

## **POLICY 7.6      Policy for Websites and Other Internet-based Media**

The Archdiocese uses and encourages parishes and all Catholic organizations to use the internet as a primary communication, resource, and community building tool.

Various departments and programs of the chancery, such as Stewardship and Youth Ministry, also use Facebook accounts to communicate directly and virtually immediately across the Archdiocese.

The Archdiocese has developed this policy to assist with effective management of internet-based media.

### **Setting up websites and social media accounts**

The Archdiocese posts all types of information on its website, <http://archgm.ca>, including the Archbishop's monthly pastoral letter, policies and procedures, parish contact information, pastoral initiatives, and more. It is also available for promoting parish and other Catholic events.

Parishes that use or plan to use websites should ensure that the Archdiocese has the site URL and the name and contact information of the person responsible for its operation.

Social media are popular and their use widespread. The Archdiocese encourages a cautious and prudent approach to their use by parishes. The Archdiocese requires that all parishes who make use of any social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, ensure that:

- the parish priest has given permission to set up the account in the name of the parish
- the person or people responsible for operating the account have provided their personal contact information to the parish priest
- the user name and password for the account are provided to the Archdiocese and that the Archdiocese is one of the Administrators named on the account
- minimum standards for acceptable use are provided to the person or people responsible and to the Archdiocese
- the person or people responsible for the account monitor it on a regular (at least weekly) basis, to ensure the content meets minimum standards.

### **Posting to websites and social media**

The rule of thumb for websites and social media such as Facebook and Twitter is not to post anything that would not be published in the parish Sunday bulletin or the Archdiocesan newsletter, the *ArchGM News*. All items posted on the archdiocesan website have been approved by the Archbishop. All items posted on parish websites and social media accounts should be approved by the parish priest (this includes missions.)

### **Minimum Standards for Official Social Media**

Employees of the Archdiocese, in the chancery and in parishes, must be responsible and charitable in their use of official social media, such as archdiocesan or parish Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and other similar accounts. They should also be charitable in their use of personal social media.

The persons with direct responsibility for archdiocesan and parish social media are required to monitor those accounts (see bullets above) and ensure content meets minimum standards. These standards include but are not limited to ensuring that content:

- does not contain offensive language (e.g. profanities, demeaning or derogatory words, personal insults)
- does not become an argument between individuals
- is not blasphemous or derogatory towards our Lord and/or the Church
- does not contain confidential or proprietary information
- is not in contravention of copyright laws

If the person responsible is not sure whether to remove or amend content on social media, she or he should consult the parish priest and/or the Office of the Archbishop.

### **Policy for use of photographs**

This policy applies to the photographs that may be posted to the internet by the Archdiocese and parishes. The personal privacy of individuals is to be respected when photographs are taken at archdiocesan and parish events, such as Mass, the Faith Rally, and parish picnics. **The Archdiocese prohibits the taking and posting of photos of anyone under the age of 18 years.** The Archdiocese further recommends the following guidelines for using photographs on websites and social media:

- in the announcements and invitations for archdiocesan and parish events, include statements about the taking and use of photographs;
- ensure that individuals who will be easily identifiable in any photo agree to having that photo posted on the internet; and,
- ensure that you have the permission of the photographer to post the photos.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 13 November 2012

Amended by the Curia on 07 January 2016

Amended by the College of Consultors on 25 October 2016

Amended by the College of Consultors on 23 January 2018