



Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls

Policy on Outside Speakers

In an attempt to allow for timely consideration of requests for approval of outside speakers on certain matters, the following policy and permission request form are promulgated.

RATIONALE:

When a forum discussing matters of faith is either provided at or promoted within the parishes, schools and/or other Catholic institutions, the faithful have the right to expect that what they hear will be consistent with the teachings of the Church and with the pastoral direction of the Diocese (cf. Can. 229§1). Similarly, the Bishop has the solemn responsibility to “firmly defend the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed” (Can. 386§2). Therefore, it is the Diocesan Bishop’s responsibility to do what can be done to assure guest speakers and honorees meet this expectation.

POLICY:

Therefore, any person under consideration to give a presentation on matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop *before* invitation is formally extended to them. This policy applies especially to those who come from outside the Diocese of Sioux Falls and to all non-Catholics who are being considered for making a presentation on such matters.

Further, Catholic parishes and schools should neither sponsor nor promote a speaker on matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals, even if not speaking on Church property, without written approval for doing so from the Office of the Bishop.

Approval is required prior to the extension of an invitation to speak in order to avoid the unpleasant situation of having to “disinvite” an individual and all the complications that doing so creates.

Consistent with the policy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the Catholic community and Catholic institutions also should not honor those who have acted in opposition to fundamental Catholic moral teachings. Examples of such acts might include public records of voting, financial support, or statements that have been made which are in direct conflict with the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. To avoid the suggestion of an endorsement of their actions, individuals who have acted in this way, no matter the substance of their body of their work or the topic of their presentation, should not be presented with awards, honors or extended platforms for speaking (cf. *Catholics in Political Life*, USCCB, 2004).

IN SUMMARY:

- Speakers who are being considered to give a presentation on faith, spirituality and/or morals must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop *before* an invitation is extended.
- Catholic Parishes, Catholic Schools and Catholic Organizations may not promote or sponsor a speaker in these areas unless he or she is approved, even if the presentation is not scheduled to be given on Church property.

TYPES OF PRESENTATIONS TO WHICH THE POLICY APPLIES:

Examples of presentations held in or sponsored by Catholic Parishes, Catholic Schools and Catholic Organizations that *might* address matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals:

lectures or public addresses	workshops or in-services	retreats
theatrical performances	musical performances	

EXAMPLES OF TOPICS THAT REQUIRE PRIOR APPROVAL:

Examples of topics that *might* address matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals:

ethics	prayer/devotionals	social justice	catechetics
ministry	marriage and family life	respect life	

EXAMPLES OF PRESENTERS TO WHOM THE POLICY APPLIES:

- Any Catholic under consideration to give a presentation on matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals who is from outside the diocese.
- Any non-Catholic under consideration to give a presentation on matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals.
- Any individual or group who does not fall in the exempt category below.

EXAMPLES OF PRESENTERS TO WHOM THE POLICY DOES NOT APPLY:

- Bishops, in communion with the Holy See
- Priests/Deacons in the Diocese of Sioux Falls who are in good standing
- Staff of Diocesan Parishes, Schools and Institutions, including:
 - Diocesan Staff Members
 - Parish Staff Members
 - Catechists
 - Diocesan Catholic School Teachers/Administrators
- Speakers who have been invited or sponsored by Catholic Parishes, Catholic Schools and Catholic Organizations but whose topic for the presentation will not address matters of faith, spirituality and/or morals. Examples *might* include:
 - o Technical presentations on skilled areas of expertise
 - o Artistic, theatrical or otherwise entertaining presentations that are held on Church property unless the presentation contains reference to such views
 - o General presentations such as keynote or commencement addresses, presuming the speaker presenting does not have a public record that is contrary to the Church's moral teachings

PROCESS:

In order to assure that local pastoral leadership is aware of the formulation of plans for an envisioned event, requests for permission to invite a particular speaker must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Bishop. Forms must be signed by pastors or individuals with appropriate institutional or pastoral authority. An accompanying form is included with this policy and is also available electronically. Supplemental information such as a *curriculum vitae*, a listing of published works, and examples of past presentations (topics, outline, etc.) should accompany the signed forms, if possible. Invitation to present should not be extended until permission from the Bishop has been granted.