



MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES POLICIES ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

- Assume the full burden of responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and spiritual direction relationships.
- Never engage in sexual intimacies with the persons you are counseling or directing. This includes consensual and nonconsensual contact, forced physical contact, and inappropriate sexual comments.
- Avoid physical contact of any kind that could be misconstrued.
- Sessions should be conducted in appropriate settings at appropriate times, not in private living quarters and not at places or times that would tend to cause confusion about the nature of the relationship to the person(s) being counseled or directed.

Sexual Conduct

No priest, deacon, other minister, employee or volunteer shall, for sexual gain or intimacy, exploit the trust placed in them by the faith community.

- Priests and deacons who are committed to a celibate lifestyle are called to be an example of celibate chastity in all their relationships at all times.
- Deacons, employees and volunteers who are married are called to be examples of marital chastity in all their relationships at all times.
- Employees and volunteers who are single or widowed are called to be examples of chastity in the single life.
- No priest, deacon, employee or volunteer may exploit another person for sexual purposes.

Priests, deacons, other ministers, employees and volunteers are to review and know the contents of the diocesan sexual abuse policies - Maintaining Boundaries.

November 14, 2003

For a complete set of *MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES: Policies on Sexual Misconduct* @1043 C, contact the Diocese of Green Bay, PO Box 23825, Green Bay, WI 54305-3825

The Diocese of Green Bay will not tolerate the sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a minor* by a priest, deacon, other minister, employee or volunteer who is in the service of the Diocese.

DIOCESAN CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT

The Diocese of Green Bay expects its priests, deacons, employees, other ministers, and those who volunteer service to conduct themselves properly and appropriately in their relationships with the people they serve, especially with minors.

The following Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct provides a set of standards for conduct in certain pastoral situations. This Code of Conduct has been developed in compliance with the 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and with the Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests, Deacons, or other Church Personnel.

Responsibility for adherence to the Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct rests with the individual, but the support and observance of the Code is an important concern for all. Those who disregard this Code will be subject to remedial action by the Bishop, the Vicar for Administration or that person's supervisor. Corrective action may take various forms — from a verbal warning to removal from the ministry or discharge from employment or release from volunteer service — depending on the specific nature and circumstances of the offense and the extent of the harm.

Conduct With Youth

When working with youth, maintain an open and trustworthy relationship and follow these rules:

- Be aware of your own and others' vulnerability when working alone with youth. Use a team approach to managing youth activities.
- Physical contact with youth can be misconstrued and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate.

**The term "minor" refers to anyone younger than 18 and to a vulnerable adult.*

- Never provide youth with alcohol, illegal drugs, sexually provocative materials or any illegal materials.
- The illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol is strictly prohibited.
- Never use alcohol when working with youth.
- Young people should not be allowed to stay overnight in the rectory or the priest's private residence.
- In rare, emergency situations, when accommodation is necessary for the health and well-being of the youth, take extraordinary care to protect all parties from the appearance of impropriety and from all risk of harm. Use a team approach to managing emergency situations.
- Taking photos of young people while they are unclothed or undressing is prohibited.
- If inappropriate personal or physical attraction develops between an adult (a cleric, an employee or a volunteer) and a young person, the adult is responsible for maintaining clear professional boundaries.
- Avoid being alone with a young person in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, dressing facility or other closed room or isolated area that is inappropriate to the relationship.

Confidentiality _____

Trust is one of the cornerstones in all pastoral relations. Over the years, people have become used to speaking in confidence to a priest or deacon because of the trust they have in the clergy. To avoid breaking that trust, priests and deacons shall continue to respect the confidentiality entrusted to them.

- Under no circumstances whatsoever may a priest disclose, even indirectly, information received through the confessional.
- Information disclosed to a priest or deacon or other minister during the course of counseling or spiritual direction or in a pastoral conversation must be held in the strictest confidence that is legally possible.

Conflicts of Interest _____

Always avoid situations that might present a conflict of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can call integrity and professional conduct into question.

For example, conflicts of interest may arise when the independent judgment of a priest, deacon, or other minister, while serving as a pastoral counselor or spiritual director, is impaired by: prior dealings; becoming personally involved; or becoming an advocate for one (person) against another. When this becomes evident, the pastoral counselor or spiritual director shall advise the parties that he/she can no longer provide services and shall refer them to another pastoral counselor or spiritual director.

Ethical or Professional Misconduct _____

Priests, deacons, other ministers, employees and volunteers have a responsibility for maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. They also have a duty to report breaches of this Code of Pastoral Conduct by themselves or by others.

When an uncertainty exists about whether a situation or course of conduct violates this Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct or other religious, moral, or ethical principles, consult with peers or others who are knowledgeable about ethical issues.

When there is an indication of illegal action by a priest, deacon, other minister, employee or volunteer, immediately notify the diocesan Vicar for Administration or that person's supervisor.

Pastoral Standards _____

Priests, deacons and others who provide pastoral counseling and spiritual direction must maintain appropriate boundaries and adhere to the following rules:

- Never step beyond your competence in counseling situations; limit the number of counseling sessions to no more than three and refer clients to other professionals when appropriate.