

ARCHDIOCESE OF KEEWATIN-LE PAS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Introduction

Social media has become a tool to communicate, to connect with a community, and share information with many people instantly. **If used improperly, it can damage a corporation or individual's reputation, spread misinformation, and change the impact of an organization's message and perception in minutes.**

a. Who/Whom does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to:

- all offices of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas,
- all parishes and missions within the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas,
- all clergy, parish staff, and ministerial volunteers,
- and all employees and volunteers of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.

b. What is Social Media?

For this policy, the term "Social Media" includes, without limitation, the websites, applications, services, and tools that enable users to create and share content or participate in social networking¹.

c. Types of Social Media

Some popular Social Media tools include:

Blogs: Short for "web log," a blog is an online journal in which pages are usually displayed in reverse chronological order, showing the newest entry first. Blogs can share lengthier articles. The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas currently does not have an official blog.

Social Network Sites: A social network site is any website that allows individuals or groups to create a public or semi-public profile, connect with users they know or have shared interests, and interact with that network. Popular social networking sites today include FacebookTM and LinkedInTM

Status-update service of microblogs: A status-update service or microblog is a service that allows people or groups to share short updates or announcements about themselves or an organization they represent. They can follow other people's groups or groups' updates as well. A popular microblogging site is TwitterTM.

Media-sharing Sites: allow people or groups to post videos or photographs to share with others. Examples include YouTubeTM or TikTokTM for videos and InstagramTM for pictures.

All categories have overlapping content to some degree. For example, you can share photos and videos on Facebook™ and link them from Twitter™, etc. We tend to cross-post our content across various channels to reach the maximum number of people.

d. Social Media Content & Characteristics

Social Media Content: the specific messages, photos, videos, etc., that are shared through social media sites.

Characteristics of Social Media:

- Persistence: Content posted on social media sites may remain there permanently.
- Replicability: Content can be easily copied and shared.
- Searchability: Content can be found easily through search engines (Google™, etc.)
- Accessibility: Social media can be used anywhere, at any time, wherever an Internet connection is available.

2. Applicable Laws and Application of other Archdiocesan Policies

a. Applicable Laws and Policies

In addition to this policy, all Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas social media must:

- Follow all applicable Canon Law,
- Follow all applicable criminal and civil laws,
- And comply with all internal policies of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas. This Social Media Policy does not replace, but instead supplements any internal policies of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.

b. Canon Law

No association, private or public (as defined in Canon Law), is to assume the name Catholic in its public or private communications without the consent of the competent ecclesiastical authority in accordance with Canon 300. The competent ecclesiastical authority to grant consent is determined by Canon 312.

c. Use of Archdiocesan Logos and Trademarks

Church personnel may use Archdiocesan or related logos and official photographs on websites/blogs/Social Media tools that have any official affiliation with the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas and are subject to review by a supervisor. Church personnel may not use the Archdiocesan or affiliate trademarks or logos on their personal social media in any way that suggests or implies approval, endorsement or oversight by the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.

d. Use of Social Media Must Reflect the Values of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas

Anything published on social media should be considered as public, for example, a homily from Mass or a prayer service, press releases issued by the Archdiocese, notices in the parish bulletin or interviews with a radio, television, or newspaper reporter. Remember, whatever is published on social media or on any other online forum is permanent and must directly reflect the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas' policies and Canon Law.

3. Social Media Policies

a. Support the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas' Mission and Vision

All social media made on behalf of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, its parishes, missions, clergy, staff and volunteers should only be used to support the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas' mission and vision.

b. Required Number of Social Media Administrators

Any official social media page, which represents the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, one of its offices or ministries, parishes, missions, or associates, must be administered by at least two (2) adults. The Pastor or Parochial Administrator, in consultation with the Parish's Pastoral Council, will name the official administrators of an Official Social Media Page. One of these delegates with administrative rights must be a supervisor. Username, password, and full administrative privileges must be granted to these delegates (when applicable). Delegates may include the parish priest, secretary, youth ministry coordinator, catechism coordinator, member of a parish council, a trusted volunteer, etc. More than two delegates may be named.

c. Personal Social Media Accounts must not be used as official Parish/Mission Social Media

Henceforth, any and all official Facebook™ or other social media accounts representing the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, one of its offices, parishes or missions should be a "Page" and should not take the form of a personal account (as per the Facebook™ User Policy, available at www.facebook.com/policies). A Facebook™ personal account is stand-alone, whereas a Page is created from within a personal account. Parishes or organizations currently using a personal account as an official ministry page are required to delete the said account in favor of an official "Page."

d. Photos

Where attendance at publicly held Church events (Mass, other parish celebrations) may result in photographs/videos recorded that may be broadcast or shared in any number of media, including local parish websites or other communication tools, a verbal announcement or advertisement should be made available prior to the commencement of the event. Wherever possible, Church personnel should make every attempt to obtain verifiable consent from participants.

e. Non-permitted use of Social Media

Parish/ministry/Archdiocesan office web pages, blogs or social networking pages or accounts must not be used for:

- Conducting outside/personal business.
- Defaming the character of any individual or institution or violating the right of every person to protect his or her privacy (Canon Law 220).
- Discrediting the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, the Catholic Church, or our partners, promoting a specific political agenda.
- Disclosing any confidential information related to the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas or any other individual without explicit consent (e.g., financial information, salary, health information, or any other information of a personal nature which may have been shared in confidence.)

4. Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons

a. Sharing of Photos

Church personnel are forbidden from posting or distributing any personal information, including photos and/or videos, of any children or youth, without obtaining the meaningful consent of a parent or guardian. From a privacy perspective, there are three age categories when determining how to obtain meaningful consent: children (under 13 years of age); youth (13-17 years of age); and adults (18 years of age and older). In the case of a youth (13-17 years of age), the individual themselves should also agree. Personal information includes full name, home address, telephone number, email address, images and recordings or any detail that would allow someone to identify or contact a child or youth. Meaningful consent can be obtained through a release/waiver form, an email from a parent or guardian, or spoken permission by a parent or guardian with another adult present. The following individuals should provide meaningful consent: parents or guardians are to consent for children; youth should consent for themselves, with the additional consent of a parent or guardian for general legal compliance; and adults should consent for themselves.

It is recommended that, for any event/ministry requiring a registration/permission form, a clause seeking permission to post photos/videos from such activities on a parish website or social media channels be included. (A statement with a simple check box should suffice.) The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas will review any alleged violations on a case-by-case basis.

Tagging Minors in Photos: It is strongly recommended that minors not be “tagged” in photos posted to Social Media Accounts.

b. Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons

Church personnel of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas and its parishes/missions will comply with all aspects of our **Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas Policy for Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults, which includes The Archdiocesan Response to a Complaint of Sexual Abuse of Minors by**

Volunteers or Employees. This policy also outlines the Archdiocesan procedure to report/investigate incidents of abuse or misconduct.

Protection of Vulnerable Persons: Clergy, Staff and volunteers (church personnel) of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas and its Parishes and Missions will comply with all aspects of our Safe Environment Policy. The policy also outlines the Archdiocesan procedure to report/investigate incidents of abuse or misconduct.

c. Communication with Children and Youth through Social Media and other Online Media

The primary purpose of electronic communication with a child or youth shall be for providing information related to a ministry or event and not for socialization or other personal interaction. Counselling of children through electronic methods, such as social media, is not permitted. For official ministry communication, there must be at least two adults with administrative rights for each social media account. Personal social media accounts must not be used for ministry communication.

d. Parental Consent

Adults must not be in electronic communication with children or youth unless their parent/guardian is sent a Carbon Copy or their parent/guardian has authorized such communication (see below). Parents must be notified of these methods of communication that are used in each ministry and must be granted access to such communication if requested at any time. Parent authorization must identify the type of communication (e.g., email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), the youth's specific contact information and contact information for parents/guardians.

e. Friend Requests

Adults must not initiate "friend" requests with children or youth. However, they may accept "friend" requests from children or youth involved in the ministry that the adult in question is leading.

f. Private Communication with Children is never permitted

Personal Social Media accounts should never be used to contact children or youth. If children or youth contact adults engaged in ministry directly through their social media accounts, the adult in question should immediately move the conversation to an Official Social Media account. To do so on Facebook, the child or youth will need to initiate the conversation through the official Page (the adult may respond with a quick prompting to continue the conversation through the Official Page's messaging), as Facebook forbids starting a conversation through a Page as per their spam policy. The reply and all further communication should occur from this Official Ministry account. These should never be deleted.

Online "chatting" with children or youth is not permitted unless it is through an Official Social Media account and unless it pertains strictly to communicating ministry information. Online "chatting" must never be used to discuss items of a personal nature.

Acceptable hours for communication with children or youth via other electronic communications shall be between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Communication outside of these acceptable hours may be used only in emergencies or to communicate time-sensitive information related to the ministry or ministry-related events.

5. Moderating User-Generated Content Such as Posts on an Official Page, or comments

Social Media may allow for two-way dialogue. The New Evangelization may lead to bridges being built with many people of different backgrounds and religious confessions. The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas is open to dialogue with society and receiving honest feedback. However, a good balance must be maintained between encouraging honest dialogue while also maintaining a positive, uplifting, and respectful tone.

a. Responding to Comments on Social Media

If user-generated content comes from an opposing view and does not significantly disrupt the positive environment promoted by the official page, then page administrators may reply to such comments, in order to build an open and honest dialogue with God's people. Administrators must remember that replies to comments are public. Only Private Messages remain private.

6. Archdiocesan Social Media Use

a. Objectives of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas Social Media Use

The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas will utilize social media to accomplish the following three objectives (In no particular order):

- To reach the faithful from all corners of our Archdiocese with **testimonials, spiritual reflections and invitations to prayer**, to increase the sense of unity through online communication.
- To reach the faithful of our Archdiocese with news, events, and activities.
- To reach **lapsed Catholics and non-Catholics** with the Gospel message.

b. Requests for Official Social Media Pages

Should a need arise for an office or ministry of the Archdiocese to have its own Social Media Page, a request outlining this need and detailing the rationale will be presented to the Diocesan Office for approval. Final Approval is reserved to the Archbishop or his delegate. Requests for an internal office or ministry of the Archdiocese to have its own Social Media Page will only be taken into consideration if the office or ministry leader makes a strong argument that an independent account or page will significantly improve its ability to reach its target audience.

7. Reporting Policy Violations

a. What to report:

Inappropriate Content posted/commented to Archdiocesan/Parish social media pages by others.

Although openness to dialogue necessarily includes the possibility of being confronted with opposing views, there will be occasions where it is justifiable to remove inappropriate user-generated content. Although decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis, the following content will be deemed inappropriate. This includes content posted on Official social media and any comments left by users. When it contains obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, or otherwise potentially harmful content, including sexually explicit and any other material deemed inappropriate.

- When it causes or has the potential to cause scandal.
- When it is considered spam.
- When it reveals confidential or private personal information.
- When it violently or excessively undermines the Church in a way that is not conducive to dialogue.
- Any other occasion where proper judgment and prudence demand that user-generated content is inappropriate.

The Diocesan Office will respond to inquiries or complaints within a reasonable time frame.

b. Warning System Option

First Warning: When it is decided that user-generated content must be removed, page administrators may send a private message to the user stating that the content was removed and explaining the rationale behind the decision. These private messages should only occur through the Official Page and should never be sent from a personal account.

Second Time: When the same user posts inappropriate content a second time to an official page the page administrators must ban the user in question. Banning a user prevents them from posting any additional content onto the page.

c. Inappropriate Content by Volunteers/Church Employees

The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas will not tolerate Church personnel posting obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, or otherwise potentially harmful content, including sexually explicit and any other material deemed inappropriate. Other prohibited content includes but is not limited to messages that are not in line with the Official Teaching of the Catholic Church, personal opinions that are not in line with the direction of the local or Universal Church, or any content which may in any way go against any other policy of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.

Violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment or a request to cease volunteer activities.

d. Determining if a Violation of this policy has occurred

The Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas or his delegate will have final authority over any content posted on any Official Social Media Page within the Archdiocese. Non-compliance will result in a formal request from the Diocesan Office to remove inappropriate comments or to remove completely the Social Media account or page in question. In any such case, the Church personnel in question could face disciplinary action upon the final authority of the Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas. If there are reasonable grounds for believing that the social media policy is being violated, then Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas reserves the right to review the personal website, blog or social networking account of any clergy, staff or volunteer.

e. Periodic Review

The Diocesan Office may periodically review Official social media pages, as well as pages owned and operated by Archdiocesan offices or parishes.

The Diocesan Office reserves the right to advise and inform parishes and Administrative Authorities regarding Social Media accounts that do not reflect basic Catholic teaching, and which are not in compliance with this Social Media Policy or other Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas policies.