

# Corpus Christi Catholic Church

## Photography and Media Policy

### Background

Some parishioners have raised questions about whether and when it is appropriate to take photos during Mass. Others have expressed concerns about privacy, where the photos are being stored, and who has access to the photos. The use of social media for sharing photos has prompted additional questions and concerns. This document's purpose is to state our policy and clarify some of the basic issues:

- when and where photography is allowed.
- whether and what type of permission is necessary from anyone photographed.
- how photos taken at church and church-related activities will be stored and shared.

Many churches now have photography and media policies. The policy that follows draws from the sources listed at the end.

### General Policy

People coming to Mass on Sunday would not typically expect to be photographed. Photography should therefore only occur during Mass on rare occasions when there is a specific, defined need for photos. Out of respect for those who have come to this sacred place to worship, photography is not allowed without prior consent of the Pastor during daily or Sunday Masses or funerals. The Pastor may provide photography guidance at the beginning of special liturgies, such as Baptisms and First Communions. It is not permissible to photograph individuals without their consent (written consent of a parent or guardian in the case of children).

Because taking photos can be distracting to the people at church or a church-related event, thought should be given to which photos are most needed and why. If photos can be taken outside of Mass (i.e. photos documenting the seasonal decorations), they should be. If it is determined that photos during Mass are needed, the photographer should not use a flash or focus assist light, should move as little as possible during Mass, and should use their quietest camera settings.

## **Specific Situations**

### *Weddings*

- Flash photography may occur during the processional and recessional only, but not during the ceremony.
- While the ceremony is in progress, photographers must remain behind the seated guests, and they are asked to refrain from obtrusive or disruptive movement during the ceremony.
- Videographers are to remain stationary during the ceremony.

### *Parish Events*

- Photos of adults identifiable in the photo can be used with verbal consent.
- Photos of children under age 18 who are identifiable may only be used if the Parish obtains a written permission from their parent or guardian.

### *Marketing Photos*

- Photos of people can be “staged” at a time other than Mass, with volunteer “models” who sign releases in advance.

## **Use of photos on the Parish website and social media sites**

- We will not knowingly post anything that would be embarrassing, objectionable or hurtful to anyone in the photo.
- We will gladly remove any photo immediately upon request.

## **Photo storage and access**

- Public access must be restricted. Examples of this might include password protection, or limited distribution of access links to protected storage on file sharing sites.

## **References**

- <https://www.cathedralsaintpaul.org/photography>
- <https://ministrylink.org/using-images-in-your-churchs-communications/>
- <http://fbc-worc.org/media/media-policy/>