

Website Guidelines & Best Practices (For Parishes)



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APPENDIX 1 - Archdiocese of St. Boniface Social Media Policy

APPENDIX 2 – Policies & Procedures for Photos & Videos

1. The Archdiocese of St. Boniface Social Media Policy (SMP)

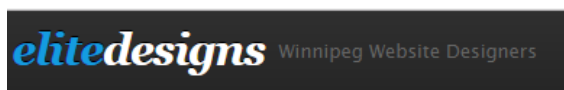
The **Archdiocese of St. Boniface Social Media Policy (SMP)** applies to web development & web strategy. **View SMP document.**

2. Website Controls

In conjunction with the SMP, there are some **Website Controls** which parish staff or volunteers, who have been assigned to update sections of the website, should follow.

- The website must be administered by at least 2 adults who are assigned to manage the website (ideally, never one person). One of these delegates must be a supervisor.
- Optimize image/photo size of images or photos which are downloaded on the website. The smaller the size, the faster your website will be. Limit size to no larger than 300-800 pixels (resize images ex. in Paint, before downloading on the website). A website that loads in less than 4 seconds is more likely to rank better in search results, get more page visits per user, get more conversions.
- Use consistent font type, style and size throughout the website.
- Avoid posting of Word documents or Excel files online, in order to avoid the possibility of unauthorized changes being applied.
- Convert all .doc, .xcl, and .ppt files to locked pdf files whenever possible before publishing.
- Use the *Archdiocese of St. Boniface Policy for Photos, Parental Consent Form and Implicit Consent Announcement* as required by various situations. Please refer to the document ***Policies & Procedures for Photos and Videos.***

3. Suggestions of Web Providers who can build your Parish Website



- The Archdiocese of Saint Boniface web provider is Léo Laramée, Elite Designs: 1-888-241-5678; info@elitedesigns.ca. <http://www.elitedesigns.ca/>

A basic web template for parishes will be provided for free; web hosting is approximately \$400 /year.

There are numerous Catholic Parish Website Providers available online:

View **CatholicTechTalk** : <http://catholictechtalk.com/2016/02/19/top-ten-catholic-parish-website-providers/> for the *Top Ten Catholic Parish Website Providers* and their description (2016).



- **eCatholic Websites**

<https://ecatholic.com/>

eCatholic is a template-based, easy-to-use solution, geared specifically for the Catholic Church market. eCatholic is available for a monthly subscription fee of \$20-\$50 per month.



- LPI's WeConnect Websites <http://www.4lpi.com/catholic-church-websites/>

WeConnect is a template-based, easy-to-use solution geared specifically for the Catholic Church market. WeConnect is available for a monthly subscription fee of \$39 per month.



- ParishPal Websites for Catholic Churches <https://parishpal.com/>



- <https://www.weebly.com/ca>

Weebly is a low-cost, general website tool for any business or non-profit. Monthly pricing ranges from free to \$25 per month. Unlimited storage and phone support are only available on the pay plans.



➤ <https://www.wix.com/>

Wix is a large national website solution builder for any business or non-profit.



➤ **WordPress** <https://wordpress.com/>

Due to the proliferation of WordPress website templates out there and the fact that many of them do not specifically say “Wordpress” on them, it is quite likely that WordPress is dramatically under-reported and the clear winner among open source solutions. It is important to mention that WordPress is a technology platform not a church website service. With the template solutions available from WeConnect, eCatholic, and OSV, the parish receives a complete solution package including support. The WordPress open source code is “free” but requires a volunteer or local consulting firm to assist, a website hosting plan, and possibly an external consultant.

4. Important Elements of a Parish Website

Source: 10 Must-Haves for Your Parish Website (2016)

An important tool for effectively communicating the vibrancy of your parish, a parish website is not a plot of land on the Internet, a billboard, or directory listing of events. A parish website is a destination for seekers to learn more about Jesus Christ and parishioners' window into their world of faith.

If your mission is to share the good news with all who will listen, it is necessary to take the role that your parish website has in that mission seriously. To understand how to reach that goal, there are ten vital components that make your parish website vibrant.

To view a complete description for each tip, click on: <http://www.4lpi.com/2016/08/03/10-must-haves-parish-website/>



- 1- Offer a brief catechesis & evangelization in an easy to digest manner**
- 2- Welcome the first-time visitor**
- 3- Post your Mass times (Sunday and weekend), Adoration & Confession Times**
- 4- Have a map with directions**
- 5- Give them a phone number to call**
- 6- Update your calendar**
- 7- Highlight your parish and parishioners outside of Sunday Mass**
- 8- Provide a place for others to share their resources and talents towards the mission**
- 9- Be mobile friendly**
- 10- Designate at least two church staff persons to manage your website and ensure it is updated!**

5. Other suggestions for website design & what to post on your parish website

- Logo in the top left corner
- Contact Us information in the top right corner: Parish Office, Parish Pastor, Parish Leaders
- Social Media icons in the header
- Search button visible
- Welcome Message
- Vision; Mission; Historical Overview; Photos of the Church (interior & exterior)
- How to join; How to donate button
- Description & photo of various parish ministries & committees, ex. Youth, Social Justice, Liturgy of the Word for Children, Knights of Columbus, Prayer Groups, Parish Pastoral Council; Parish Financial Council, etc.
- Parish Bulletins
- Email sign-up for the Parish Bulletin
- Religious Education Classes (Catechesis)
- Preparation Classes for Sacraments (Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation, Marriage)
- Availability of Sacrament/Anointing of the Sick
- Sacrament of Holy Orders – the date of any ordination occurring in the diocese
- Sacrament of Matrimony – the date of any wedding celebrated in your parish
- Parish Life, ex. Events; Testimonies; Faith Stories; Photos; Short Videos
- Liturgical Seasons (Advent, Lent, Ordinary Time, etc.): Tips & Tools for Families - [Catechetics Diocesan Website Page](#) OR [Catéchèse page web diocésaine](#)
view [Catholic Activities for the Liturgical Year](#) or
<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/activities/>
- Sunday's homily or a short message from the parish pastor
- Daily Mass Readings: <https://dailygospel.org/M/AM/>

- Link to the Archdiocesan website: <http://www.archsaintboniface.ca/index.html?lang=en>
- Link to the Archdiocesan Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/ArchSaintBoniface/>
- Link to the Archdiocesan Weekly News Bulletin:
<http://www.archsaintboniface.ca/main.php?p=13>
- Link to the Vatican website: Vatican News <https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html>
and link to the Holy See: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>

6. Links to resources to 'feed' your parish website

- **Archdiocese of St. Boniface Website**
Know Your Faith <https://www.archsaintboniface.ca/main.php?p=621> where you will find a list of resources.

- **Ascension: The Faith Formation Leader**
<https://ascensionpress.com/>



Leaders in faith formation. The Most Catholic Programs for Both Adults & Teens; The Best Catholic Presenters & Authors; Visually Stunning On-location Filming; Most Popular Catholic Videos Online



Ascension Press (Fr. Mike Schmitz)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLeXS0cAkuTPpJ6j3eH59WudJhJ4q1tpwH>

- **Busted Halo:** <https://bustedhalo.com/>

Supported by the Paulist Fathers religious order.

Busted halo has become an expert New Media

linguist, attracting, connecting with, and forming the spiritual lives of young adults.



- **Catholic Answers** is one of the nation's largest lay-run apostolates of Catholic apologetics and evangelization. Catholic Answers is an apostolate dedicated to serving Christ by bringing the fullness of Catholic truth to the world. We help good Catholics become better Catholics, bring former Catholics "home," and lead non-Catholics into the fullness of the faith. When it comes to apologetics, one of the best informational resources is the Catholic Answers website: www.catholic.com



- **Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO)** <https://cco.ca/> is a university student movement dedicated to evangelization. We challenge students to live in the fullness of the Catholic Faith with a strong emphasis on becoming leaders in the renewal of the world.



- **Catholic Mom:** <https://catholicmom.com/> Lisa M. Hendey is the founder and editor of CatholicMom.com. She writes and speaks nationally on faith, family and Catholic New Media topics. <http://catholicmom.com/>



- **FacetoFace Ministries**

FacetoFace Ministries is a Catholic Evangelization ministry. Living in the spirit of the new evangelization, we provide opportunities for all people, especially Catholics, to encounter Christ through the programs we offer:



<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL02C7657AA41C66D2>

Ken Yasinski is the founder of FacetoFace Ministries.

Speaking since 1999, he has become one of Canada's most sought after Catholic speakers giving over 150 presentations a year. Through his gift of communicating, his audience is captivated by the love of Christ and His Church. Ken has spoken for conferences, rallies, parish missions, schools, and retreats to youth and adults across Canada and internationally. At the core of every message, Ken challenges people to realize their full potential in life: to become a saint. Ken's first book, 'The Fullness of Purpose', and his fifth worship CD, 'Your Dancing Within My Soul', were published and released in 2010.



View numerous videos of Ken on Youtube: *Catholic Minute*
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2Ea3vm-NN3z39PJRYtn0Bg>

➤ **Fathers for Good:**



<http://www.fathersforgood.org/en/index.html>

An initiative for men by the Knights of Columbus.

Whether you are a seasoned dad, a new dad, a dad-to-be, or a single guy wanting to know more about fatherhood, this Web site is for you.

There is a role only a father can fill and gifts only a father can give. In a culture that often does not favor fatherhood or masculine virtue, we wish to highlight the unique contributions of men, husbands and fathers. The world would be lacking without them.

We also welcome wives who want to support their husbands in becoming the best fathers they can be.

➤ **Lighthouse Catholic Media Resource**

<https://www.lighthousecatholicmedia.org/>



Lighthouse Catholic Media, distributes CDs, books, and other media to over 7,500+ parishes. Having merged with the Augustine Institute in 2015, they are now able to reach more souls than ever to accomplish their mission.

Subscriptions for their CD/MP3 of the Month Club; enormous variety of books, DVDs, CDs and MP3s.

➤ **Morguefile** <https://morguefile.com/>

Morguefile is a **free photo archive** “for creatives, by creatives.” Founded by Michael Connors in the early Internet days of 1996, the site was created to serve as a free image exchange for creative professionals and teachers to use in their work. This same mission remains true today: we are a community-based free photo site, and all photos found in the Morguefile archive are free for you to download and re-use in your work, be it commercial or not. The photos have been contributed by a wide range of creatives from around the world, ranging from amateur photo hobbyists to professionals.

➤ **Word on Fire** (Fr. Robert Barron): <https://www.wordonfire.org/>

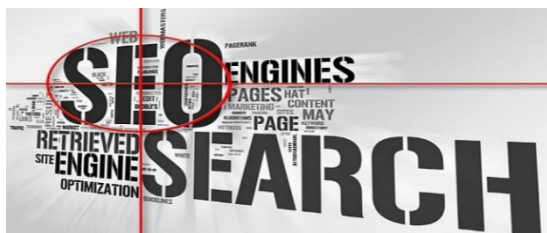
Word on Fire is a Catholic media organization founded by Robert Barron that focuses on using digital and traditional media to explain Catholicism to the broader world.



➤ **Other archdioceses of Canada**

- Halifax: <https://www.halifaxyarmouth.org/>
- Montreal: <http://www.diocesemontreal.org/>
- Ottawa: <https://www.catholiqueottawa.ca/>
- Toronto: <https://www.archtoronto.org/>

7. *SEO (Search Engine Optimization) Tips for Beginners – 15 Ways to Google Boost Your Web Site



<https://www.reliablesoft.net/seo-tips-for-beginners-15-ways-to-google-boost-your-web-site/>