

REACHING OUT WEDNESDAYS

Topic: Pastoral Use of Technology & Social Media

Diocese of Jefferson City: Seminarians must use good moral judgment regarding the use of all communications media, particularly use of the Internet. Sound prudence will dictate which websites, chat rooms and forums he will engage in, as well as the amount of time expended on such activities. Seminarians must be aware that web browsing, e-mails, blogs and various types of postings are public and not private modes of communications. In public venues and public forums seminarians are to represent the diocese, the Bishop, the Church and the Lord Himself with an appropriate decorum that reflects first and foremost “all things in charity.” No seminarian is to initiate or maintain a personal website, blog, Linked-In, YouTube, or Twitter site or any other like platform without the expressed permission of the Director of Seminarians. Both the Director of Seminarians and Vocation Director must have access to these places for permission to be granted.

Seminarians may have and maintain a Facebook and/or Google site(s) primarily to stay in better contact and communication with fellow seminarians potential seminarians, and to maintain healthy holy friendships that will sustain them in the vocation the Lord is calling them to live. Maintaining such a site is contingent upon making both the Director of Seminarians and the Vocation Director “friends” and giving them as much access to the profile as possible. Seminarians are cautioned to: 1) Not “friend” anyone they do not know or trust. 2) Not communicate with anyone outside of immediate family under the age of 18 after 9:00 p.m. 3) Ensure the time spent on the site is reasonable and moderate.

Diocese of Superior: We do not currently have a policy per say in the Diocese of Superior specific to seminarians, however, the following guidelines are strongly encouraged – Contact with minors should be respectful of healthy ministerial boundaries; no direct contact with minors for “friending” on Facebook et al --- general contact is allowed; contact with minors for recruitment and discernment toward priestly vocation should include parents/guardians; no posting of a minors pictures without parental/guardian consent in writing; we encourage them to use prudence when personal friends are still minors, and they are required to participate in our Safe Environment Training and background check process. The safe environment training covers all of those actual policies that we do have pertaining to contact with minors. The following link will take you to the diocese Resource Binder for Safe Environment policies/guidelines and procedures: <http://www.catholicdos.org/index.php?cat=1160204093648416>

Diocese of Fargo: We do not have a specific policy of seminarian contact with minors through social media.