



## DIocese OF MANCHESTER MEMORANDUM

To: Parish Secretaries, School Principals, Camps staff, DAB staff  
CC: Diane Murphy Quinlan, Chancellor  
Meredith Cook, Vice Chancellor  
From: Tom Bebbington, Director of Communications  
Date: March 4, 2019  
RE: Use of unlicensed images

It has recently come to our attention that Catholic ministries across the country, including at least one parish in our diocese, are receiving letters demanding payment due to the unlicensed use of images. The most frequent complaint has been the use of unlicensed images of Pope Francis in parish bulletins or on parish websites. The letters threaten suit unless a payment of hundreds or even thousands of dollars is made within the next few weeks.

The internet is full of images, which makes it easy to do a quick search and download a picture for your website, print publication, or social media feed. But federal copyright law protects all original created works, including pictures found on the Internet. Even if a copyright, trademark, or other symbol is not apparent, you should assume that all materials posted on the Internet enjoy copyright protection. Even “free” materials that are available without payment of a royalty may only be used consistent with the permissible uses stated on the website.

To remain in compliance with federal copyright law:

- Review your websites, print publications, and social media feeds as soon as possible and remove any images for which you do not have specific, documented permission to use.
- Share the information in this memorandum with anyone who has authority to post information to your website and social media accounts and be clear that images must not be posted unless documented permission has been received. (Please note that when dealing with social media posts, sharing or retweeting content created and posted by others is generally OK, but creating a new post or tweet that contains an image that you do not have not have permission to use is not.)
- Please note that the images on catholicnh.org are copyrighted and the diocese has permission to use them. That permission does not automatically extend to parishes, and any use of an image from the diocesan website should be cleared with the Office of Communications in advance.
- If you receive notice of a copyright violation, please contact the Office of the Chancellor immediately.

Please share this with your staff as appropriate, and if you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact me at [tbebbington@rcbm.org](mailto:tbebbington@rcbm.org), or at 603-663-0150.