

DIOCESE OF BILOXI
Policy on the Use of Alcohol

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We are to take care of them, remembering the needs of others and the common good of all (CCC 2288). The Catechism teaches that “The virtue of temperance disposes us to avoid every kind of excess: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, and medicine. Those incur grave guilt who, by drunkenness or a love of speed, endanger their own and others’ safety on the road, at sea, or in the air” (CCC 2290).

The people of the Diocese of Biloxi do not wish to encourage the use or abuse of alcohol; therefore, publicity for events on Church property or sponsored by Church entities should not appear to do so. The following policy is intended to provide for the responsible use of alcohol at Church-sponsored functions.

This policy is in addition to all applicable state and federal laws,* and applies to any function sponsored by any parish, mission, school, or ministry of the Diocese of Biloxi whether on Church premises or elsewhere.

The term “alcoholic beverage” refers to liquor, beer, and/or wine and includes beverages or other concoctions containing liquor, beer, and/or wine when these can have an intoxicating effect.

1. No one under the age of 21 is permitted to consume, handle, or serve alcoholic beverages even with permission of parent(s) or guardian(s), whether or not the function takes place on Church property. Alcoholic beverages may be self-serve only at gatherings where no one under 21 is admitted.
2. Because of the difficulties involved in assuring that persons do not become intoxicated and that those under 21 do not consume alcohol, Bring Your Own Bottle (“BYOB”) functions are prohibited.
3. Beer and/or wine may be sold if food is also served at the function.
4. Sale of liquor and concoctions containing liquor that can have an intoxicating effect is prohibited at any function, whether or not the function takes place on Church property. Any exchange of tickets, free will offerings, etc., for an alcoholic beverage is considered to be a sale.
5. Containers of beer and wine are to be clearly labeled and supervised by an adult.
6. Alcoholic beverages are to be refused to anyone who appears to be intoxicated. Alcoholic beverages are to be distributed by individual servings. Any sale of a ticket entitling a person to multiple alcoholic drinks is prohibited.
7. There is to be a plan in place in the event that anyone appears to need transportation as a result of consumption of alcohol.

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8. When Church premises are rented or loaned for private events, the responsible adult organizer is to sign a copy of this policy indicating understanding and agreement; this same person is to assure that a copy of this policy is provided to all relevant parties, e.g., bartenders, other organizers, etc. Other diocesan policies are applicable when participants at an event exceed a determined number.

*See "Distribution of Beer and Light Wine - Legal Considerations"

I have read the above policy, and I understand and agree to comply with my obligations herein.

Signature and Date

Effective February 1, 2007.