



# CHURCH OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEO

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## **ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** **Social Media Policy and Protocol (“Social Media Policy”)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **The Need to Engage in Social Media**

*“The world of digital communication, with its almost limitless expressive capacity, makes us appreciate all the more Saint Paul’s exclamation: ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’ ” (1 Cor 9:16) – Pope Benedict XVI, May 16, 2010, 44<sup>th</sup> World Day of Communication Message.*

Social media is the fastest growing form of communication in the United States, especially among youth and young adults. Our Church cannot ignore it, but at the same time we must engage social media in a manner that is safe, responsible, civil, and purposeful.

As Pope Benedict XVI noted in his message for the [44<sup>th</sup> World Day of Communication](#), this new form of media “can offer priests and all pastoral workers a wealth of information and content that was difficult to access before, and facilitate forms of collaboration and greater communion in ways that were unthinkable in the past.”

The Church can use social media to encourage respect, dialogue and honest relationships – in other words, “true friendship” ([43rd World Communication Day Message](#)). To do so requires us to approach social media as a powerful means of evangelization and to consider the Church’s role in providing a Christian perspective to digital literacy.

The online encyclopedia Wikipedia defines social media as “... media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media use web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into social media dialogues”.

#### **Opportunities and Challenges**

Social media offers both opportunities and challenges to Catholic organizations. These can be grouped into three primary categories:

- Visibility
- Community
- Accountability

#### **Visibility**

Online social media communities are vast and growing at a rapid pace. Given the size and scope of these communities, they offer excellent forums for the Church’s visibility and evangelization.

Therefore the key question that faces us is not “Should we engage”, but: “How will we engage?” This engagement must be undertaken with the knowledge that this is a serious commitment. Social media requires constant input and monitoring to maintain visibility and awareness of the Church’s presence through that particular social media. To keep members, a social networking site must have new content on a regular basis. Therefore it is important that site administrators determine how often posts will be made, so that our “followers” can become accustomed to our schedule.

## Community

Social media can be a powerful tool for strengthening community, although social media interaction should not be viewed as a substitute for face-to-face gatherings. Social media can support communities in a myriad of ways: connecting people with similar interests, sharing information about in-person events, providing ways for people to dialogue, etc. A well-considered use of social media has the ultimate goal of encouraging “true friendship” and of understanding the human longing for meaningful community.

## Accountability

Social media provides a tool for building community. Membership in communities also requires accountability and responsibility. People who use social media expect site administrators to allow dialogue, to provide information, and to acknowledge mistakes. The explosion of information available to social media consumers has meant that they often only use information from trusted sites or sites recommended by those whom they trust.

While not every demand or inquiry can be met, it is important that creators and site administrators of social media understand how different social media is from mass media and the expectations of its consumers. Many communication experts are describing the adaptation of social media as a paradigm shift in how humans communicate, as important a development as that of the printing press and the discovery of electronic communication.

## POLICY

All Users (“Users” as defined in the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL AUP**) who are **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** employees or clergy working directly for the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** who utilize social media for or on behalf of the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** must abide by this Social Media Policy, the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications, the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis Code of Pastoral Conduct, the Code of Canon Law and complementary legislation, applicable state and federal law, and the policies of the social media sites they use.

**ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** will engage in social media in a thoughtful way, focusing its efforts in specific, **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** -approved virtual venues.

Social media presences will be established for **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** departments and initiatives following the “Site Establishment” policy below.

Certain **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** employees and/or volunteers will be identified as site administrators for these **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** approved social media venues. This identification will be made by the parish administrator, school principal, or pastor.

Recognizing that certain Users currently maintain their own personal social media presences (including Facebook page(s), Twitter account(s) and blog(s)), it is recommended that such Users abide by this Social Media Policy, the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL AUP**, the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis Code of Pastoral Conduct, the Code of Canon Law and complementary legislation, applicable state and federal law, and the policies of the social media sites they use.

Social media site visitors are also asked to abide by the Site Code of Conduct (below) and will be blocked from use of the site if they violate the Code more than once.

Site Code of Conduct:

All posts and comments should be marked by Christian charity and respect for the truth. They should be on topic and presume the good will of other posters. Discussion should take place primarily from a faith perspective. No ads please.

## Site Establishment

Websites or social networking profile pages are the centerpiece of any social media activity. These guidelines apply to a profile, or fan, page on Facebook, a Twitter account, a video sharing site account, and any future sites determined for use as noted below.

- Any site establishment for or on behalf of **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** will be approved by the business administrator, school principal, or pastor.
- All **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** social media site(s) administrators will be identified by the business administrator, school principal, or pastor.
- There should be at least two site administrators (preferably more) for each social media site, to allow rapid response and continuous monitoring of the site.
  - Social media site administrators must monitor a site at least daily and take prompt remedial action if the administrator notices inappropriate posts or other inappropriate interactions, including, but not limited to: bullying, harassment, vulgar language, sexual innuendo, and inappropriate personal information.
- Steps for dealing with bullying/harassing behavior align with **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** bullying/harassment prevention policy and may include:
  - Document, if possible, and remove offensive posts
  - Inform the business administrator, school principal, or pastor at **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**
  - Contact parents/guardians of offenders and bullied children/youth under the age of 18
  - Remind offenders and bullied children/youth and their parents/guardians of the social media site code of conduct and the comment policy which prohibit bullying/harassing and state consequences for such behavior
  - Offer appropriate assistance to bullied children/youth
- Do not use personal sites for **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** programs or other purposes for or on behalf of **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**.
  - A parish or school leader or staff person's inappropriate personal posts may be seen by parish, school or archdiocesan leadership which could potentially result in employment consequences
- Passwords and names of sites should be registered with the business administrator or school principal. More than one designated site administrator should also have access to this information for each site.
- Administrators establishing a site must follow these rules:
  1. Abide by **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** Social Media Guidelines and Acceptable Use Policy
  2. Abide by archdiocesan policy. (Code of Conduct, etc.)
  3. Do not claim to represent the official position of the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** or the teachings of the Church, unless authorized to do so.
  4. Abide by state and federal law, including copyright, fair use, and financial disclosure laws.
  5. Do not divulge confidential information of others.
  6. Do not cite others, post photos or videos of them, link to their material, etc., without their approval.
  7. Practice Christian charity.
  8. Refer to established trusted sources, including resources on the Archdiocese's website(s) and the USSCB website, to ensure accuracy.

## **Social networking with minors**

Users must have appropriate permission from a minor's parent or guardian before contacting a minor via social media or before posting pictures, video, or other information that may identify that minor. Do not tag minors in visual images or otherwise post minors' names in connection with visual images of those minors.

If any User knowingly communicates privately with a minor as a part of his or her duties for or on behalf of the **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**, reasonable steps must be taken to send the minor's parent/guardian the same communication content, not necessarily via the same technology.

Church personnel should be encouraged to take reasonable steps to memorialize and preserve private communications with youth, especially those which concern the personal sharing of a teen or young adult, as appropriate. All Users must abide by the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, which is federal legislation that oversees how Web sites interact with children under age 13. A summary is available at <http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/privacyinitiatives/childrens.html>. Children under age 13 are not allowed to use Facebook or other social media sites which collect information. A site administrator should not knowingly allow a child under age 13 to engage in Facebook or other applicable social media sites.

Social media primarily intended for minors must utilize appropriate privacy settings.

## **PROTOCOL**

### **How to post, monitor, and respond**

Approved site administrators should use their judgment when deciding whether to respond to any post. It is not necessary to respond to every post. Some posts are too outrageous to be dealt with and are best left alone. Report these to the business administrator or school principal via email, copying other site administrators. In some instances, if applicable and appropriate, the ability to comment can and should be disabled.

An FAQ page (or pages) should be developed on [www.stchb.org](http://www.stchb.org) to which to refer people with common questions/comments. Visitors can then be referred to the appropriate FAQ page. Websites for the Archdiocese, USCCB, Vatican and other entities may also be appropriate resources. This saves time and ensures a consistent response.

Common sense is the best guide when deciding whether to post information in any way relating to **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** in particular or the Church in general.

Above all, please remember to be professional, kind, and discreet.

All Users should report to the business administrator, school principal, or pastor any 'unofficial' sites that carry the **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** logo or name or otherwise purport to be an official site of the **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**

All Users should report to the business administrator, school principal, or pastor any misinformation regarding **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** they find on a site. This is especially important when responding to an incorrect wiki, such as Masstimes.org, etc.

### **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL's Social Media Goals**

- Make the name of Jesus Christ known and loved
- Educate visitors about the teachings of the Church
- Share (**St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**'s, and where appropriate, the Archdiocese's goals/messages/initiatives
- Drive traffic to **St. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**'s website and where appropriate, the Archdiocese's website, the USCCB's website or other appropriate websites

## Social Media Site Posting Guidelines

- Do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** or the Archdiocese
- Write in thoughtful language consistent with the message of the Catholic faith (no insults, slurs or obscenities, or “chat” language)
- Do not instigate conflict, and be the first to admit and correct a mistake
- If it gives you pause, pause. Reread your comments for tone and accuracy before posting.

Examples of topics for acceptable and encouraged posts:

- **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** information – blog posts, current campaigns, new initiatives, etc.
- Upcoming **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** events
- Links to articles believed to be of interest to the audience
- Recent news releases (as directed by the business administrator, school principal, or pastor)
- Anything appropriate that fans or followers would benefit from knowing

## How to Deal with Negative Feedback on Facebook

1. Determine what type of feedback the site has received. Not all posts warrant a response. Negative feedback can come in a variety of forms and is best dealt with by a response tailored to the comment.
  - **Straightforward Problems** – Someone has an issue with **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** in particular or the Church in general.
  - **Constructive Criticism** – The comment comes with a suggestion attached. This type of feedback may point out a perceived “flaw” with policy or practice and is negative, but it can be helpful to receive.
  - **Trolling/Spam** – Trolls leave groundless attacks and try to incite conflict. Spammers try to use a parish, school or archdiocesan page to promote their products.
2. Once it is determined what type of feedback has been received, the appropriate response must be determined.
  - **Straightforward Problem Response:** This is on a case-by-case basis, but the best responses educate rather than defend. For example:
    - Straightforward Problem Post: (In regards to the new Missal) I think prayer which touches the heart and can be felt in a personal way as it is proclaimed is so much more beautiful than prayer that does not flow. To me, this new translation is awkward.
    - **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL Response:** For any questions or concerns you may have regarding the new translations of the Roman Missal, we encourage you to visit the following website: <http://www.archspm.org/departments/worship/roman-missal.php>
  - Constructive Criticism Response: Thank the site visitor for their suggestion. For example:
    - Constructive Criticism Post: Dear Communications Office: Please have your FB page admin set wall posts on this page to "Admins Only." It's an easy thing to do and takes mere seconds. It will not prevent Facebook site visitors from posting comments or expressing opinions. It will cause comments to respond to relevant topics. Thanks and God bless!
    - **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL Response @xxxx:** Thank you for the suggestion. It is something we have been considering. We will continue to monitor the page closely and evaluate our options.

- Trolling/Spam Response: This is designed either to bait a site administrator into an unnecessary and image-damaging fight/discussion: do not respond.
  - Trolling Post: The Catholic Church hates everyone.
  - Spam Post: Add me up guys. Thanks.
- **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL Response**: Do not respond. Delete the post and block the troller/spammer. Report to the business administrator, school principal, or pastor if appropriate.

### **How to Moderate a Facebook Page**

**ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** Facebook site administrators are determined by the business administrator, school principal, or pastor.

We have the right to delete comments that violate our comment policy (below).

If a poster blatantly disregards the Code of Conduct posted for visitors of the site (i.e. uses vulgar language, maliciously attacks another poster, etc.), we operate under a one strike policy - we let poster know once, and only once (by a personal message), that they are violating our comment policy. If a poster has been warned and disregards the warning by continuing to post comments that go against our Facebook policy, we reserve the right to ban them from posting on the page.

If there is a fan who needs to be warned, please bring it to the attention of the business administrator, school principal or pastor via email, including the poster's name and inappropriate/unacceptable comment. The business administrator, school principal, or pastor will warn the poster, and monitor as needed.

### **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL 's Facebook Comment Policy to be Posted on All ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL 's Facebook Sites**

The purpose of this Facebook page is to provide an interactive forum where readers can gather and discuss information about the wide range of issues involving **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**.

Followers are encouraged to post questions, comments and concerns, but should remember this is a moderated online discussion hosted by the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL**.

The **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** appreciates healthy, constructive debate and discussion; that means we ask that comments be kept civil in tone and reflect the charity and respect that marks Christian discourse.

It is understood that comments made by visitors do not necessarily reflect the positions of the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** and/or the teachings of the Catholic Church. Comments will not be removed simply because they express opinions in disagreement with the teachings of the Catholic Church. However, comments that may be deleted include those that contain:

- Vulgar language
- Personal attacks/bullying/harassment/inflammatory remarks against a person or group
- Links to sites that contain offensive material or attack the Catholic Church
- Spam
- Promotion of services, products, political organizations/agendas
- Information that is factually incorrect
- Content/comments off topic

The **ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** reserves the right to remove posts/block posters who violate this policy.

### **How to Deal with Negative Feedback on Twitter**

1. Determine what type of feedback the site has received. Not all posts warrant a response. Negative feedback can come in a variety of forms and is best dealt with by a response tailored to the comment.

- **Straightforward Problems** – Someone has an issue with the **ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** in particular and/or the Church in general and has laid out why.
  - **Constructive Criticism** – The comment comes with a suggestion attached. This type of feedback may point out a perceived “flaw” with policy/practices and is negative, but it can be helpful to receive.
  - **Trolling** – Trolls leave groundless attacks.
2. Once it is determined what type of feedback has been received, the appropriate response must be determined
- **Straightforward Problem Response:** This is on a case-by-case basis, but the best responses educate rather than defend. For example:
    - Straightforward Problem Tweet: @ARCHSPM I don't like the Missal Changes!
    - **ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CHURCH AND SCHOOL Response:** @xxxx Find out more about why these Missal changes are happening throughout the English speaking world at <http://www.archspm.org/departments/worship/roman-missal.php>
  - **Constructive Criticism Response:** Thank the site visitor for their suggestion. For example:
    - Constructive Criticism Tweet: @ARCHSPM You need to get the word out about your calendar of events, you should tweet events.
    - **ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CHURCH AND SCHOOL Response:** Thanks, @xxxx. That's a great idea. We will try to implement that ASAP.
  - **Trolling Response:** This is designed to bait administrators into an unnecessary and image-damaging fight:
    - Do not respond.

#### **Video Sharing Site**

Comments on video sharing site(s) should be disabled, unless you are able to commit to monitoring regularly.

**ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CHURCH AND SCHOOL** gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Communications Office in the development of this policy.