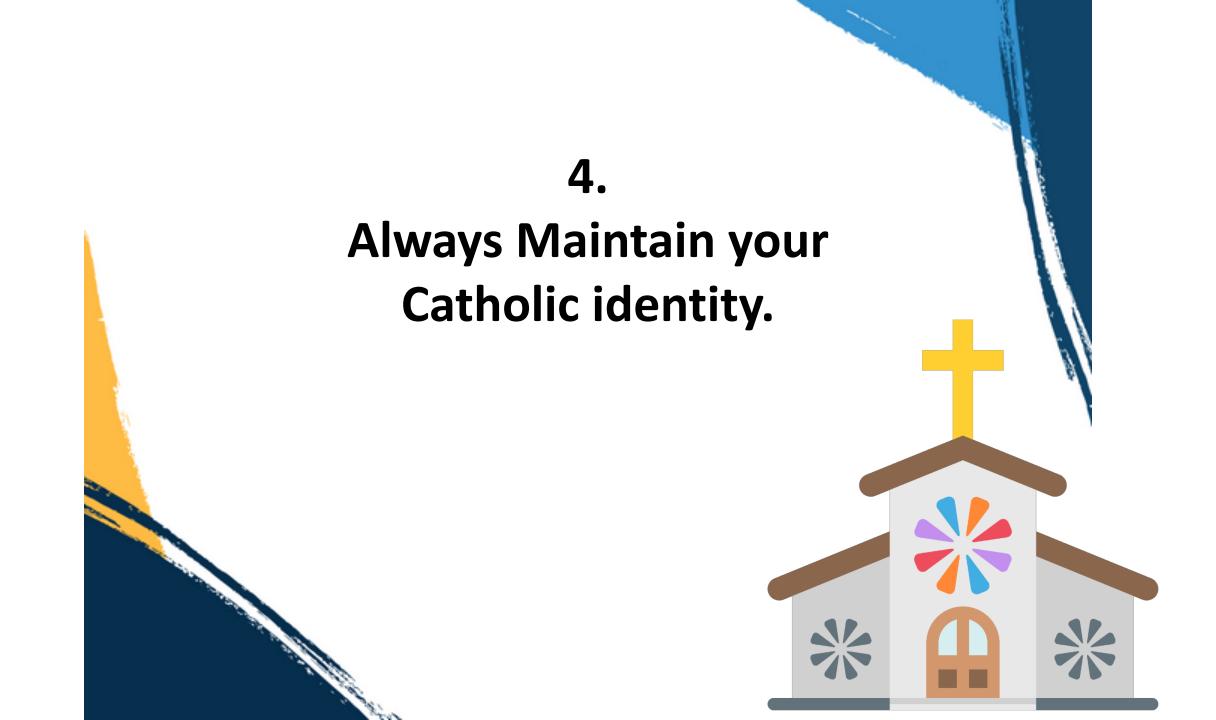
An Internet tool, such as social media, website or blog created by employees, clerics, and volunteers primarily to share personal communication with friends and family.

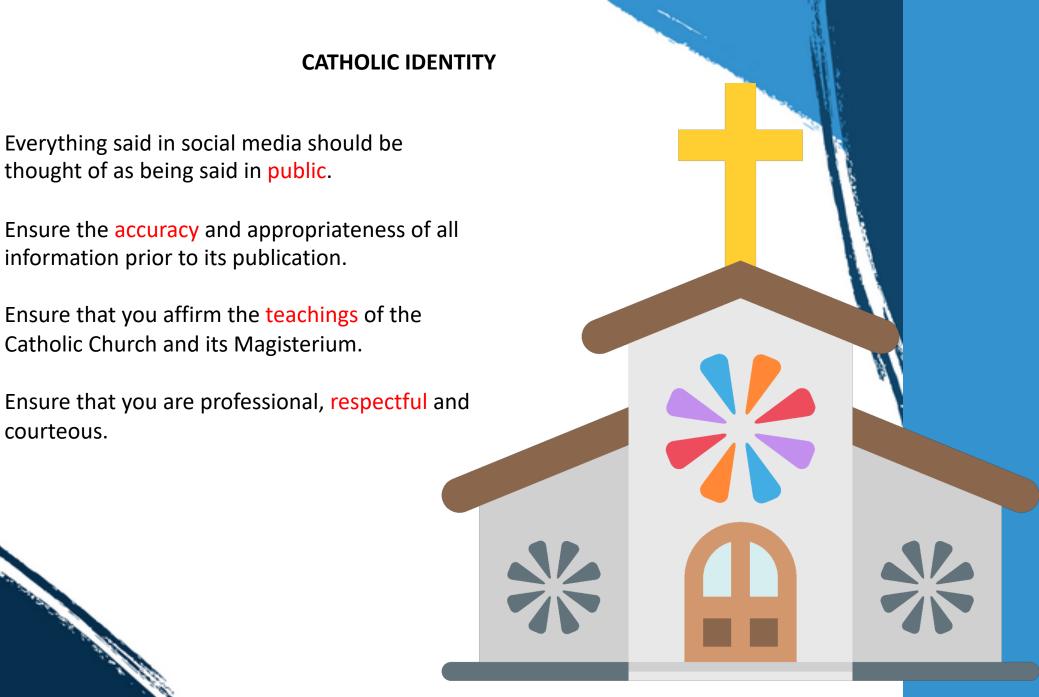


SEPARATE ACCOUNTS FOR MINISTRY:

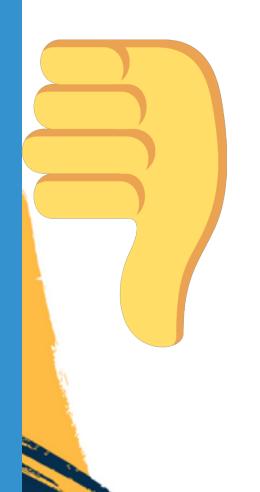
Social media accounts should be formed independently of a person's personal social media account and personal email address. The email address used for the establishment of the account must correspond with an entity email domain. A generic email, such as socialmedia@dosp.org, should be used for this purpose.







courteous.



CATHOLIC IDENTITY

No:

Offensive or disruptive messages, initiated either by the administrator or users.

Example of Offensive:

Messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, genderspecific comments, or any other comment which offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, belief system, national origin or disability.

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.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

When to Block or Ban

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.

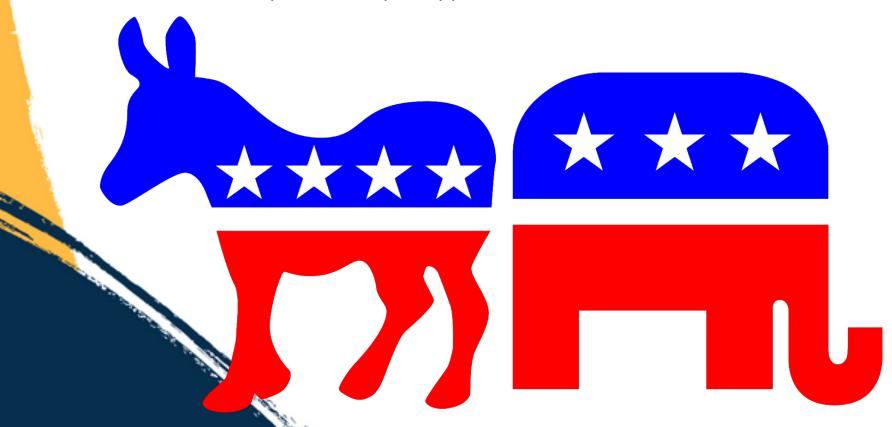




No:

Political activity; that is, expressing opinions, support, endorsements or other commentary for candidates seeking political office

Lobbying is limited. The Church's support regarding political issues and legislation is limited, and must only be done upon approval of the administrator



CATHOLIC IDENTITY

No:

Conducting or promoting any outside or personal business.

Defaming the character of any individual or institution.

Causing embarrassment to the Diocese of St. Petersburg or its entities.

Divulging any personal information about children that would jeopardize their safety or well-being in any way.



PRIVACY AND LEGAL CONCERNS

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.



PRIVACY AND LEGAL CONCERNS

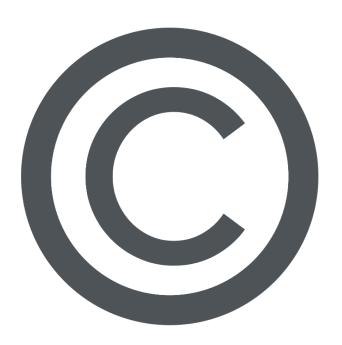
Save appropriate records of all communications through social media.



PRIVACY AND LEGAL CONCERNS

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.





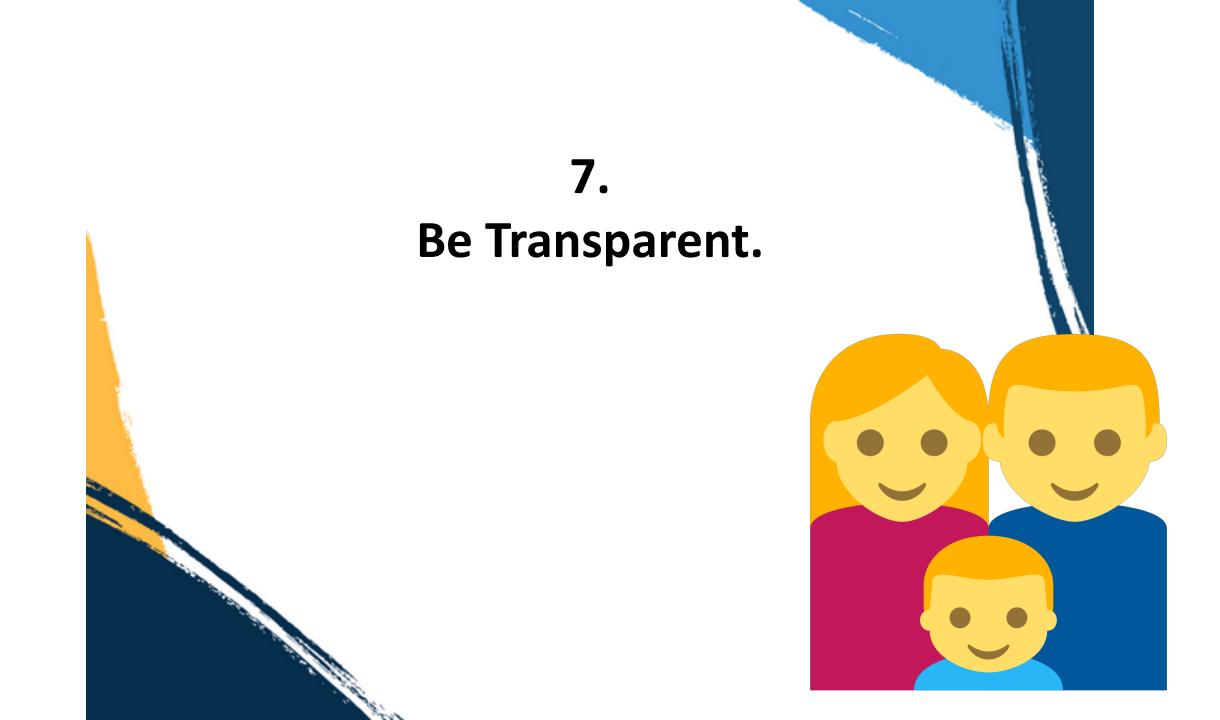
PROTECTING MINORS AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our vulnerable populations. Whenever possible, only first names should be used to identify minor individuals in photos or videos. Encourage parents of young people to become active in the social media lives of their children. This will not only inform them of the activities of your ministry but will help improve the on-line safety of their children. Church personnel will comply with all aspects of the Diocese of St. Petersburg's Safe Environment policies and procedures.

PROTECTING MINORS AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Caution: Maintain appropriate boundaries

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.

Parents must be notified of the methods of communication which are used in each particular ministry and must be granted access in such communications.

When communicating to a minor through any correspondence such as regular mail, email, text, etc. the correspondence must be accompanied with a corresponding copy to the parent.

Transparency

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.

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

A text messaging service such as Flocknote or Remind hides the personal cell phone numbers of the adult ministers.





APPROVAL PROCESS

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.



9. Monitor Comments

MONITORING COMMENTS

Comments must be moderated.

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.



MONITORING COMMENTS

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.





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

10. Be Careful Who You Follow.

SOCIAL MEDIA ASSOCIATIONS

Ministry accounts should exercise care in choosing who to follow as this association is an implied endorsement.



Questions?

communicate@dosp.org

727-344-1611

Thank you ©

