Chancery Social Media
Principles, Policies, and Guidelines

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Introduction

This document contains social media guidelines for Chancery employees, including the use of personal social media channels as well as Archdiocesan social media channels. All Chancery employees must understand the principles underlying these guidelines and apply them with thoughtful judgment and careful consideration to each particular situation, recognizing the nuances involved in using social media.

For the purpose of these guidelines, "social media" includes social networking tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs and podcasts. However, these guidelines should also be applied to all future social media tools.

"… media can help us to feel closer to one another,
creating a sense of unity of the human family which
can in turn inspire solidarity and serious efforts to
ensure a more dignified life for all…
The internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities
for encounter and solidarity.
This is something truly good, a gift from God."

– Pope Francis, 2014

General Policies

All content must be consistent with authentic Church teaching. All posts and comments should demonstrate Christian charity and respect for others. They should be on topic and presume the good will of other posters. Discussion should take place primarily from a faith perspective.

Anyone who doesn't abide by this Code of Conduct or other social media policies and guidelines may lose privileges and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

As is true for all internet use, Information Technology will monitor Chancery employee social media use and report any misuse to the appropriate supervisor.

Following are policies that everyone using social media on behalf of the church should understand:

- Policies of the Safe Environment Program:
  - *Policy for the Prevention of & Response to Sexual Abuse, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment* and *Code of Professional Conduct for Church Personnel.*

- *Many Gifts, One Spirit*:
  - Electronic Communications
  - Archives and Records Management policies

- Computing Services and Security Policy

- Internet Use and Security Policy

- Children's Online Private Protection Act, which is federal legislation that oversees how Web sites interact with children under age 13. A summary and links are available at http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/privacyinitiatives/childrens.html.

Starting and Stopping a Social Media Channel

If your department would like to get involved in social media, please reach out to the Communications team. Social media can be an effective channel for communications. However, if pursued without a strong strategy, ample resources to support it or a lack of integration with other archdiocesan channels, the efforts may not only fall flat, they may dilute the overall brand for the archdiocese.

Strategically, the archdiocese should not have a multitude of social media channels. Instead, the archdiocese should drive people's attention to key channels where people can see the variety of activities across the archdiocese. This is the best way for us to grow the audience the reach and ultimately achieve our goal of helping people grow closer to Christ.

Key sub-channels may exist if there is a distinct audience who is not served by the main archdiocese channels. For example, the @MinisterioHispano does an excellent job of reaching out to Catholics who speak Spanish and who may not be served by the main @ArchdioceseofSeattle channel.

All social media sites must be registered with Archives and Record Management
After receiving approval from the Communications team, departments will need to register channels with Archives and Record Management (archives@seattlearch.org). Here is a sample of the information needed for the registration:

- Office/program name
- Platform (YouTube, Facebook, etc.)
- Strategic goal of the account? (event marketing, program marketing, general information/announcements, community engagement, etc.)
- Commenting allowed?
- Commenting monitored? By whom? How often?
- Staff positions responsible for posts and commenting?
- What is your plan for moving documents, videos, photos, audio, etc. to Chancery owned data stores (network server, cloud storage, or Archives) once posted?
  - Which office position will be responsible for this?
  - How often will these transfers take place? Annually? Each time content is posted?

Closing out an account

If you are no longer using page or if a page has been abandoned, we must take steps to ensure that page is properly shut down. Please connect with the Communications team and Archives and Records Management to discuss this, as there are several steps involved with closing out an account logistically and in regards to our record retention requirements.

Additionally, you will be asked to provide an update for the official social media registry with the date it was suspended. Depending on which channel it is, or if it is a microsite, you may be required to continue paying for the domain name to ensure future "bad actors" do not take over that property.

Best Practices for Social Media for Chancery Departments

The following are guidelines for the establishment of a Chancery Department supported Social Media presence:

All Chancery channels must include a clearly visible Code of Conduct for visitors:

> "All posts and comments should be marked by Christian charity and respect. They should be on topic and presume positive intent from others. Discussion should take place primarily from a faith perspective. No advertising please."

Administering social media channels:

- Chancery employees who will be administering or posting on archdiocese channels must complete a designated training program and sign the Social Media Use Agreement form.

- There must be at least two site administrators (preferably more) for each site, to allow rapid response and continuous monitoring of the site.

- Accounts and authentication credentials (i.e., User ID's, log-on's and passwords) must be afforded the same importance as any other sensitive information.

- Passwords and names of sites should be in a central location and at least two employees, of which one must be a supervisor, should have access to this information.

- Archive your channels. Archives is currently reviewing tools that will enable us to do this better.

- Report any 'unofficial' websites that carry the Archdiocesan coat of arms, or represent themselves as an officially sanctioned site of the Archdiocese, to the Office of Communications and IT.

- Report any misinformation on any site such as Wikipedia, Masstimes.org, etc. to the Office of Communications.

- Chancery personnel should report defamatory, libelous or slanderous comments to Office of Communications rather than respond themselves.

Managing social media channels:

- Write in first person. Do not claim to represent the official position of the organization or the teachings of the Church unless authorized to do so.

- Identify yourself. Do not use pseudonyms or the name of the parish, program, etc. as your identity, unless authorized to do so.

- Abide by copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws. (This means you can't just copy and paste a photo from another website!)

- Do not divulge confidential information of others.

- Make sure you test and vet any links.

- Post images in accordance with our photo policy.

- Do not "tag" any pictures of minors with any identifiers. All "geo-tagging" must be disabled.

- Any Chancery employee who becomes aware of information that a minor or vulnerable adult has been abused or is under threat of harm, through public domain of a site, must report this information to local law enforcement or DSHS within 48 hours.

- Any Chancery personnel with a personal social networking presence, or otherwise involved in social media, must not advertise that page to or "friend" any minor or vulnerable adult with whom they minister to/work with in a pastoral setting.

Photo Guidance

- Overall, use your best judgement. There is no hard and fast rule that will work for every situation.

- In general, we are OK to feature large group shots where it is hard to discern individual people. Photos at a mass or event typically fall into this category.

- We will use a "Shoot now and ask permission later" approach since we receive many photos from people outside our teams. While we are legally OK to post most of our photos, we *should* ask for permission before posting if there are identifiable people in the photos. This means we need to track down the photographer so we can follow-up and ask for permission if we will be featuring a photo.

- If we are featuring smaller groups of people in a photo we should either:
    - Alert them ahead of time that photos/videos will be taken
    - Ask permission via email once we've selected photos
    - Be mindful if we may be featuring people in hiding. (This is especially true for our immigrant ministry work.)

- If we are going to use a photo for promotional or "Commercial use" then we need a release form. This would apply to any fundraising campaigns like the ACA.

- If people complain about a photo – EVEN if they gave us permission – we will take it down.

- We should not use any photos that feature questionable content. For example, we should avoid photos of a naked baby during a Baptism. Or photos of priests swimming with kids at camp. While these may be very innocent photos, they could be misconstrued by a viewer. When in doubt, just choose another photo.

Photo Permission Layers

1. The first layer concerns **kids under 18**. Overall, we need permission to include them in photos – but this does not necessarily require a signed form. This could be done through event registration as well as signage that notifies people photos and videos will be taken:

   > *You may be photographed or video recorded*
   > *during this event. The images may be used*
   > *without compensation by the church for*
   > *promotional purposes in digital or print media.*

   Catholic Schools and CYO has all parents sign waivers at the beginning of the year. If we are featuring children in a photo we should confirm with the Office of Catholic schools and/or CYO that the featured child has a signed waiver.

2. The second layer of permission involves **specifically requesting permission** before using any photo. A simple e-mail explaining what the image will be used for suffices. While not necessarily required legally, specific requests offer safeguards against awkward conversations. We recommend this anytime we want to feature a photo (ie: on a banner or poster).

   > *We love this group photo that you're in! We want*
   > *to use it at the Archdiocese for the website and*
   > *social media. Would you be ok with that?*

3. The third layer of permission employs an **actual model release**. This layer is only needed for "commercial use." For the archdiocese this would include any major promotion campaign (ie: Annual Catholic appeal or campaign video that's used to promote a major program or initiative.)

Personal Social Media

Church employees are witnessing the faith through all of their actions including social media. Because of this, Chancery employees should reflect Catholic values on all their personal social media channels. Here are key things to keep in mind:

- All employees represent the Church whether online, on social channels or in face-to-face interactions. Please use good judgement when posting or liking other social media content. You do not want to put yourself in a situation that makes it appear that you are undermining the Church. A pattern of posting that undermines the Church will result in disciplinary actions, and may result in termination.

- Chancery employees should consider including a disclaimer on their personal social media channels. One example: "The views expressed on this site are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."

- Even with this disclaimer, employee's content can still reflect the Church. While employees have a right to privacy and confidentiality regarding what their employer knows about them, the employee's use of social media – because of its very nature – means he/she relinquishes some privacy as their postings could be construed as representing the Church's ethics and values.

- Absolutely no contact with any minor or vulnerable adult with whom they minister to/work with in a pastoral setting is permitted on an employee's personal social media channel.

- Employees are encouraged to "like" and "follow" social channels from groups across the archdiocese to help promote and amplify the good works in our archdiocese.