

Media Relations

Policy No. 902

Policy Statement:

The Director of Communications and Public Relations is responsible for formal public relations in all media including daily and weekly newspapers, news departments of radio and television stations, wire services, internet services and national media. The Director serves as the official spokesperson for the Archbishop and the Archdiocese in general.

Intent of Policy:

- To maintain and promote the public image of the Archdiocese, its parishes and institutions
- To ensure that this image is presented in a consistent, professional manner
- To reflect accurately the position of the Church in public discourse
- To ensure that sensitive issues are communicated directly and honestly
- To ensure that media coverage of Church activities is carried out in a respectful manner.

Procedure:

The Director of Communications and Public Relations is to be contacted:

- a) Whenever a pastor, deacon, religious or employee of the Archdiocese or its parishes or institutions is approached by the media for an interview regarding ecclesial matters.
- b) To arrange a news conference or news release. These should be limited to important issues and topics.
- c) For assistance in arranging coverage of local news and features in the Western Catholic Reporter as well in the other news media. Pastors, deacons, religious, directors and staff are encouraged to anticipate upcoming newsworthy events well in advance.
- d) Whenever an unanticipated event is likely to interest the news media, or when members of the media arrive at church property without prior notice.
- e) Whenever there is a potential for either negative or positive news reaching the media. The Director will treat such information confidentially as required.
- f) Whenever media outlets ask to record all or part of a liturgy (e.g. daily Mass, Christmas midnight Mass, funerals of prominent citizens) or other Church event.

- g) Whenever a production company approaches a parish about using church property to film a movie, television program or other commercial venture.
- Before permission can be granted, the script must be submitted to the Office of Communications and Public Relations for review and approval
 - The production company must also submit a location release form detailing the work that is proposed for the church property
 - The Chancellor must sign the location release form in order to grant permission.