

## Faith in the Workplace

Presented to the University Staff Council – December 18, 2018

Roger R. Martinez '85, Ph.D. – Catholic Faculty and Staff Network/Christian Faculty Network

Websites - Join our listserv at:

Catholic Faculty and Staff Network: <http://cfsn.tamu.edu>

Christian Faculty Network: <http://christianfaculty.tamu.edu>

The information provided below was presented by the **Texas A&M University System legal counsel** on two separate occasions at Texas A&M University.

1. You can talk about your faith in the workplace between colleagues and visitors. This is considered “water cooler talk” and similar to talking about sports or any other topic in the office, it’s acceptable. A signal to talk about faith is if your visitor brings it up.
2. You can quote any other faith-based book/document/figure to support your point. You can’t take over the presentation with only those quotes and need to provide a diverse set of quotes unless your topic is specifically about your religion/faith.
3. If you have a motivational email quote of the day for your department, some of the quotes can be faith or religious related.
4. Christian perspective examples:
  - a. During the Advent and Christmas season, we can say Merry Christmas. We can send out a Merry Christmas Card/ecard from our department. If you would like to be more inclusive, you can say “Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.”
  - b. You can have a Christmas tree with Christmas ornaments in public office space/locations as long as you are inclusive of other faiths. Some people add information on Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and other events during the Advent and Christmas season as examples. You can have a snowman and other secular items displayed with the Christmas tree.
5. In our personal office space, we can have any number of items that display our faith. We can have a picture of Jesus, or other holy individuals or sites displayed. We can have our own Christmas tree with only Christian ornaments. We can have a bible on our desk/shelf. We can’t have a shrine in our office, so use discretion. No one can make you take this down as it is your right to express your faith in your personal space. If you have frequent visitors, you might consider what is appropriate for you and your guests.

It is possible to celebrate our faith and value diversity. Since Texas A&M University values diversity, we should each aim to value those who wish to express their faith in the workplace.

For questions or comments, email [cfsn@tamu.edu](mailto:cfsn@tamu.edu). Representatives of the CFSN and CFN are available to present or discuss this information with your leadership team or department.