

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL TEACHERS OF THE FAITH EXERCISING MINISTRY IN SINGAPORE

### 1. Purpose

To provide a code of conduct for all approved teachers of the Roman Catholic faith in Singapore, whether foreign or local, so as to promote the respectful and peaceful teaching of authentic Catholicism.

### 2. Definitions

“approved”	Having received the express authorization of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore in written form or through an act of commissioning/ appointment by a legitimate representative of the Archdiocese
“Church”	Referring or belonging to the Universal Catholic Church, and/or the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore
“Catholicism”	The Catholic religion as handed down through Sacred Scripture, the Magisterium and Christian tradition. Sources of such teaching include but are not limited to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), papal documents, Vatican II documents, General Instructions of the Roman Missal (GIRM), Code of Canon Law, pastoral letters to the faithful and other publications that have received the necessary imprimaturs and <i>nihil obstat</i>
“Code of Conduct”	A set of rules outlining the social responsibilities and proper practices for foreign and local teachers of the Catholic faith in Singapore
“exercising ministry”	A person acting in their capacity as a appointed teacher to transmit the Catholic faith in speech or writing
“teachers of the Catholic faith”	Persons appointed, sanctioned or invited by the Archdiocese of Singapore or any of its representatives to transmit the faith, in speech or writing. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All clergy and religious (local and foreign)</li> <li>• All lay speakers, preachers and missionaries (local and foreign)</li> <li>• All archdiocesan ministry leaders who participate in transmitting the faith through teaching and sharing</li> <li>• All parish ministry leaders who participate in transmitting the faith through teaching and sharing, including parish catechists</li> <li>• All religious education or catechism teachers in Catholic schools (independent and autonomous)</li> <li>• Chaplaincy teams for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Singapore</li> </ul>

### 3. Existing Archdiocesan policies for Screening

#### 3.1 Statement of Suitability for Ministry (SSM) For Clergy and Religious

3.1.1 All foreign (visiting) clerics and religious who are not incardinated in the Archdiocese of Singapore and who intend to celebrate or concelebrate Mass or do any ministry work in Singapore must submit an SSM application with a valid celebret.

3.1.2 The SSM form has three sections including:

- i. the Singapore Organizer's form,
- ii. the endorsement of the applicant, by his or her Bishop/ Provincial Superior,
- iii. the applicant's own statement on fundraising, house blessings/ anointing of the sick, and agreement to abide by Singapore's Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act (MHRA).

3.1.3 The SSM form is submitted to the Chancery with an approved Miscellaneous Work Pass (MWP) from the Singapore government's Ministry of Manpower.

#### 3.2 Statement of Suitability for Ministry (SSM) For Laity

3.2.1 All foreign (visiting) laity who wish to do any ministry work in Singapore must also submit an SSM application to the Chancery with an approved Miscellaneous Work Pass (MWP) from the Singapore government's Ministry of Manpower.

3.2.2 The SSM form for laity has the same three sections as for Clergy and Religious. These are:

- i. the Singapore Organizer's form
- ii. the endorsement of the lay minister, by his or her Parish Priest/ Spiritual Director of their Church organization **AND** the endorsement by his or her own Bishop
- iii. the applicant's own statement on fundraising, and agreement to abide by Singapore's Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act (MHRA).

#### 3.3 Announcement & Advertisement Request (AAR)

3.3.1 Parishes or Catholic entities listed in the Catholic Directory who wish to advertise events that they are organizing in the Archdiocesan website's events section and/or print media (e.g. Hai Sing Pao and Catholic News) must complete and submit the AAR form before submitting the event for publication. The local speaker's parish priest or spiritual director is required to sign the form as a method of indicating the speaker's legitimacy and their knowledge of the event.

3.3.2 The AAR helps to ensure the legitimacy of the speakers, compliance with the data protection laws in Singapore and facilitates the promotion of the event in the Archdiocese.

#### **4. Rationale for the Code of Conduct**

- 4.1 In light of heightened concerns about the spread of radicalized ideologues, the Singapore government has recently indicated that it is looking into stricter measures for religious preachers. These measures ensure that religious preachers do not preach incendiary teachings, or teachings that otherwise challenge the multicultural and multi-religious harmony of Singapore's society.
- 4.2 As a responsible religious organization and stakeholder in Singapore, it behoves the Catholic Church to provide a code of conduct for all approved teachers of the Roman Catholic faith in Singapore, whether foreign or local, so as to promote the respectful and peaceful teaching of authentic Catholicism.
- 4.3 This Code of Conduct strengthens the existing protocols that govern the entry and conduct of foreign preachers (cf. Paragraph 3.1 and 3.2) and regulates local lay teachers of the faith (cf. Paragraph 3.3).
- 4.4 This Code of Conduct complements the processes regulating teachers of the faith domiciled in Singapore, in accordance with canons 804 and 805 of the Code of Canon Law.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Can. 804 §1. The Catholic religious instruction and education which are imparted in any schools whatsoever or are provided through the various instruments of social communication are subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the conference of bishops to issue general norms about this field of action and for the diocesan bishop to regulate and watch over it.

Can. 804 §2. The local ordinary is to be concerned that those who are designated teachers of religious instruction in schools, even in non-Catholic ones, are outstanding in correct doctrine, the witness of a Christian life, and teaching skill.

Can. 805. For his own diocese, the local ordinary has the right to appoint or approve teachers of religion and even to remove them or demand that they be removed if a reason of religion or morals requires it.

## 5. Code of Conduct

### 5.1 Conduct of the Teacher

- 5.1.1 All teachers of the Catholic faith exercising ministry in Singapore are to convey the truths of Catholicism faithfully, in accordance with Sacred Scripture, the Magisterium and authentic Catholic tradition.
- 5.1.2 All teachers are to reflect charitable Christian behaviour in the course of their preaching.
- 5.1.3 All teachers are to be aware of their obligations with regards to civil and canon law. These include the awareness of:
- i. Criminal offences in Singapore
  - ii. Canons pertaining to Catholic education (Cann. 804- 805)
  - iii. Canons pertaining to Ministry of the Divine Word (Cann. 758- 760)
- 5.1.4 All teachers must be careful to respect the distinction between religion and politics, and should not engage in partisan politics and issues that are strictly political.
- 5.1.5 All teachers should be sensitive towards persons and practices of other faiths. They must not use incendiary or derogatory language when speaking of other religions.<sup>2</sup>
- 5.1.6 No teacher may use his or her position of authority to exercise any kind of coercion over any of the persons at the event or following from the event.

### 5.2 Conduct of the Teacher's Ministry

- 5.2.1 In line with data protection laws of Singapore, the organizing committee or the teacher may not collect, use or disclose personal data of their students or audience without first informing them of the purpose (e.g. for registration) and seeking their consent for such a purpose. The data collected may not be used for any undisclosed purposes.
- 5.2.2 No member of the audience is obliged to provide their personal details to be contacted after the event has ended.
- 5.2.3 Personal contact details from persons under 18 years old may not be collected without their parent's or legal guardian's consent.

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<sup>2</sup> "The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men." *Nostra Aetate* (1965), n. 2.

- 5.2.4 If the teacher's exercise of ministry includes a liturgical, prayer, or healing service as part of the teaching, these should as far as possible be conducted in spaces accessible to the public.
- 5.2.5 Where the teacher's ministry is conducted in homes, the local authority must be informed and give their express written consent. Authorization for foreign speakers should come from the Archbishop's office or the Chancery, and authorization for local speakers should come from their parish priest or spiritual director of the group they belong to.
- 5.2.6 The ministry should not be conducted in homes unless the relevant authorities' consent has been sought and given, and all participants and parents/ legal guardians (for persons under 18 years old) have been informed and have similarly given their consent.
- 5.2.7 If audio or video recording is to be carried out on the teacher's instructions, the audience should be informed prior to the recording.

## **6. Consequences of violating the Code of Conduct**

- 6.1 Teachers who are found to be teaching against Church doctrine or otherwise violating this Code of Conduct will be warned and if necessary suspended from their teaching ministry.
- 6.2 Foreign teachers may be barred from re-entering Singapore to teach.
- 6.3 Teachers who have received a warning, suspension from ministry or barred from entering Singapore will be blacklisted by Church authorities in the Archdiocese of Singapore.
- 6.4 Teachers who use denigrating language against other religions are liable to prosecution by Singapore's government under the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act (MRHA).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Section 8 of the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act

The Minister may make a restraining order against any priest, monk, pastor, imam, elder, office-bearer or any other person who is in a position of authority in any religious group or institution or any member thereof for the purposes specified in subsection (2) where the Minister is satisfied that that person has committed or is attempting to commit any of the following acts:

- (a) causing feelings of enmity, hatred, ill-will or hostility between different religious groups;
- (b) carrying out activities to promote a political cause, or a cause of any political party while, or under the guise of, propagating or practising any religious belief;
- (c) carrying out subversive activities under the guise of propagating or practising any religious belief;
- or
- (d) exciting disaffection against the President or the Government while, or under the guise of, propagating or practising any religious belief.

## **7. Policy Details**

Effective Date of Policy: 25 January 2018