

Instructions: Completing the Mandate

1. Who: Anyone who is 14 years old or older (cf: Canon 1478§3) and has an interest in the spiritual or temporal affairs of the Diocese of Fort Worth can sign a mandate. This includes all Catholics, even those who do not attend Mass (cf: Canon 383§1); non-Catholics who are married to a Catholic or who are related to a Catholic in the Diocese of Fort Worth; anyone who lives outside the Diocese of Fort Worth but supports the Diocese of Fort Worth or one of its affiliates (eg: school, parish, pro-life outreach, etc.) by working for that entity (eg: school teacher, etc.), volunteering for that entity, or supporting that entity financially. And, those who live or work or volunteer outside the Diocese of Fort Worth but are directly harmed by the actions of Bishop Michael Olson or his staff may sign a mandate.

NB: In cases of those living outside the Diocese of Fort Worth, it is necessary to establish the cause for signing the mandate. This is done by providing a note, attached to the mandate, that explains your purpose in signing a mandate (eg: donor to a school, staff or volunteer in the diocese, or identify the harm suffered). It is sufficient to handwrite this explanation on the back of the mandate.

2. Signature: Sign the mandate on the top line provided at the bottom of the first page. Place the date of signature on the line provided, to the right of the signature line. Immediately below the signature line, print your name and address.

3. Verification: On the back of the form is a place for two witness verifications. Please sign your mandate in the presence of two witnesses. Those witnesses are to verify your identity and signature by providing their signatures and printed names and addresses as shown.

NB: You are encouraged to have others who sign a mandate witness yours. In groups of three or more, each person can sign a mandate and witness the signatures of the others.

4. Return the mandates either to the person who shared it with you (a core group leader in the Diocese of Fort Worth), or mail it directly to:

Philip C. L. Gray, JCL
85882 Water Works Rd.
Hopedale, OH 43976

Question: What if I am afraid to sign a mandate? I am afraid the Bishop will take retribution against me or my family member?

Answer: Mr. Gray does not send the mandates to the Bishop. He does not send them to any third party. He sends them only to the Holy See in a sealed box. It is not the usual protocol for Rome to send material to the Bishop. It is not impossible that the Bishop will see the mandates, it is improbable and would take a considerable effort for him to obtain the names. That being said, if you are truly fearful, you should sign the mandate and have it authenticated, and write “CONFIDENTIAL” across the top of the mandate, and a brief explanation of why you are afraid written on the back. Mr. Gray will provide a copy to Rome with names and street addresses blacked out. Rome will probably not consider these to be valid mandates, but they will be valid evidence of the fear caused by the Bishop in his exercise of ministry. In this way, you may not be counted as a mandator, but you would be a witness to the harm of the Bishop and your confidential mandate would provide that evidence.

Question: If my pastor asks me if I signed a mandate, do I have to tell?

Answer: NO. You have no obligation to admit that you signed a mandate. They are intended to authorize Mr. Gray to pursue a petition to the Pope to remove Bishop Olson. They cannot be used to determine if you are suitable for pastoral ministries in your parish, or to otherwise judge your character. You have a right to sign a mandate and ask for Bishop Olson's removal without fear of reprisal (Canons 212§3, 213, 215, 216, 221).

Question: What do I do if my Pastor or the Bishop does something harmful because I signed a mandate or he thinks I signed a mandate?

Answer: Contact Mr. Gray's office immediately by calling 740-937-2054 and report the incident. If you signed a mandate, Mr. Gray will intervene to defend your rights. If you did not sign a mandate, his office will work with you to find a solution.