



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NEW YORK

## SOME THINGS TO KNOW

APRIL 19, 2021

<https://archny.org/monthly-combined-mailing-from-the-vicar-general/>

**REQUIRED ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN** The Archdiocese of New York is committed to doing all that is can to protect children and young people from sexual abuse. As part of that effort, we periodically write to the Catholic community to advise them whom they may contact and what steps they can take if they have suffered abuse by someone representing the Catholic church.

Please include this announcement in both English and Spanish in your Sunday bulletin. Its wording was approved by the presbyteral council. If your parish uses another language, i.e., Chinese, French, German, Italian or others, I am asking that you have it correctly translated and send a copy of your bulletin with these translations to my office. Additionally, publish this announcement every May, September and January.

*“To report an alleged incident of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest, deacon, religious or lay person serving in the Archdiocese of New York may contact the victims assistance coordinator, Mrs. Eileen Mulcahy at 646-794-2949 or [victimsassistance@archny.org](mailto:victimsassistance@archny.org). Information can also be found on the archdiocesan website [www.archny.org](http://www.archny.org). In keeping with archdiocesan policy regarding sexual abuse of minors, this is provided to ensure that our children remain safe and secure.”*

*“Cualquier persona que necesite reportar algún incidente de abuso sexual de un menor por un sacerdote, diacono, religioso/a, o laico sirviendo en la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, se le pide que por favor contacte al coordinador de asistencia a las víctimas, Señora Eileen Mulcahy al 646-794-2949. Ella también pueden ser contactada vía correo electrónica: [victimsassistance@archny.org](mailto:victimsassistance@archny.org). Para más información pueden visitar la página en la red de la arquidiócesis: [www.archny.org](http://www.archny.org). De acuerdo con las normas de la arquidiócesis sobre el respeto al abuso sexual de menores, esta información se provee para asegurar que nuestros niños permanezcan seguros.”*

**ANNUAL MEETING AND MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES** To ensure that your parish is in compliance with the New York State Religious Corporation Law, make certain that the names of your two lay trustees are on file with the chancery office and that the minutes of the annual meeting of the board of trustees are kept on file at your parish office. For a quorum, it is permissible for the archbishop and vicar general to be excused. New trustee nomination forms for 2021-2022 will be coming your way at the beginning of the summer.

**SALUS INFIRMORUM** Father Brian Brennan, Monsignor Dermot Brennan, Monsignor Michael Curran, Father John Figueroa, Father Hugh Grace, Father Thomas Lynch, Monsignor Hugh McManus, Father Philip Quealy, Father Richard Seagraves, Bishop Gerald Walsh.

**REQUIESCAT IN PACE** Father Joseph Henchey, CSS.

**SHARE THE WORD** Please give access to all your priests and staff members to the material which is pertinent to them, enclosed in the monthly mailing from the office of the vicar general. For it to succeed, we recommend that this *Some Things to Know* be posted in the public area of the general office.

**ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD** The class of 2021 will be ordained to the sacred order of priest at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday, May 29 at 9:00 am. On behalf of His Eminence and Bishop James Massa, you are warmly invited to concelebrate at this liturgy and receive first priestly blessings from the newly-ordained. For the Archdiocese of New York, they are

Reverend Mr. Matthew Breslin  
Reverend Mr. Robert Carolan  
Reverend Mr. Carmine Caruso  
Reverend Mr. Steven Gonzalez  
Reverend Mr. Kevin Panameno  
Reverend Mr. Wesbee Victor

**FUNERAL EXPENSES FOR COVID-19 DEATHS** Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA will provide financial assistance for COVID-19-related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020. In April, FEMA will begin accepting applications. If your parishioners had COVID-19 funeral expenses, have them gather documentation such as

- Official death certificate that attributes the death directly or indirectly to COVID-19 and shows that the death occurred in the United States, including the US territories, and the District of Columbia;
- Funeral expenses documents (receipts, funeral home contract, etc.) that includes the applicant's name, the deceased person's name, the amount of funeral expenses, and the dates the funeral expenses happened;
- Proof of funds received from other sources specifically for use toward funeral costs.

Those who meet the FEMA guidelines will need to order a new certified copy of the death certificate with a cause of death. Any hospital, nursing home or home death will not have a cause of death listed on the death certificate due to NYC HIPAA laws. Funeral homes can only reorder death certificates for family within one year from the date of death.

<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>.

**RELIGION AND POLITICS** Like all citizens, priests and deacons certainly have the right to form and express their own political beliefs and opinions, and to vote according to their well-formed conscience. It is also their duty to teach fundamental moral principles that help Catholics form their consciences correctly, to provide guidance on the moral dimensions of public policy matters, and to encourage the faithful to carry out their responsibilities in political life.

However, clergy must always bear in mind that “it does not fall on the shoulders of the pastors of the Church to intervene directly in political activities and in social organizations. This task, in fact, forms part of the lay faithful vocation, in which they work by their own initiative together with their fellow citizens.” (CCC 2442)

As a result, clergy must always be mindful of their unique role in the parish and the larger community, and the potential impact of their expression of political opinions. The highest degree of prudence is necessary to ensure that partisan politics do not cause division or scandal in the Church. A priest must always maintain his vital position as a source of unity and fraternity for all Catholics, regardless of their political views. We have seen many examples of priests who do not show such prudence, and the grave damage that this causes.

To put this in more concrete terms:

- Avoid any partisan political expression from the pulpit or in the parish bulletin or social media). This includes praise or condemnation of political parties;
- Never endorse or oppose a candidate for office in any official Church forum, whether hidden or overt;
- Always assist the conscience formation of parishioners by explaining what the Church teaches on moral issues that may have political importance;
- Clergy statements on political matters in official settings should always focus on the issues involved and not on individual candidates or office holders;
- In personal social media and private discussions, always exercise restraint and civility in the expression of political views; always avoid unreliable sources and inflammatory material;
- Always speak respectfully of public officials, particularly in official settings. A good example of this is to refer to public officials by their office, rather than just by name (e.g., "the president", or "the governor"). Derogatory or derisive nicknames for public figures should never be used.
- Additional specific guidance is available in the document “Pastors, Parishes and Political Responsibility” from the NYS Catholic Conference. ([www.nyscatholic.org](http://www.nyscatholic.org)).

**PAPAL BLESSINGS** This is the season when requests for parchments in recognition of sacraments, special birthdays or anniversaries are made. These can now be obtained either in Rome or online at <https://www.elemosineria.va/papal-blessing-parchments>. Apostolic blessings now come in a selection of designs and languages and you can pay online via Visa or Mastercard. Parishes or individuals can set up an account with the *Elemosineria Apostolica* (Office of Papal Charities). Parchments are shipped via DHL Courier.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS MAILBOX** This is a good time for us to revisit the option of receiving official mail at a personal email account. The main benefit is that it eliminates the need to log in to the clergy webmail system through the archdiocesan website. Email from the *Announcements Mailbox* will go directly to a priest's personal address and is kept on a private server which strictly monitors who has access to it. All email to priests is approved by the vicar general so that they are not deluged with unauthorized or unnecessary messages from various departments at the Catholic Center. If a priest chooses this option, he must be sure to keep the email address up-to-date. New information may be sent to the data system center (*support@archny.org*).

**BLOGGING, EMAIL, AND SOCIAL MEDIA** Although it can be a very useful tool, priests are reminded to exercise caution and prudence while using the Internet, including writing blogs, sending e-mail, choosing an e-mail address, and the use of social media sites.

**TIME AWAY FROM THE PARISH** Priests engaged in a full-time assignment in the archdiocese are entitled to four weeks of vacation (either continuous or interrupted) which, as a general rule, are to be taken during the summer months. Those days which are spent once a year in spiritual retreat are not computed in the vacation. Time away from the parish ought not interfere with the priest's pastoral ministry and/or the spiritual needs of the parish, office, institution, or agency to which he has been assigned. In order to be absent from the parish for more than seven days, however, the local ordinary is to be informed. For our purposes, local ordinaries include the vicar general or the priest's regional bishop/episcopal vicar.

**A REMINDER** *"Don't put your elbows on the table."* *"Remember not to text while driving."* *"Put your dirty laundry in the hamper, not on the floor."* The reminders we have heard throughout our lives are good. So, we offer this reminder. While we are still observing the initial guidelines in our churches during the pandemic, it is not appropriate for deacons and priests to invite the faithful to exchange a sign of peace during any liturgy. This option, along with communion from a common chalice has been suspended within the archdiocese since last March. We are still avoiding physical contact and maintaining two-meter distancing. It is for the protection and safety of all.

**WHAT TAKES SO LONG?** When mailing a letter to the pastoral or administrative offices of the Catholic Center, like requests for dispensations, for example, to ensure fastest service, include the name of the recipient on the outside of the envelope. Otherwise, it may take longer than usual for your message to arrive where it belongs.

**JUST ONE MORE THING** Once my dog ate all the Scrabble tiles. He kept leaving little messages around the house.