

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY FOR SAINT VINCENT ARCHABBEY

Social networking involves the use of internet platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other internet-based social networks. This policy is intended to guide the members of the Benedictine community of Saint Vincent Archabbey in their use of online social networking.

Social networking presents an opportunity to spread the Gospel in a variety of effective ways. Nevertheless, those who use social networks must remain attentive to the problems that can occur through careless or irresponsible use of social networks.

The Archabbey's Child Protection Policy incorporates the provisions of this social media policy. With regard to communications occurring over social media or any other electronic means, Community Members should pay particular attention to the prohibited behaviors listed in §1.04, Standards of Conduct, (A): (8)–(11) and (C) Violations of Boundaries with Minors or Vulnerable Adults of the Archabbey Policy: *Creating a Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults*. **Community members are responsible for maintaining the standards of Saint Vincent Archabbey even when interacting outside of formal ministry.** Community Members must also be aware of the provisions of the Acceptable Use Policy of the Saint Vincent community as promulgated by the Information Technology (IT) office, the Website Privacy Policy, Title IX Policy, the Information Security (IS) Security Policy (specifically Section IV. Policy and Procedure Elements: (D) (6)) and policies contained in the applicable Saint Vincent Handbooks.

Violations of these policies will result in severe sanctions, which may include referral to civil and criminal authorities.

Principles and Guidelines

Interacting online with current and former students of the College or anyone else requires careful monitoring. Standards of respect, prudence, professionalism and absolute protection of children and their safety are heightened in all interactions. Expect that anything you post on line will become public information.

- Posting material online gives the information a permanence that is different from face-to-face interactions. Community Members should be totally aware of this if they post material for online viewing. Accordingly, anything that would potentially bring shame or disrepute to the Community or to an individual monk is forbidden.
- As a Member of a religious community, the public has high expectations regarding the ethical and moral acceptability of a monk's behavior and statements. The public considers statements from a monk to have authority. Comments that Community Members publish both in person and online must be in compliance with the higher moral standards represented by religious. Publishing any libelous, scandalous, abusive or knowingly false information is immoral and carries possible civil and/or canonical consequences.

- Any opinions that a monk expresses on social networks must be faithful to and consistent with the established policies of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops :(www.usccb.org/about/communications/social-media-guidelines.cfm) Accordingly, do not publish any statements contrary to the teachings of the Church or defamatory of its members or leaders.
- Guidance on the publication of any matter can be obtained from the Archabbot, Prior or monastic superior.
- Community Members shall not accept Facebook friend requests, LinkedIn connections, or any other similar social media connection request from minors or vulnerable adults. Inappropriate internet contact with a minor can result in a felony criminal prosecution carrying penalties of years in prison pursuant to § 6318 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code.
- Community Members shall not accept Facebook friend requests, LinkedIn connections, or any other similar social media connection request from unknown persons.
- Community Members shall not communicate with others on internet chatrooms.
- Community Members shall not incorporate into any electronic communication any trademarked or copyrighted material of the Archabbey, College or Seminary or any other source without the specific permission of the Archabbot or his designee.
- A Community Member who publishes a blog or posts online matters related to their work or on subjects associated with the Archabbey must make sure that the reader understands that their views do not necessarily reflect the views of the Archabbey or the Benedictine Society.
- Violation of these social networking policies by any Community Member should be reported to the Archabbot or to the Delegate for Child Protection.