



Ministry Clearance Process for Religious Speakers

Thank you for utilizing this process when inviting religious brothers and sisters from outside the Archdiocese to speak at events organized for the Catholic faithful. The intent of this policy is to ensure speakers meet the highest standards of fidelity to Church teaching and operate within appropriate boundaries when interacting with participants, in particular, children and vulnerable adults.

As part of the event planning process, the parish or sponsoring organization may contact the prospective speaker or ministry event provider to determine the individual's availability and request additional information about his or her ministry experience and services. However, an invitation may not be extended until the clearance process is completed and a letter of permission is received.

Please take the following steps once you have identified a speaker you would like to invite:

1. Request a **testimonial letter** from the proposed religious speaker's superior, attesting to the speaker's suitability for this role. A [sample request letter](#) is provided for your convenience.
2. When you have received the testimonial letter from the religious superior, please complete and submit the online [Ministry Clearance Request Form - Archdiocese of Seattle \(archseattle.org\)](#). At the same time, please email the following supporting documentation to **Rob Prather** in the Archbishop's Office at Robert.Prather@seattlearch.org:
 - A letter or email addressed to the **Vicar General, Fr. Gary Lazzeroni**, from the pastor, priest administrator or pastoral coordinator, stating knowledge and consent of the proposed speaker and event.
 - The testimonial letter received from the religious superior.
3. The received documentation will be provided to the Vicar General for review. He will reply in writing with approval or denial to the pastoral leader or his/her representative. Denials are rare and generally occur when 1) a testimonial is not provided by the religious superior; 2) the received testimonial indicates or prompts a concern with the speaker's suitability to serve in the role; 3) there are known concerns about the speaker from other activities or speaking engagements, either inside or outside the Archdiocese.

In order to expedite this process, all communications are conducted by email. Because it can take some time for religious superiors to respond to your request for a testimonial letter, it is advised that you make this request of the superior up to six months in advance of your event or no less than three months. Please reach out to Rob Prather with any questions about this process: (206) 382-4886 or Robert.Prather@seattlearch.org.