

VIDEO GUIDELINES

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“In our age which is characterized by the mass media, we must not fail to avail ourselves of the media for the first proclamation of the message, for catechetical instruction and for a deeper study of the faith. These, when they are employed in the service of the gospel, can disseminate the word of God over a vast area and carry the message of salvation to millions of men. The Church would feel herself guilty before God if she did not avail herself of those powerful instruments which human skill is constantly developing and perfecting. With their aid she may preach ‘upon the housetops’ the message which has been entrusted to her. In them she finds in a new and more effective form a platform or pulpit from which she may address the multitudes”

Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*; n. 45

The mission of the Catholic Church is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ all around the world by becoming His missionary disciples. Modern technology is an important tool that can help fulfill the mission of the Church. It allows us to improve communication, to evangelize, advocate, and pray, among other things. Videos are one of the most commonly used media today due to the combination of visuals and audio. A video can convey a powerful message to a great many people. For this reason, the Diocese of Charleston’s Office of Multimedia has developed these guidelines to help you create quality video content that can reach the heart of the community of faith.

Clear and concise message

Videos need to have an intention and a clear message for the viewer.

- a. What is the message of the video? Is it to evangelize? To inform? To invite? Is it a CTA (call-to-action) video?
- b. How is your message going to engage your audience?

Length vs. Content Quality

This is one of the most controversial topics when producing a video, but at the end of the day what matters is what works for your message and your audience. If the quality of the content is good enough, then producing a long video is not a bad idea. However take in mind several things:

- Viewers' attention span is short. Based on a research made by Wistia¹ on Video Marketing "engagement is steady up to 2 minutes," after that there is an exponential decay on the viewer's attention.
- Create different versions of a video based on where it will be posted. Take into account the time limit of the platform, audience's age, and preferred aspect ratio (screen size) of the platform (See page 10).
- Using analytics provides information to better understand your audience: the average watch time, which videos have been more engaging to the audience, etc.
- If the content is long and can be divided, then a video series could be an option.
- Think as one of your viewers: Would you watch the full video? Would you keep it muted or play it with audio?

Visuals and audio

These two elements allow a video to be memorable and powerful; a professional camera, a microphone and a professional editing program are not necessary to accomplish this. A tablet, a mobile phone, a regular video camera and a free app can obtain the same results for a well-crafted message. What visuals and/or audio will help you deliver a clear message?

¹Fishman, Ezra. Wistia (2016). *How Long Should Your Next Video Be?* Cambridge, MA. Retrived from: <https://wistia.com/learn/marketing/optimal-video-length>

Pre-production

- Schedule with a few days or weeks ahead to film or to do an interview.
- Check the weather or conditions of the location where you want to film.
- Ask for permission to use a location and ask people if they want to participate in the video.
- Take a few minutes to set up the equipment and to organize the composition of the frame (See Figure 1), especially if you are using a tablet or smart phone.
- Make a list of things you need to film.

Production

- **The Rule of Thirds:** It is a simple technique that allows you to improve the composition and to balance the image. Mentally, you divide the frame (what you see in the viewfinder of the camera or smartphone screen) vertically and horizontally into thirds. This will divide the image into 9 parts and allow you to place the point of interest (subject) in any place where the lines intersect.



Figure 1- Rule of Thirds

- Don't forget to press RECORD and make sure the red light or LIVE sign is on; believe it or not, people often forget.
- When filming different clips, make sure they are 10 to 15 seconds long.
- Vary your shots from a wide angle to a medium one to a close-up. This allows you to tell a cohesive story and make it more interesting to watch.



Figure 2 - Close-up shot



Figure 3 - Medium shot



Figure 4 - Wide shot

- Most of the time it is better to record horizontally, but depending on the social media channel you are using to upload the video you might have a better idea on how to record.

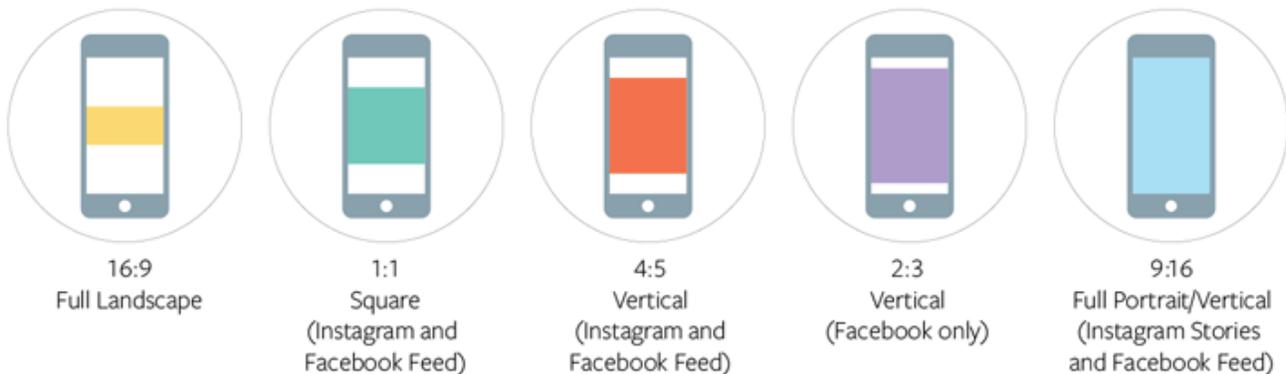


Figure 5 - Facebook and Instagram aspect ratios. Image by LouiseM.com

- Avoid recording in places with too much background noise.
 - If possible, use a microphone when doing an interview.
 - Audio tests are important to make sure there are no background noises and audio levels are correct (usually between -20db and -10db is recommended.)

- In most cases, it's preferably to have a decent amount of headroom (space between the top of a person's head and the top of your frame).



Figure 6 - Extra amount of headroom



Figure 7 - No headroom



Figure 8 - Good amount of headroom

- Consider the angle you want to film and be careful with it; a bad angle can distract the viewer or affect the way the viewer processes the message, but an interesting angle can be engaging and can make your video more interesting to watch.
- Have some movement when filming. Be careful with the pace of the movement and have a variety of still shots and shots with movement (panning, tilting, etc.). Be aware of the background inside the frame. Remove or change any element that can be distracting to the viewer.
- Try to film stable shots. Sometimes handheld shots are helpful for a point-of-view perspective but they can be distracting due to shakiness. Using tripods, monopods and stabilizers might help. If handheld, brace yourself against a wall, the ground, furniture, etc.
 - While editing you can cut the shaky parts, or depending on the program you are using to edit, you might have the ability to stabilize the image.
- Lighting is easy to forget when filming, but it's important in order to avoid grainy images or overexposed ones. Always have a source of light when filming.

- When conducting an interview, make sure the interviewee is not looking straight at the camera. Sit or stand next to either side of the camera and ask them to look at you; it is more natural and comfortable for the interviewee.
 - Make sure you and the camera are positioned at the same eye-level of the interviewee.



Figure 9 - Interview shot

Post-production

- To retain your audience you have the first 3 to 5 seconds of the video to grab the attention and deliver the key message. Get to the point!
- Always include a description or caption of the video.
- Optimal audio levels should be around -12db with occasional peaks to -8db, but your ears should be your guide.
- Be careful when using copyrighted music and imagery; without the appropriate license or permission, your video can be muted or deleted.
- Transitions between video clips and/or photos are fun, but using a lot of them can be distracting. Stick to one or two transitions throughout the video. Make sure you have permission to use the photos.
- Using photos in your production is good when there is no video available; however, if you use more pictures than video it will become a slideshow of photos and not very engaging for your viewers.
- When using text, make sure the font is legible and has a contrast with the background.



Figure 10 - Contrast and legible text over image

Social Media channels video recommendations

Channel	Maximum length Maximum file size	Optimum length	Recommended format ²	Aspect Ratio ³
Facebook 	45 minutes 1.75 GB	Under 2 minutes	MP4 or MOV	9:16 to 16:9
YouTube 	12 hours ⁴ 128 GB	Under 3 minutes	MP4 or MOV	16:9
Twitter 	2 minutes and 20 seconds (120 seconds) 512 MB	Under 2 minutes	MP4 or MOV	1:3 to 3:1
Instagram 	60 seconds 15 MB	Under 60 seconds	MP4	9:16 (vertical) 1.1 (square) 1.91:1 (lanscape)

² Most smartphones record video in compatible formats with all social media channels.

³ Video recorded vertically will be displayed with a pillar box on desktops or letterbox if they are too wide.

⁴ After 15 minutes or 20GB, YouTube will require you to verify your Google account.

How can your videos achieve maximum visibility on YouTube?

YouTube is used by over 1.9 billion people, which makes it the second most important website after Google, and the most important video sharing service. In order to stand out among the million videos uploaded to YouTube it is important to make it easy for your viewers to find your videos. What are some of the ways viewers can find your content?

- 1. YouTube search:** The viewer types a topic or a specific video they want to see into the search box and YouTube will show a list of videos related to the words searched, and will organize them on how relevant the videos are.
- 2. Suggested videos:** Everything a person searches for on YouTube is analyzed by YouTube's algorithms to come up with a customized list of suggested videos to watch next.
- 3. Browse features:** Videos that appear on YouTube's home page are selected based on the browsing history of the viewer, relevance of the video, day uploaded, and view velocity, which is the amount of traffic a video gets within the first 24 hours.

Understanding the algorithms, we can find ways to allow our videos to be visible and relevant to those watching. Optimizing the metadata of your videos is a great way to achieve maximum discovery of your work on YouTube.

Metadata is the information YouTube uses to understand what the video is about. This information includes the title, the description and the tags.

- **Title:** In 60 characters you have to grab the attention of the viewer, reflecting the content of the video by using keywords.
- **Description:** Allows you to share in depth what's on the video and include important links (a website, fundraiser, registration, surveys, etc.). In 5,000 characters you can reiterate, reflect and expand on the content of the video.

⁵University of Leeds. (2018). *Video Guideline*. Leeds, UK. Retrieved from: <https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/video/video-guidelines/>

However, the first 265 characters are the most visible ones in the description and need to be engaging.

- **Tags:** These are keywords that connect the content of the video, the title and the description. Keywords the algorithms to confirm the content of the video. You are able to type 500 characters but it has a limit of 15 tags per video.

The image shows a screenshot of the YouTube video metadata editor. It is divided into three sections: Title, Description, and Tags. The Title field contains 'SC Catholics in Action Conference'. The Description field contains two paragraphs of text. The Tags field contains five tags: 'Catholics in Action Conference', 'Catholics in Action', 'Diocese of Charleston', 'South Carolina Catholics', and 'Bishop Nelson Perez'. Each tag has a small 'x' icon to its right for removal. There is also a large 'x' icon on the far right of the tags section.

Title (required) ?
SC Catholics in Action Conference

Description ?
The SC Catholics in Action Conference hosted by the Diocese of Charleston will take place on October 13 at Cardinal Newman School in Columbia, SC, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information visit, www.sccatholic.org

By our baptism, we are called to be missionary disciples. We have been given a charge, a mission, to fulfill. Join us on October 13 to once again hear the call to put our faith in action. Be inspired, transformed. and nourished to carry out the call to share the joy of the Gospel to everyone we

Tags

Catholics in Action Conference × Catholics in Action × Diocese of Charleston ×

South Carolina Catholics × Bishop Nelson Perez ×

Enter comma-separated values

Figure 11 - Example of a Title, Description and Tags for a video on YouTube

The following programs are optional tools you can use to edit videos for mobile devices and access free music and sound effects:

Video Editing Apps



Splice by GoPro
www.spliceapp.com
FREE

- App only for iOS devices (no need of a GoPro camera)
- Allows you to trim, crop, add effects, add titles, speed control, add animation, add transitions, and select free music and sound effects from the app's library
- You can uploaded directly to YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. You can share it through text messages or email, or save the video on your phone
- Has different tracks to overlay music and narration



Quik by GoPro
www.quik.gopro.com
FREE

- App for Android and iOS devices (except iPhone 4/4s, iPad 2/3/4 and Minipad)
- Allows you to add video clips and photos in the timeline and edit each one individually
- You customize a theme (font, color, transition and music preset), allows you to trim or use the smart cut, edit the video format, music, effects and palette.
- Option to share the video in any social media network
- The app has a music library that you can use but it can have some copyrights problems in YouTube



Adobe Clip (Does not require purchasing the Adobe Creative Cloud)

www.adobe.com/products/premiere-clip.html

FREE

- App for Android and iOS devices
- You can add video clips and photos, mix audio and music, you can add titles, transitions, slow-motion and lighting
- Option to sync the video with the beat of the music
- Option to share it directly to Dropbox, Twitter and YouTube
- If you have the Adobe Creative Cloud you can sync with your device and open it in any Adobe program to continue editing.
- It includes a royalty-free music library and themes
- Option to edit automatically or freeform (manually)
- It won't allow you to rotate video.



iMovie

www.apple.com/imovie

FREE

- App for iOS devices only
- Option to create a Movie or a Trailer
- You can select themes with preset fonts, transitions and colors for your video
- Allows you to import photos and video on your device only (you can only import the audio of a video)
- Option to fade in and out the music automatically
- Includes a music library, or you can select from your music library
- You can record audio or video directly in the app
- You can add transitions, trim or split video clips, you can add titles, select a filter, overlay videos, adjust the volume, speed control
- You can save the video on your phone, or share it in YouTube, Vimeo, and text message, but it will not share directly to Instagram.



Magisto
www.magisto.com
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- For iOS and Android devices
- Fast as writing a blog post, easy as using PowerPoint, powerful as a personal meeting and as scalable as digital marketing
- 3 steps:
 1. Upload content
 2. Choose video editing style and soundtrack from the app's library
 3. The A.I. (Artificial Intelligence) powered professional video maker will analyze and edit the video
- Allows you to zoom, pan (in static shots), manage volume, and for color-correction and image stabilization.
- Can host videos on your website with the Magisto's native player and upload videos on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and Google + in an optimized way.
- Plans
 - Premium: \$4.99/month (annual plan)
 - Professional: \$9.99/month (annual plan)
 - Business: \$34.99/month (annual plan)

Music & Sound effects

Remember that royalty-free music might require you to request a license to use the music or sound effect you want and to give credit to the original artist.



YouTube Audio Library
www.youtube.com/audiolibrary/music
FREE

- If you already have a YouTube account with your Gmail address, you have access to the YouTube music library with royalty free music and sound effects.

- Some videos will have this icon  which means you are required to give attribution to the original artist in your video. You can add the credits on the YouTube description section.



Storyblocks - Audioblocks
www.audioblocks.com

Storyblocks \$\$\$
AUDIOBLOCKS

- Unlimited downloads with the plan
- 100% Royalty-free music and sound effects
- Continuously updated content
- Plans
 - Basic: \$8.25/month (billed annually) 5 members
 - Unlimited: \$12.42/month (billed annually) Unlimited members



Epidemic Sound
www.epidemicsound.com
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- Mostly for YouTube channels but can also be used in content on Facebook, Instagram and Twitch
- Unlimited downloads with the plan
- Royalty-free music
- Plans
 - Starter: 0 – 500K monthly channel views \$15/month
 - Professional: 500K – 5M monthly channel views \$30/month

Aspect ratio: The proportional relationship between width and height of a frame

- Landscape 16:9
- Portrait 9:16
- Square 1:1

Pillarbox: The visual effect of black bars on the left and right sides of the screen when a standard TV image is display on a wide screen.

Letterbox: The visual effect of black bars on the top and bottom of the screen when a movie with a wide aspect ratio is displayed on a TV that is not as wide.

Resolution: Number of pixels in the screen

- 3840 X 2160px = 4K/Ultra HD
- 1920 X 1080px = 1080/Full HD
- 1280 X 720px = 720/HD