



# Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Use of Social Media for Volunteers

Pope Benedict XVI noted at the 44th World Day of Communications that “greater communion in ways that were unthinkable in the past” provide a way to evangelize our Catholic faith. Pope Benedict was referring to what we today call “social media” in its many forms.

Social media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, websites, blogs, e-mail, texting, Instant Messaging, online video and chat rooms. Because social media is so easy to use, so individualized and accessed in real time, it is essential that volunteers understand the diocesan policies governing their use.

The Diocese of Fort Worth asks all volunteers who participate in social media to review and follow the standards outlined in the Social Media Policy.

The following **DO** and **DON'T** represent a summary of key points of the social media policy but is not meant to replace the official diocesan policy. It should also be used as a guide for your behaviors in your personal social media because you are a Catholic volunteer and a role model for the faithful.

## DO:

- Do use social media as a form of evangelization of the faithful.
- Do create and maintain your social media with Christian charity, good judgment and respect for truth.
- Do use your official parish or ministry logo to clearly identify your parish or ministry social media.
- Do have at least two approved site administrators with access to the password – the password should never reside with only one person.
- Do monitor and update your social media site frequently to ensure it is fresh and contains no inappropriate information.
- Do identify yourself as an employee or volunteer on your personal social media, add a disclaimer found in the policy that makes it clear the ideas expressed are not the Diocese’s position.
- Do recognize that all social media is by nature public.

## DON'T:

- Don't use social media to access or pass on inappropriate sites.
- Don't use official Catholic social media for personal communications.
- Don't disclose confidential parish or diocesan information on personal social media.
- Don't use official diocesan or parish crest or logos on personal social media.
- Don't use language that can be interpreted as obscene, offensive, or having sexual overtones on official or personal social media.
- Adult volunteers cannot use social media to communicate with non-family children under age 18 without specific parental permission.
- Don't cause scandal or embarrassment to the parish or Diocese while using social media.

