

October 22, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

The late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, often expressed the need for a new evangelization, intended to help people throughout the world open the doors of their hearts and lives to Christ. It is the duty and responsibility of each believer to proclaim Jesus Christ to all people. Yet, if we are to fulfill this duty well, each of us needs ongoing formation in our faith so that our proclamation of and witness to the Gospel will be credible. Such formation is “a lifelong process for the individual and a constant and concerted pastoral activity of the Christian community” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Catechetical Directory*, no. 32).

At the same time, each of us must recall that we have received the deposit of faith that was first entrusted to the Apostles by Christ Himself as a gift. “It is the heritage of the whole Church. It is our privilege and our responsibility to preserve the memory of Christ’s words and the words themselves and to teach future generations of believers to carry out all that Christ commanded his apostles” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Directory for Catechesis*, no. 26).

As the Chief Shepherd of souls within the Diocese of Arlington, I am obliged by the law of the Church “firmly to defend the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed” (*Code of Canon Law*, Can. 386 §2). As part of the fulfillment of this duty, it is important that I assist the pastors and those with pastoral authority in the Diocese to ensure that guest speakers, who come to teach the Catholic faithful, and so to assist in the ongoing formation of the faithful, do so with fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church. When we provide a forum for a speaker within our parishes, schools or other institutions, the faithful have the right to expect that what they hear will be consonant with the teaching of the Church, and with the pastoral direction of the Diocese of Arlington (cf. Can. 229 §1).

In order to assist me in this responsibility of maintaining intact “the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed,” I am pleased to appoint a Theological Commission within the Diocese of Arlington. This Commission, composed of Fathers Paul deLadurantaye, Thomas Ferguson and James Tucker, will be responsible for reviewing the qualifications of all guest speakers who may be invited to offer presentations dealing with matters of Catholic faith or Catholic moral teaching.

Office of the Bishop ✠ Diocese of Arlington

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I am enclosing, with this letter, a policy concerning guest speakers in the Diocese of Arlington. This policy will be effective on January 4, 2008. I ask that you read this policy carefully and observe its directives completely.

The concern to hand on the authentic teaching of the Church, in all its liberating beauty and integrity, is of vital importance in every age. As we respond to the late Pope John Paul II's call for a new evangelization, may we all continue to be well formed in our faith so that we might, by word and example, lead others to Jesus Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6).

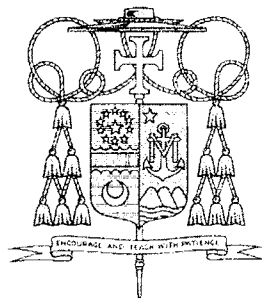
With the assurance of my prayers, I remain,

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+ Paul S. Loverde". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde
Bishop of Arlington

Enclosure (1)



Policy Concerning Guest Speakers in the Diocese of Arlington

Formation in the faith is an important and life-long task. The Catholic faithful have the right to be formed in their faith (cf. can. 217; can. 229), and those responsible for leadership in the Church have the duty to provide for such formation (cf. can. 386; can. 528, §1). Often, this formation can be aided by presentations, workshops and speakers at parish and diocesan events.

Since it pertains to the diocesan bishop to protect the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed (cf. can. 386, §2), the policy set forth below is to be applied to any and all speakers from outside the Diocese of Arlington who may be invited to offer presentations dealing with matters of Catholic faith or Catholic moral teaching. This policy is applicable to offices of the Central Administration of the Diocese of Arlington, to parishes and missions, diocesan schools, and Catholic campus ministries. This policy is to be followed whether the diocesan office or institution invites, sponsors or simply serves as a host for speakers coming from outside the diocese.

POLICY CONCERNING GUEST SPEAKERS

1. Speakers who **do not need approval** (i.e., those who are exempt from this policy) include:
 - a. Cardinals and bishops in communion with the Holy See;
 - b. Priests and deacons of the Diocese of Arlington who are in good standing;
 - c. Members of religious communities (whether priests, deacons, brothers or sisters) officially established in or serving in the diocese;
 - d. Anyone in the diocese who is appointed by the bishop or a pastor/parochial administrator as a staff person (paid or volunteer), catechist, school teacher, youth minister, campus minister or is on the staff of a Catholic institution.
2. Guest speakers from outside the diocese are to be approved through the Diocesan Theological Commission. Approval is necessary before the speaker can be invited. The following procedures are to be followed by the office or institution that wishes to invite, sponsor or host a guest speaker:
 - a. In all cases, the speaker must be in good standing with the Church.


- i. Priests and Deacons – with their diocese through their bishop
 - ii. Religious – with their religious congregation, as verified by the major superior, provincial or local superior
 - iii. Laity – with either the bishop of their diocese or their pastor.
- b. The inviting/sponsoring office or institution should first contact the Diocesan Theological Commission either by mail or by telephone [703-841-2554] to propose the name of a guest speaker and to determine whether it will be necessary to follow the manner of proceeding given below. In the case of a well-known speaker, for example, approval may be obtained directly without the need to observe what is set out in the following points.
- c. The inviting/hosting office or institution is to obtain the guest speaker's *curriculum vitae* which is to include academic degrees/qualifications and all writings (articles, books and/or book reviews).
- d. The inviting/hosting office or institution is to note the guest speaker's competence in the subject area which will be presented by detailing the speaker's education, ministerial background (if applicable), and references (especially if the speaker has given presentations in other dioceses).
- e. The inviting/hosting office or institution has the following set of responsibilities:
 - i. To verify the speaker's good standing and competency (as noted above, in #2, a-d);
 - ii. To verify insurance and visa information, if necessary (e.g., for speakers coming from outside the country);
 - iii. To clarify financial arrangements;
 - iv. To provide a suitable environment for the presentation;
 - v. To provide for an evaluation of the speaker, to collate and summarize the evaluation, and to submit a report to the Diocesan Theological Commission.
- f. The following documents are to be submitted by the inviting/hosting office or institution to the Diocesan Theological Commission:
 - i. A copy of the letter of recommendation by the proposed speaker's bishop, religious superior or pastor, mentioned in #2, a, i-iii above.

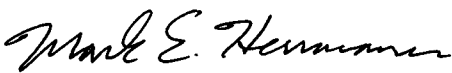
- ii. A copy of the proposed speaker's *curriculum vitae*, mentioned in #2, c above.
- iii. A cover letter from the sponsor of the proposed speaker. This letter should address the points detailed in #2, d above. If the proposed speaker is not a Catholic, the cover letter should provide written assurance that the speaker's presentation will not conflict with Catholic teaching in any way.
- g. The above-mentioned documents must be sent to the Diocesan Theological Commission before a formal invitation can be issued for a guest speaker. Therefore, offices or institutions planning to invite guest speakers from outside the diocese should allow enough time prior to the planned event to gather the needed documents and forward them to the Diocesan Theological Commission. The Theological Commission will review the documents and communicate approval or non-approval to the inviting/hosting office or institution.
- h. The above-mentioned documents should be sent to the following address:

Diocesan Theological Commission
200 N. Glebe Road, Suite 503
Arlington, Virginia 22203

This policy is effective on January 4, 2008. Speakers already invited prior to this date are exempt from this process; after this date, however, all diocesan offices and institutions must comply with the above policy.

Given from the Office of the Bishop of Arlington
October 22, 2007


Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde
Bishop of Arlington


Mr. Mark Herrmann, Esq.
Chancellor