

Top 10 FAQs Regarding Best Practices For Internet and Social Media Usage

Q. ***Are we allowed to post pictures of school and/or youth group kids on our website or social media pages?***

A. Yes... if you have received permission from their parent or guardian to do so. At the beginning of the year, most schools send home an 'opt out' form when it comes to using photos or video of a child for marketing purposes. This would include printed and electronic materials (including website and social media accounts). The same can be done at the beginning of the year for religious education and youth groups. Information (name, age, address, or 'tagging') of minors in photos should never be published.

Q. ***Does the same go for adults?***

A. Yes, adults must also give written permission to use their images on parish and/or school materials.

Q. ***How do I get permission from everyone if I want to take photos or videos at a large event, like a Mass?***

A. You can post a sign at the entrances to the event, which reads: "By entering these premises you give permission to have your likeness photographed and/or videotaped for parish/school use. If you would not like to be photographed and/or videotaped, please sit in the designated areas."

Q. ***What is the purpose of our school and/or parish website?***

A. The main purposes are to evangelize and inform, and must be consistent with the values of the Catholic Church. It is important to have a site that is easily navigated and where the most important information is easy to find.

Q. ***What about using photos, videos or music that are on the web for my site?***

A. Unless exempt by Fair Use, or in the public domain, use of any copyrighted material (images, video, music, etc.) must be used with permission of the copyright holder. When in doubt, use your own media.

Q. ***Is it ok to post links to other websites?***

A. Caution is always a good idea when choosing to post links to other sites. While not prohibited, one should do proper vetting to make sure the linked pages do not contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Q. ***Who should maintain parish and/or school websites and social media sites?***

A. At least two (2) people should have administrative access to all web-based accounts, and one of those MUST be an employee of the parish and/or school.

Q. ***Can we communicate to individuals through our social media accounts, email or text?***

A. Boundaries are important. These accounts should be seen as extensions of your ministry and therefore not be used for personal communication. All such communications should be professional and appropriate.

Q. ***I really want to do things with video and photography, but we don't have anyone on staff who is experienced with that. What can I do?***

A. The Creative Services Department at the Archdiocese of Portland can assist with photography, videography and video streaming services. It is always better to NOT do something than to do something poorly. If you have questions or need help, the archdiocese is a great place to start.

Q. ***Who do I contact if I have more questions?***

A. The Office of Communications is always here to help! Please call 503-234-5334.