



## Diocese of Madison

Office of the Bishop

August 15, 2010

*Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

### **To all Pastors, Pastoral Associates, School Chaplains, School Principals, Diocesan Staff:**

As the Chief Shepherd of souls within the Diocese of Madison, the law of the Church obliges me “firmly to defend the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed” (*Code of Canon Law*, Can. 386 §2). As part of the fulfillment of this duty, it is important that I assist the pastors and those with pastoral authority in the Diocese to ensure that guest speakers who come to teach the Catholic faithful do so with fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church. When we provide a forum for a speaker within our parishes or schools, the faithful have the right to expect that what they hear will be consonant with the teaching of the Church, and with the pastoral direction of the Diocese (cf. Can. 229 §1).

Therefore, effective immediately and following the lead of numerous dioceses throughout our state and country, I ask you to submit for my review the requisite documentation for any person under consideration to lecture, present a workshop, give a retreat or otherwise speak or give an address on matters of faith and morals on diocesan property. This directive applies especially to those who come from outside the Diocese or those inside the Diocese who are not certified to engage in religious instruction by the Diocese of Madison. It is important to have any such individual approved by my office before an invitation can be extended. This will avoid the unpleasant situation of “disinviting” someone and all the complications this creates.

Further, Catholic parishes and schools should neither sponsor nor promote a speaker on matters of faith and morals, even if he is not speaking on Church property, without official approval. If a pastor is asked to sponsor or promote a speaker off Church grounds, he should make it clear to the person making the request that the speaker must be approved by the Bishop before he can do so. The requesting party, not the pastor, has the responsibility for obtaining the appropriate permission from the Bishop’s office.


There will be forms available for you on the Communications page of the Diocese of Madison’s website to initiate the approval of a given speaker. The completed form must include:

- 1) A *curriculum vitae* for the speaker
- 2) A letter of support from the speaker’s pastor, in the case of a layperson, establishing that he is a Catholic in good standing; a letter attesting that the speaker is a cleric/religious in good standing from the speaker’s superior/ordinary, in the case of clerics and religious

- 3) Clerics must also have a *celebret*, indicating they have permission to celebrate the sacraments outside their diocese
- 4) College or university professors should provide a *mandatum* from their bishop, if they have one

The Office of the Vicar General will also provide a list of recommended speakers upon request. Looking forward to your full cooperation, and thanking you for your important ministry for the Church, I am

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,

+   
Most Reverend Robert C. Morlino  
Bishop of Madison



## Speaker Policy for the Diocese of Madison

### RATIONALE

- ✘ Canon 386 §2 requires the Diocesan Bishop to defend the integrity and unity of the faith.
- ✘ Speaker approval avoids difficult situation of having to dis-invite someone and public scandal.

### BASIC IDEA

- ✘ Speakers who are being considered to give a presentation on faith and morals must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop *before* an invitation is extended.
- ✘ Catholic Parishes, Catholic Schools and Catholic Organizations cannot promote or sponsor a speaker unless he or she is approved (even if the presentation is not being given on church property).

### TO WHICH SPEAKERS THE POLICY APPLIES

- ✘ Any speaker under consideration to give a presentation on matters of faith and morals who do not fall in the exempt category below.

### SPEAKERS WHO DO NOT NEED APPROVAL

(i.e. those who are exempt) INCLUDE :

- ✘ Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church, in virtue of their office
- ✘ Bishops in communion with the Holy See
- ✘ Those who hold appointed or staff positions in the Diocese of Madison:
  - Priests/Deacons in the Diocese of Madison who are in good standing
  - Staff of Diocesan Parishes, Schools and Institutions, including:
    - Parish Staff Members
    - Catechists
    - Diocesan Catholic School Teachers/Administrators

*(All persons listed above are referred to, as defined by the Holy See, Diocese of Madison and the Wisconsin Catholic Conference Standards for Educators in Catholic Parishes and Schools' "Terms Defined", 2008 – [linked here](#).)*

### PROCEDURE

- ✘ Before a firm invitation is extended to the speaker (preliminary contacts, checking availability, etc., are OK), a request must be submitted to the Office of the Bishop from the inviting party.
- ✘ Must include:
  1. A completed **Cover Letter Request Form** from the inviting party, which includes the speaker's name and topic(s). It should attest to the speaker's fidelity to the Magisterium, and the conformity of the topic to the pastoral direction of the Diocese.
  2. A **curriculum vitae** for the speaker.
  3. In the case of a lay person:
    - A **letter of support** from the speaker's pastor establishing that he is a Catholic in good standing.

In the case of a cleric/religious:

- A *letter of support* from the speaker's superior/ordinary attesting that the speaker is a cleric/religious in good standing.
- 4. A cleric must also have a *celebret*, indicating he has permission to celebrate the sacraments outside of his diocese.
- 5. College or university professors should provide a *mandatum* from their bishop, if they have one. If not, please indicate that they do not have one.
- 6. If the speaker is not a Catholic, the *curriculum vitae* should be accompanied by *written assurance* that the speaker's presentation will not conflict with Catholic teaching in any way.
- 7. If the proposed speaker will address minors, proof that they have adequate safe environment training, as deemed by the Diocesan Safe Environment Officers and the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection Office.

EFFECTIVE DATE

August 15, 2010

- ✘ Anyone already booked before that date does not need to go through the process (however, that person will have to go through the process if and when they are considered in the future)

Summary Prepared by:  
*The Chancery Office*  
*August 2010*



# COVER LETTER FORM FOR REQUESTING GUEST SPEAKERS IN THE DIOCESE OF MADISON

When requesting approval for a speaker, please return the completed form  
with the pertinent documents to:

OFFICE OF THE VICAR GENERAL, Attn: Speaker Request  
([Speaker Approval Policy linked here](#))

## **PERSON OR GROUP INVITING THE SPEAKER:**

CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

## **PROPOSED SPEAKER:**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE/POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_  
TOPIC(S) TO BE PRESENTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
(attach additional page if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

## **EVENT:**

NAME OF EVENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF EVENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
EVENT LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ATTESTATION**

- I can attest to the proposed speaker's fidelity to the teachings and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.
- I am unsure about the proposed speaker's fidelity to the teachings and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church (*please explain under "Additional Comments" on next page*).

## **Please include with this form:**

- Proposed Speaker's *curriculum vitae*
- If the proposed speaker is a layperson, a *letter of support* from the speaker's pastor or ordinary attesting that he or she is a Catholic in good standing.
- If the proposed speaker is a religious, a *letter of suitability* from the speaker's superior attesting that he or she is in good standing.
- If the proposed speaker is a cleric, a *letter of suitability* (often referred to as a *celebret*) from the speaker's superior or ordinary attesting that he or she is in good standing.
- If the proposed speaker is a college or university professor, he or she should provide a *mandatum*, however, the lack of a *mandatum* does not necessarily disqualify a speaker, but this should be indicated.
- If not a Catholic, the speaker should provide a *written assurance* that his or her presentation will not conflict with Catholic teaching in any way.

- If the proposed speaker will address minors, proof that they have adequate safe environment training, as deemed by the Diocesan Safe Environment Officers and the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection Office

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

**PERSON SUBMITTING THIS FORM:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed form to:  
**OFFICE OF VICAR GENERAL  
ATTN: SPEAKER REQUEST  
702 S. HIGH POINT RD  
MADISON, WI 53719**

[Form adopted August 2010]