



Office of the Bishop

# Diocese of Richmond

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November 1, 2022

**To: Pastors, Deacons, Parish Staff, Catholic School Chaplains, Principals, College Campus Chaplains and College Campus Ministers, and Pastoral Center Staff:**

In April of 2018, I approved the policies instructing diocesan ministry leaders about the process for Guest Speaker Approval. These policies have served the Diocese well over the last several years and fulfill my obligation to “defend the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed” (Code of Canon Law, Can. 386 §2).

These instructions 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. When we provide a forum for a guest speaker within our parishes, campuses, or schools, the faithful have a right to expect that what they hear will be consistent with teachings of the Catholic Church, and within the pastoral direction of the Diocese (cf. Can. 229 §1).

These Instructions for Guest Speaker Approval will continue to be followed, and those who invite a guest speaker to lecture, present a workshop, give a retreat, or otherwise speak or give an address in-person or virtually on matters of faith and morals are required to submit the requested documentation in order to receive approval.

These instructions apply especially to those who come in-person or virtually from outside the Diocese or those inside the Diocese who are not already approved to engage in religious instruction by the Diocese of Richmond. It is important that individuals be approved before an invitation can be confirmed.

Those who hold appointed or staff positions in the Diocese of Richmond who do not need to apply for Speaker Approval are:

- Priests and Deacons in the Diocese who are in good standing;
- Diocesan and parish staff and catechists, school administrators and teachers.

I reaffirm and approve these Instructions for Guest Speaker Approval for use in the Diocese of Richmond.

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout  
Bishop of Richmond