

**PROVINCE OF MIAMI POLICY ON
ACCESS TO CHURCH FACILITIES**
Approved by the Bishops, December 21, 1977

Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me . . . Matthew 25:34-36

These words of Christ contain the principle on which the Church engages in social action, in the promotion of the dignity and fundamental rights of the human person. It is on this basis that the Province of Miami adopts this policy relating to access of non-church groups to church facilities.

The primary purposes of all church property are liturgical and the development of the local church community.

The control and management of local parish and institution property remains in the local pastors or administrators, who will undoubtedly concur in the full spirit of this policy. The Chancellor, or such person as he names, shall coordinate the application of this policy and shall be available to advise or recommend responses to requests, so that the policy throughout the respective dioceses might be applied with some degree of uniformity.

Pastors and administrators are encouraged to be open to the use of church facilities and premises by non-church groups and organizations, especially so when the users are those who suffer hardships and indignities or are the objects of special concern by the Church. Migrant workers, minorities and youth are examples of such users. Such usage shall not conflict with the values of the Church; permission to use the property shall not be construed to be an endorsement of any nature.

When organized groups seek the use of facilities or premises they should be asked:

1. to bear the actual expenses involved (i.e., cost of heating, air conditioning, etc.) unless this is waived.
2. to have a release of liability, a form of which is attached, executed by the responsible party.
3. furnish a certificate of liability insurance, naming the (Arch)diocese as an insured, in amounts of not less than \$100,000/\$300,000.
4. notice shall be clearly and publicly given to members of the parish and to the general public of the said policy to the effect that "permission to use the property shall not be construed to be an endorsement of any nature." Such notice may be published in all notices of meetings, in the parish bulletin, on parish bulletin boards or by other means acceptable to the pastor.