DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG
723 EAST PITTSBURGH STREET • GREENSBURG, PA 15601-2597
724-837-0901 FAX 724-837-0857

SPEAKER APPROVAL POLICY

The Most Reverend Larry J. Kulick, JCL, Bishop of Greensburg has promulgated this Speaker Approval Policy. This policy is effective February 14, 2024 and supersedes and abrogates all other Speaker Approval Policies previously issued.

INTRODUCTION:

The *Code of Canon Law* states that "a diocesan bishop... is bound to propose and explain to the faithful the truths of the faith which are to be believed and applied to morals… so that the whole of Christian doctrine is handed on to all," and "through suitable means, he is firmly to protect the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed, while nonetheless acknowledging a just freedom in further investigating its truths" (*CIC*, 386).

Furthermore, the laity "possess the right to acquire knowledge of Christian doctrine appropriate to the capacity and condition of each in order for them to be able to live according to this doctrine, announce it themselves, defend it if necessary, and take their part in exercising the apostolate" (*CIC*, 229 §1)

These instructions are to assist Pastors and those with pastoral responsibilities to ensure that guest speakers who come into the Diocese in person or virtually to teach the lay faithful, do so with fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church. The faithful have a right to expect that what they hear from speakers within our parishes, campuses, or schools will be consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

As a general rule, the invitation to any speaker or honoree should be an opportunity to evangelize, catechize, or better form the faithful. Thus, anything which can cause confusion, scandal, or incite disrespect or dissent from the Catholic Church's faith, morals, or discipline is to be avoided.

In addition, in order to maintain our commitment to provide safe environments for the people we serve, all presenters must provide documentation that they have cleared a criminal background check and completed Safe Environment training that is comparable to the requirements of the Diocese of Greensburg.

A NOTE FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG:
Catholic Institutions of Higher Education in the Diocese of Greensburg are covered by a separate policy between the Diocese and each institution.

It is with these points in mind that the Speaker Approval Policy of the Diocese of Greensburg is promulgated:

POLICY:

1. The following speakers require the prior approval of the Bishop or his delegate to offer public presentations on matters relating in any way to faith or morals in our Diocese:
    - Any Catholic priest or deacon without faculties in the Diocese of Greensburg.
    - Members of Religious Communities who are not actively serving in a Diocesan, parish, or school ministry in the Diocese of Greensburg.
    - All Catholic lay people, except those exempted in paragraph 10 below.
    - Any non-Catholic speaker.

2. Any speaker sponsored by or occurring at any parish, (including parish missions, retreats, or workshops) Catholic school, Diocesan institution, Diocesan office, Catholic organization, or retreat center in the Diocese of Greensburg must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop or his delegate before an event is promoted, advertised, or sponsored. This applies to any talk, lecture, conference, or similar event, parish missions or retreats, or music concerts with lyrics. A speaker for a conference may not be advertised until he or she has received approval.
3. To be considered to speak in the Diocese of Greensburg, the speaker's published documents and previous public presentations must also be in harmony and fidelity with the teaching and discipline of the Church, as prescribed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
4. Any speaker who publicly promotes or advocates views which are contrary to Church teaching and discipline may not give a talk, retreat, workshop, course, or similar presentations at Church related events or on church, school, or Diocesan property, or Catholic institutions in the Diocese of Greensburg. Likewise, anyone who publicly promotes or advocates views which are contrary to Church teaching or discipline may not be given awards, honors, or other marks of public recognition.
5. There may be times when a presentation may not involve teachings related to faith and morals or the best speaker is not of our Catholic faith. Most times, these presentations will be on subjects such as music, physical or mental health, violence, drugs, child raising, or similar topics. The speakers on these topics should not promote anything that is contrary to the Catholic faith, unless the Catholic teaching is also clearly presented at the same time.
6. The Diocese of Greensburg promotes and encourages ecumenical dialogue. Official representatives of other faith traditions are allowed to speak on their religious traditions and beliefs in appropriate settings.
7. Any speaker request made to the Diocese on behalf of a parish or school must be approved by the Pastor, Administrator, or Chaplain of the Diocesan entity.
8. The speaker cannot be promoted or sponsored unless he or she is approved in writing, though an initial inquiry to availability can be made. When communicating with speakers prior to approval, please notify them that any invitation is conditional, pending approval.
9. With due respect to Canon 763 of the *Code of Canon Law*, prior to any outreach to a Cardinal or Bishop to speak in the Diocese of Greensburg, the Diocesan entity must request the permission of our Diocesan Bishop, whose Office will assist in the coordination of the invitation.
10. The following speakers are exempt from needing prior Diocesan approval to offer public presentations on matters relating in any way to faith or morals in our Diocese other than at the parish or school of their employment or domicile:
    - Any priest or deacon with faculties to serve in the Diocese of Greensburg who are in good standing.
    - Members of religious communities actively serving in a Diocesan office, parish, or school in the Diocese of Greensburg who are in good standing.
    - Managing Directors and Directors from the Pastoral Center in the Diocese of Greensburg.
    - Staff of Diocesan Institutions, including pastoral ministers, parish ministerial staff, catechists, and Catholic school principals and teachers **who are already included** on the approved speaker list of the Diocese of Greensburg.

11. The approval process includes submission of the following:
    - A completed Speaker Approval Submission Form (see page 5)
    - A brief biographical profile or a *curriculum vitae* of the speaker.
    - In the case of a professor of religion or theology, a *mandatum* from their bishop or a letter explaining why a *mandatum* is not readily available.
    - In the case of someone formally representing an organization other than the Catholic Church, a completed Declaration of Organization Policies Form (see page 8)
    - In the case of a speaker being invited to speak on a topic not related to faith or morals at an event, a completed Speaker Declaration of Topic Form (see page 9)
    - **Evidence of all required child abuse protection clearances that are current**, regardless of the presence of youth at the event. (See section below on protection of minors and vulnerable adults)
    - A letter of good standing or a letter of support depending on the status of the speaker. (See section below for various requirements).

    The Bishop or his delegate reserves the right to request additional information or documentation in determining the suitableness of a particular speaker.

12. Approval of a speaker is event specific. Parishes, schools, Diocesan institutions, offices, organizations, and retreat centers must follow the approval process each time they intend to invite a speaker to the Diocese.

13. All events requesting grants from the Francis Fund or Anselm Fund are subject to this process and will not receive funding until all event speakers have received approval.

PROCEDURE:

- All necessary paperwork and any questions about what is required should be submitted to speakerapproval@dioceseofgreensburg.org.
- Once all paperwork is submitted to the approval process, it can take up to two weeks to receive a notification of decision. Notification of decision will be communicated by e-mail to the Pastor or Administrator. Notification by letter will only be done if requested.

PROTECTION OF MINORS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS:

- If a speaker is a parishioner of the Diocese of Greensburg:
    - All child abuse clearance and training requirements for volunteers must be submitted for an individual to be a speaker. These clearances must be active and current.
    - If these clearances are on file in Virtus with a particular parish, please provide the name of the parish so we can access this information. Otherwise, all clearance documents must be submitted separately.
- If a speaker is a parishioner in another Catholic diocese:
    - A Speaker Clearance Declaration Form – Catholic (see page 6) is to be completed by the home diocese of the speaker who is responsible for protection of minors' compliance and submitted. Contact your Diocesan Safe Environment Office for assistance.
- If a speaker is not Catholic:
    - A Speaker Clearance Declaration Form – Non-Catholic Organization (see page 7) is to be completed and submitted by the supervisor of the ministry the speaker represents or the person responsible for ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable adults in their ministry or employment. This documentation must include that the speaker has cleared a criminal background check and completed a Safe Environment training that is comparable to the requirements of the Diocese of Greensburg.

DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THE SPEAKER APPROVAL FORM:

- **For speakers who are priests or deacons:**
  - ❒ Proposed speaker's **brief biographical profile** or ***curriculum vitae***. Required for all clerics.
  - ❒ A **letter of good standing and suitability** from the speaker's Superior or Ordinary attesting that he is a cleric in good standing and is compliant with the policies and procedures related to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Required for all clerics.
  - ❒ If the proposed speaker is a college or university professor of religion or theology, a ***mandatum*** or a letter explaining why a *mandatum* is not readily available.
  - ❒ If the cleric will be celebrating a sacrament, he must also request **specific permission** from the Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg.

- **For speakers who are members of Religious Communities:**
  If the speaker is both a religious and a cleric, please use the above requirements for clerics.
  - ❒ Proposed speaker's **brief biographical profile** or ***curriculum vitae***. Required for all religious.
  - ❒ A **letter of good standing and suitability** from the speaker's Superior or Ordinary attesting that he or she is a religious in good standing and is compliant with the policies and procedures related to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Required for all religious.
  - ❒ If the proposed speaker is a college or university professor of religion or theology, a ***mandatum*** or a letter explaining why a *mandatum* is not readily available.

- **For speakers who are lay persons:**
  - ❒ Proposed speaker's **brief biographical profile** or ***curriculum vitae***. Required for all lay persons.
  - ❒ If Catholic, a **letter of support** from the speaker's Pastor or Ordinary attesting that he or she is a faithful, practicing Catholic in union with the Church. If the speaker is not Catholic, this letter of support should come from their Pastor or another person who can attest to their character and suitability. Required for all lay persons.
  - ❒ A completed **Speaker Clearance Declaration Form** *(see page 6 or 7)* that verifies the speaker cleared a recent background check and has completed a Safe Environment training. If this form cannot be completed, the speaker must complete the requirements related to Safe Environment for volunteers in the Diocese of Greensburg. Required for all lay persons.
  - ❒ If the speaker is formally representing an organization other than the Catholic Church, a completed **Declaration of Organization Policies Form.** *(see page 8)*
  - ❒ If the speaker is being invited to speak on a topic not related to faith or morals at an event or is not Catholic, a completed **Speaker Declaration of Topic Form.** *(see page 9)*
  - ❒ If the proposed speaker is a college or university professor of religion or theology, a ***mandatum*** or a letter explaining why a *mandatum* is not readily available.

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SPEAKER APPROVAL FORM

Diocesan Office/ Parish/ School: _____

Event Contact Person: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Address *(if printed response necessary)*: _____

_____

Please check all that apply:

The person named below is a: ❒ Priest ❒ Deacon ❒ Religious ❒ Lay Person

The person is coming into the Diocese: ❒ At the request of a Diocesan entity.
❒ At the request of the speaker.

This person will be working with minors: ❒ Yes ❒ No

Event Name: _____

Description of Event *(examples: retreat, conference, parish mission, etc.)*: _____

Date of Event: _____ Location of Event: _____

Name of Speaker: _____

Title/ Position of Speaker: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Diocese of Speaker *(if known)*: _____

Religious Institution or Employer of Speaker: _____

Name of Reference of Speaker *(Ordinary or Delegate, Religious Superior, Pastor)*: _____

Please give a brief description of the topics to be presented: _____

_____

Additional Relevant Information: _____ _____

_____

Signature of Pastor or Administrator Hosting Speaker: _____

Printed Name of Pastor or Administrator: _____ Date: _____

For Diocesan Use: ❒ FFD Approved _____ ❒ SEO Approved _____ ❒ VG Approved _____ ❒ PA Notified Date: _____

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SPEAKER CLEARANCE DECLARATION FORM — CATHOLIC

The Diocese of Greensburg is committed to ensuring that a safe environment is provided for all our youth and vulnerable adults. As part of that commitment speakers, presenters, and facilitators for any event in the Diocese must have completed appropriate training on the protection of minors and current and cleared background clearances.

SPEAKER INFORMATION:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Home Diocese: _____ Home Parish: _____

CONFIRMATION OF TRAINING AND CLEARANCES:
Must be completed by an official of the Safe Environment Office of the home Diocese of the speaker.

I certify that the above listed individual has completed all necessary training and clearances as defined under the USCCB standards for protection of minors and is in good standing with the Diocese/Parish. Further, I certify that all clearances have been completed within the last five years.

Name of Training: _____ Date Completed: _____
(Virtus or equivalent)

Name of Training: _____ Date Completed: _____
(Mandatory Reporter Training or equivalent)

Name of Screening: _____ Date Completed: _____
(Cleared Criminal Background Check)

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____ _____
Printed Name Diocese

[Diocesan Seal or Stamp]

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SPEAKER CLEARANCE DECLARATION FORM — NON-CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION

The Diocese of Greensburg is committed to ensuring that a safe environment is provided for all our youth and vulnerable adults. As part of that commitment speakers, presenters, and facilitators for any event in the Diocese must have completed appropriate training on the protection of minors and current and cleared background clearances.

SPEAKER INFORMATION:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Employer/ Affiliated Organization: _____ _____

CONFIRMATION OF TRAINING AND CLEARANCES:

Must be completed by a person who is the supervisor of the organization that the speaker represents or is employed and/or who is responsible for ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable adults in that organization.

I certify that the above listed individual has completed training and clearances intended to ensure the safety of youth and vulnerable adults as required by this organization.

Name of Training: _____ Date Completed: _____
(Virtus or equivalent)

Name of Training: _____ Date Completed: _____
(Mandatory Reporter Training or equivalent)

Name of Screening: _____ Date Completed: _____
(Cleared Criminal Background Check)

On the reverse side or a separate sheet please describe organizational requirements for individuals regarding protection of youth and vulnerable adults.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____ _____
Printed Name Organization

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DECLARATION OF ORGANIZATION POLICIES FORM

Organization Name:_____

Contact Person:_____

Title:_____

Phone:_____ Email:_____

I, the undersigned, a formal representative of the above organization, declare that the above organization does not directly or indirectly:

1. Support, promote or fund the practice of surgical or chemical abortion.
2. Support, promote or fund the practice of the destruction of human embryos to extract embryonic stem cells or the practice of embryonic stem cell research.
3. Support, promote or fund the use or distribution of artificial contraceptives including so-called emergency contraception.
4. Support, promote or fund the practice of human cloning.
5. Support, promote or fund pornography.
6. Support, promote or fund assisted suicide or euthanasia practices.
7. Support or promote same sex marriage and/or civil unions.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

[Seal or Stamp of Organization]

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SPEAKER DECLARATION OF TOPIC FORM

Event: _____

Hosting Organization Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

According to the Speaker Policy of the Diocese of Greensburg, "There may be times when a presentation may not involve teachings related to faith and morals or the best speaker is not of our Catholic faith. Most times, these presentations will be on subjects such as music, physical or mental health, violence, drugs, child raising, or similar topics. The speakers on these topics should not speak regarding anything that is contrary to the Catholic faith."

I, the undersigned, declare that I will speak not on the following topics that may directly or indirectly:

1. Support, promote or fund the practice of surgical or chemical abortion.
2. Support, promote or fund the practice of the destruction of human embryos to extract embryonic stem cells or the practice of embryonic stem cell research.
3. Support, promote or fund the use or distribution of artificial contraceptives including so-called emergency contraception.
4. Support, promote or fund the practice of human cloning.
5. Support, promote or fund pornography.
6. Support, promote or fund assisted suicide or euthanasia practices.
7. Support or promote same sex marriage and/or civil unions.

_____ _____

Speaker Signature Date

_____

Speaker Printed Name