

Recommended Catholic Websites

Produced by Our Lady of Guadalupe, Seattle, WA

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WHAT TO CONSIDER:

In looking for a Catholic website it is important to note that the term “Catholic” is always clear. “Just because you can find something on the Web doesn’t mean it’s true; and just because a site uses ‘Catholic’ in its name doesn’t mean it reflects the teaching and practice of the faith”, as noted by the bishops in “Your Family and Cyberspace”.

Websites with “Catholic” as part of their names may actually be anti-Catholic propaganda sites. Or they may represent points of view held by some Catholics but not representative of the Church universal. They may provide misinformation, or mix good information with bad theology. So how can Internet surfers sort out what is truly Catholic in cyberspace?

The “Protocol for Catholic Media Programming and Media Outlets,” issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, says that anyone operating a web- site identified as Catholic should seek approval from the diocesan bishop where the site is based. Approval establishes that a site is in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church. It doesn’t necessarily mean the bishop agrees with all of the opinions expressed on the site. But this process set out in the Protocol is voluntary. The operator of the Catholic Web site may not know about it or may not bother to go through it. Without the diocesan approval described in the Protocol, how can you tell how “Catholic” a reputedly Catholic site really is? Here are some clues:

- **What is the source?**

If the generator of the Web site is an official arm of the church—the Vatican, an (arch)diocese, or a Catholic parish—then the site is certainly Catholic. But be careful. Using the name of a parish or (arch)diocese doesn’t mean that the site is genuine. Anyone can register a domain name for less than a \$100. If you didn’t receive the Web address from a reliable source or if anything on it looks questionable, check it out with a call to the supposed source.

Any site that isn’t what it seems to be shouldn’t be trusted on its content. Not all good Catholic material on the Web comes from church authorities, however. Unofficial sites need not be rejected automatically. But the origin of the site is still important. If the source is not official, is it reputable? Is it credible? Perhaps you don’t know because you’ve never heard of the organization behind the site or the organization is not identified. Then you should find out more about it. You also need to ask yourself a few more questions:

- **What is the content?**

The material on the Web site may come from reliably Catholic sources, such as official teaching documents of the Church, even if the operator of the site is not official or familiar. So the source of site is important.

- **What are the links?**

Any U.S.-based Catholic Web site should link to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and to the Holy See. For any other links, you should hold them to the same standards of source and content as the original site.

GETTING STARTED

So where do you start? You may be tempted to type “Catholic” into a search engine and go from there. That’s probably not the best approach. A better starting point would be some of the official sites, such as the Vatican and the U.S. Catholic bishops. But don’t stop there.

Cyberspace is home to perhaps hundreds of thousands of excellent Catholic sites. Below is a suggested list of websites. But this list is just an appetizer. Most of the sites listed have links to other good sites. Absence from this list should not in itself be taken as an indication that a particular site is defective in quality or orthodoxy. If you find a link to a site that intrigues you, check it out. But also check out the source, the content, and the content of the source.

SUGGESTED CATHOLIC WEBSITES

Parish Site

www.olgseattle.org (Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish schedules, directions, program information, etc.)

Official Church Sites

www.vatican.va (Holy See)

www.usccb.org (National Conference of Catholic Bishops/United States Catholic Conference)

www.seattlearch.org (Archdiocese of Seattle)

www.rc.net/rcchurch/vatican2 (Vatican II Documents)

Megasites

www.Catholic.net (International/national news, movie reviews, church documents, saints’ lives, interesting information)

www.Catholic-use.com

www.CatholicWeb.com (This has links to many other Catholic web sites)

www.americancatholic.org

Bible

www.biblemaster.com (Offers the Bible in translations, search by word, phrase, book-chapter-verse, topic. Also has study guides)

www.biblestudytools.net (Offers different Bible translations, the Latin Vulgate, concordances, dictionaries, as well as various search options)

News

www.cathcom.net

www.catholicnews.com

www.catholicpress.org

www.americamagazine.org

www.commonwealmagazine.org

For Inactive Catholics

www.OnceCatholic.org

www.paulist.org/landings

www.CatholicsComeHome.org

Christian Initiation (RCIA)

www.naforum.org (North American Forum on the Catechumenate: articles, upcoming workshops, resources, etc.)

Spirituality/Liturgy/Prayer

www.usccb.org/liturgy/innews/index.htm (Newsletter of the Bishops' Committee on Liturgy)

www.usccb.org/nab/index.htm (Lectionary readings for the day)

www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Retreats/Palisades (Retreat and Faith Center for the Archdiocese of Seattle)

www.christdesert.org

www.christusrex.org

www.jesuit.ie/prayer

www.monks.org

www.ignatianctr@juno.com (Website for Ignatian Resource Center-Seattle)

www.nouwen.net

www.paulist.org

Social Justice

www.osjspm.org

www.paxchristiusa.org (Website for the international peace organization)

www.paxchristipnw.org (Local website for Pax Christi Pacific Northwest)

www.maryknoll.org (Website for the Maryknoll Missionary Organization-also their website for their Orbis Bookstore)

www.sojourners.com (Website for the Sojourners Magazine)

www.workingforchange.com (The Online Resource for Social Change about news, human rights and global affairs)

www.crs.org (Website for Catholic Relief Services, an international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States.

Miscellaneous

www.ltp.org (Liturgy Training Publication-publisher of high quality books chiefly for use in learning about the liturgy, has an online bookstore)

www.litpress.org (Liturgical Press-one of the finest publishers of scholarly Catholic books in the US, has an online bookstore)

www.siena.org (The Catherine of Siena Institute presents workshops and other activities aimed at discernment of charisms (spiritual gifts) and the call and ways of life that go with them)

www.cabriniministry.org (Cabrini Pastoral Care Ministry has an annual formation process for persons who feel called to do lay ministry in their parishes or other institutions; based in Seattle)

www.jesuit.org (Website for the Jesuit Religious Community)