

Endorsement of Local Lay Speakers Teaching at Archdiocesan-National Level in the Archdiocese of Singapore— Q & A

I. Questions about the application process

1. What are the different levels of ministry in the Archdiocese?

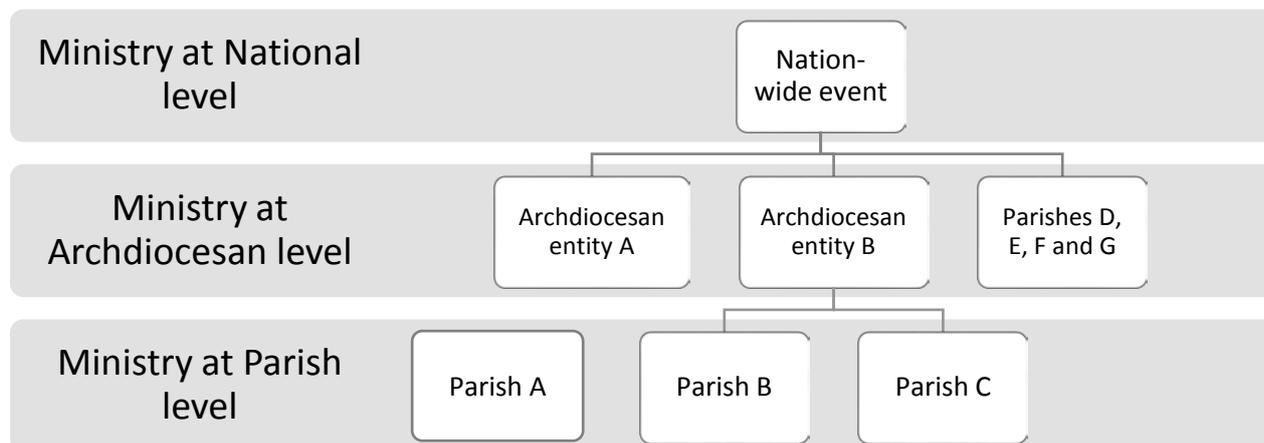


Figure 1 Diagram of the different levels of ministry in the Archdiocese of Singapore

A. There are three main levels at which ministry is conducted.

- **Ministry at Parish level**— Teaching the faith is carried out by laity as an extension of the parish priest's office (cf. can 776). Ministry at this level may include parish ministers such as lay catechists and local lay speakers giving talks or conducting workshops and retreats, as invited by the parish team. The parish priest has full authority to ensure that laity ministering in his parish transmit the faith accurately and skilfully, as strong witnesses (refer to Parish A in the diagram above). Endorsement by the Archdiocese is *not* required for laity in parish ministries.
- **Ministry at Archdiocesan level**— When local lay speakers teach about Catholic faith, spirituality or doctrine at the Archdiocesan level, they are required to belong to an officially recognized Archdiocesan entity (refer to Q. 11) or be endorsed by the Archdiocese for this ministry. The two avenues to teach the faith at Archdiocesan level are:

Avenues of teaching	Example
1. Under the auspices of Archdiocesan entities and/or	E.g. a talk organized by Archdiocesan Entity B, attended by parishioners from Parish B and C
2. By an individual lay speaker teaching at more than one parish or Catholic entity	E.g. a local lay speaker giving the same talk to parishes D, E, F and G

Note: 'lay teachers of the faith' and 'lay speakers' are used interchangeably. Both refer to lay individuals who are involved in the ministry of preaching about the Catholic faith, spirituality and doctrine.

- **Ministry at National level**—When local lay speakers teach about Catholic faith, spirituality or doctrine at an event, talk or workshop open to the public in Singapore, including non-Catholics, they are required to belong to an officially recognized Archdiocesan entity (refer to Q. 11) or be endorsed by the Archdiocese for this ministry. Note: “National-level” and “Archdiocesan-level” are terms that can be used together in reference to the same event, i.e. Archdiocesan-National level.
- 2. What are some examples of ministries that involve teaching the faith?**
- A. Some examples include but are not limited to: conducting spiritual retreats, general talks on the faith, days of recollection, specialist training workshops (e.g. training Spiritual Directors), and religious music performances where there are portions of preaching. If in doubt, please contact the Chancery Office at Tel: 6336 9408 or Email: chancery@catholic.org.sg.
- 3. How does the process of application work?**
- A. Application forms can be found at <https://chancery.catholic.sg/> under Services >> Procedures for Lay Teachers of the Faith. Completed forms should be sent to the Chancery as per the address provided in the form. Applications are reviewed by the higher Church authorities and applicants will be notified of the results via the Chancery.
- 4. How long does it take for my application to be approved?**
- A. It will take between 6- 8 weeks. Potential applicants should apply at least 3 months before their speaking engagement.
- 5. Who can I contact to make an edit on my application after it has been submitted?**
- A. You may contact the Chancery Office at Tel: 6336-9408 or Email: chancery@catholic.org.sg.
- 6. Will the reason(s) for unsuccessful applications be made known?**
- A. The Archdiocese of Singapore reserves the right to accept or reject an application without disclosing the reasons for rejection. Rejected applicants may however, seek the following avenues.
- 1) Request to know the reasons for rejection. A rejection advisory may be provided at the Archdiocese’s discretion.
 - 2) Appeal for a second consideration if they can address the issues in their rejection advisory immediately.
 - 3) Wait one year and apply again via the Chancery, having addressed the issues in their rejection advisory.

Note: ‘lay teachers of the faith’ and ‘lay speakers’ are used interchangeably. Both refer to lay individuals who are involved in the ministry of preaching about the Catholic faith, spirituality and doctrine.

7. What if my parish priest and/or spiritual director of my ministry are unable to be my character referees? Can I ask another priest, religious or lay person to be my referee?

A. The parish priest and spiritual director of your ministry are officially assigned to the pastoral care of the community committed to them under the authority of the Archbishop. If one is unable to receive a referral from these offices, applicants may also submit character referrals from priests incardinated in the Archdiocese of Singapore or religious/lay spiritual directors affiliated with an official Archdiocesan/ Religious entity.

8. How is the Endorsement of Local Lay Speakers different from the Statement of Suitability for Ministry (SSM) and Announcement & Advertisement Request (AAR) process?

A. Please refer to the table below.

	Endorsement of Local Lay Speakers	Statement of Suitability for Ministry (SSM)	Announcement & Advertisement Request (AAR)
Who should apply for this?	Local laity living in Singapore, who are not affiliated with any Archdiocesan/religious entities in Singapore and wish to teach the Catholic faith publicly	Local organizers wishing to invite foreign speakers (clergy, religious or lay) to teach the Catholic faith in Singapore	Local organizers wishing to announce and advertise event(s) in the following Archdiocese media channel(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events section at catholic.sg and/or • Print media (e.g. Hai Sing Pao, CatholicNews, etc)
Purpose	To ensure that local lay teachers of the Catholic faith transmit the faith accurately and skilfully, as strong witnesses to the faith, in consideration of religious harmony and fundraising regulations in Singapore.	To ensure the legitimacy of foreign teachers of the faith, in consideration of religious harmony and fundraising regulations in Singapore	To ensure the legitimacy of lay/ foreign speakers and facilitate the promotion of the event(s)
Validity	The endorsement letter is valid for 1 year	The SSM form is valid for 6 months	The AAR form is only valid for the specific event

Note: 'lay teachers of the faith' and 'lay speakers' are used interchangeably. Both refer to lay individuals who are involved in the ministry of preaching about the Catholic faith, spirituality and doctrine.

II. Questions about lay speakers

9. Is this endorsement required for lay speakers who wish to minister in an overseas context?

A. No. As per the existing policy (cf. Chancery Notice 28 February 2014), lay individuals engaged for talks or ministry overseas should request for endorsement letters directly from the spiritual director of their ministry group or from their parish priest.

10. Is this endorsement required for lay speakers who are not Singaporean or Singaporean Permanent Residents (PR) but living in Singapore?

A. Yes, endorsement is required. Please note that a person would be considered “living in Singapore” if he or she resides in Singapore except for temporary absences, and is physically present or employed in Singapore for more than six months in a year.

11. Do laity working with religious (e.g. with Jesuits, Redemptorists, Franciscans) have to apply for this endorsement?

A. No. Lay speakers with a teaching ministry given by Institutes of Consecrated Life based in Singapore are under the jurisdiction of that religious entity. They need not apply for further endorsement. **However**, laity working with religious entities who are **not** based in Singapore should apply for endorsement.

Please refer to the Archdiocese of Singapore’s online Catholic Directory at http://www.catholic.sg/directory/singapore_catholic_church/ for a list of Institutes of Consecrated Life that are officially based in and recognized by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore.

12. If the speakers are already part of an Archdiocesan entity e.g. Office for Catechesis (OFC) or Catholic Theological Institute of Singapore (CTIS), do they need to apply for Archdiocesan endorsement as well?

A. No. Lay speakers affiliated with an officially recognized Archdiocesan entity do not need to apply for further endorsement.

Please refer to the Archdiocese of Singapore’s online Catholic Directory at http://www.catholic.sg/directory/singapore_catholic_church/ for a list of entities that are officially based in and recognized by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore.

13. Is endorsement compulsory for local lay speakers who are not part of an officially recognized Catholic entity?

A. Yes. In line with Archdiocesan efforts to ensure that the local Catholic community receives authentic Catholic formation, lay speakers must seek Archdiocesan endorsement or come under the jurisdiction of an officially recognized entity before accepting invitations to teach the faith at an Archdiocesan-National level.

Note: ‘lay teachers of the faith’ and ‘lay speakers’ are used interchangeably. Both refer to lay individuals who are involved in the ministry of preaching about the Catholic faith, spirituality and doctrine.

14. Do Catholic organizations inviting lay speakers have to ensure that the lay speakers have received endorsement by the Archdiocese?

A. Yes. Catholic organizations inviting local lay speakers to give talks or conduct workshops in Singapore at an Archdiocesan- National level should ensure that the speaker they have engaged has been endorsed by the Archdiocese or belongs to an officially-recognized entity. They should ask the lay speaker for a copy of his or her endorsement letter which the Archdiocese provides to all endorsed local lay speakers.

Note: Catholic organizations inviting foreign lay speakers to give talks or conduct workshops in Singapore should abide by the Statement of Suitability for Ministry (SSM) procedures established by the Chancery Office. Please refer to the Chancery's website at <https://chancery.catholic.sg/statement-suitability-ministry/> for more details.

15. Can the public check with the Chancery if a lay speaker has been endorsed by the Archdiocese?

A. Yes. You may contact the Chancery Office at Tel: 6336-9408 or Email: chancery@catholic.org.sg.

16. If a member of the public has concerns about an endorsed lay speaker's teachings, how can they provide feedback?

A. Individuals who have concerns or feedback about an endorsed speaker's teaching may contact the Chancery via email: chancery@catholic.org.sg or by post at Chancery Office, #07-01 Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo Street S(187954). Individuals are reminded to provide their full name and contact details as anonymous messages will not be entertained.

This document was last updated on 18 June 2018. Please contact the Chancery Office at Tel: 6336 9408 or Email: chancery@catholic.org.sg for further enquiries.

Note: 'lay teachers of the faith' and 'lay speakers' are used interchangeably. Both refer to lay individuals who are involved in the ministry of preaching about the Catholic faith, spirituality and doctrine.