

Awareness Campaign's necessarily formulaic press release used in cases of church-personnel misbehavior

Annotated with Reasoning Explained

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Use organization's letterhead

Church dismisses youth worker following arrest

- ❑ Active-voice hed,
- ❑ Shorter what-we-are-doing-about-problem

Public information from [your org. name]

Sept. 8, 2014

Contact: Joe Flack [e-mail and cel No.]

The [Diocese, church etc., of _____] on Sept. 8 received information about the arrest of a parish youth worker who Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigators say had child pornography on a home computer.

- ❑ Who, When What
- ❑ Passive voice OK because part of attribution
- ❑ ALWAYS attribute sources of info (fairness, accuracy)

[church or org. name, city], immediately terminated its employment of the youth worker, [name of the arrestee], and prohibited him from being on church property or having contact with any children associated with the church.

- ❑ Longer what-we-are-doing, more details.

Before his employment at [church/org. name], [arrestee] had fulfilled the [org name]'s required Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse certificate program, called Safeguarding God's Children. Completion of the program is mandatory for all workers – paid or volunteer – who have contact with youth at diocesan organizations. For more information about [name of program] see [url for third-party trainer/certifier].

- ❑ How we are always, scrupulously on guard about this kind of thing
- ❑ Make SURE these facts are straight. (*In this case as well as the SOP – Insist that everyone really does take the course and signs the paper, and keep excellent records thereof*)

“As Christians, a core tenet of our church is the protection and elevation of the dignity and care of all people, especially children and others who may be the most vulnerable and in need of special safeguarding,” said the Rt. Rev. [name], diocesan bishop. “Our hearts and our prayers go out to everyone involved in this matter.”

- ❑ ABSOLUTELY necessary to have head of org. speak up (and not sound evasive or defensive).

For guidelines on ways to keep children safe online, the FDLE has information here: bit.ly/safekids08

- ❑ Says: “We’re serious about this subject, and we want you to be too.”
- ❑ Always use your Bitly (or other shortened, trackable) link to monitor clicks

Letterhead should include org. street addr. and other contact info