

DIGITAL, ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

AT A GLANCE

WHY A POLICY ON DIGITAL, ONLINE, AND SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION WITH YOUTH?

- A desire of Bishop Shawn McKnight
- An extension of *Virtus* principles/practices to the digital realm
- A response to the need from those in ministry to young people

TRANSPARENCY: COMMUNICATION SHALL BE OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO MULTIPLE PARTIES ALWAYS TAKING CARE TO AVOID PERSONAL, PRIVATE, ONE-ON-ONE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN CHURCH PERSONNEL AND INDIVIDUAL YOUNG PEOPLE.

- Parents should be notified of all mediums used to communicate with youth, and written permission should be granted to do so. Parents should have complete access to all information their children are receiving.
- More than one adult should always be involved in communications with youth.
- Passwords and sites should always be registered at a central location in the parish.

PRUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL PARAMETERS OF USE: BOTH THE CHRISTIAN VALUE OF PRUDENCE AS WELL AS STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OUGHT TO INFORM COMMUNICATIONS. APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES MUST BE RESPECTED IN ANY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH MINORS OR ADULTS.

1. All communications between youth and church personnel shall be appropriate, professional, and in conformity with teachings of the Catholic Church as well as the Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct.
2. The primary purpose of all communications with youth shall be to provide information related to a ministry, event or for evangelization efforts.
3. Acceptable hours for direct communication with youth are between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

THESE 2 OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES SHOULD BE APPLIED TO THE FOLLOWING MEDIUMS:

- Cell Phones and Texting
- Personal Social Networking Sites
- Parish/Youth Ministry Social Networking Sites
- Email
- Instant Messaging
- Video Calling, Chat Rooms, Hangouts, and Online Video Game Forums
- Blogging and Vlogging (video blogging)
- Webpages and Websites



Download the full policy at www.oymdiojeffcity.com/forms-and-policies.
Office of Youth Ministry and Religious Education | Diocese of Jefferson City