

Archdiocesan Policy for Speakers & Sacramental Assistance

We want our Catholic faith to grow and we want to reach out to the inactive and unchurched to join us. One of the best ways to accomplish these goals is through speakers that are hosted at parishes, schools and through Catholic Center departments. However, to accomplish this and ensure orthodox teaching and provide safe environments for our children and young adults the following policy is effective 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 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
- 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.
- Once received, the letter will be reviewed, and a decision will be made to grant approval.
- The hosting entity will be notified of the Archbishop's decision and the information entered on our database at the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.
- 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
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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 going to invite is on the approved list or not.

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 Speakers Bureau List maintained by the Pastoral Ministries Division. This involves an application process and letters of recommendation from their Pastor as part of the application. The Archbishop makes the final decision as to whether they will be placed on the Archdiocesan Speakers Bureau List. This list will be referred to by the Archbishop if any of the approved speakers are asked to speak outside of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Laity and deacons need the approval of the Pastor in whose Parish they wish to speak. Please contact call Denise Frias, Administrative Assistant to the PMD executive office at 505-831-8165 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 who may be invited to talk on subjects such as music, health, gangs, drugs, child raising, etc. would need to provide their birth date and social security number to the Victims Assistance Coordinator to do a background check. This is to assure the safe environment for the Dallas Charter. A letter from their Pastor is not needed as they should not be speaking to 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 listed in Section D. The process outlined in Section D for background checks is to be followed.

In the 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 approaches you (priests, religious, deacons, laity – Catholic or non-Catholic) please ask them 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 the needs of the parishes and schools.

G Speakers Promoting Themselves in Archdiocese

Sections A-F describe the process for speakers which a Parish, Catholic School, or Catholic Center Department has sought out and invited to present. We have had several lay speakers and religious orders that come into the Archdiocese and then start to seek out people 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 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'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 priests are "passing through" town and want to celebrate Mass. They can concelebrate by showing the celebrant. 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

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 have provided the required letters described in Sections A & B ahead of time so that the Pastor can be notified. Unlike priests, deacons do not carry celebretts, so the letters are required ahead of time.

- Revised on June 15, 2015
- Reviewed and Approved by Presbyteral Council on July 7, 2015
- Updated January 8, 2021