



Untangling

THE CATHOLIC WEB

We help you navigate the best sites for news, resources and opinions about the Faith.

By Sarah Reinhard

When I first discovered Catholic websites — a few years after converting — it was like a fire was ignited underneath me.

It didn't take me long after that to jump in with both hands on my keyboard. I started blogging and, not long after, I began contributing to other sites. I found myself devouring the wisdom and insight, the humor and sorrow, and, best of all, the window into other Catholics' lives. Thanks to the Catholic Internet, the fact that I liter-

ally live in the middle of a cornfield didn't mean I was the only Catholic around.

Thanks to the Catholic world online, I could find other Catholics who not only shared my state in life, but also my enthusiasm for the Faith. It became a special kind of community.

Chances are you're no stranger to the Internet and that you have some favorite Catholic sites, too. I've found, though, through my work both locally in our small parish — and through nationally

speaking and writing — that many Catholics just don't know what's out there. The world of Catholic content on the Internet is an ocean, not a stream, and like the ocean, it has many hidden depths.

So let's dive in, shall we?

Sarah Reinhard writes at Snoring-Scholar.com and is the author of "A Catholic Mother's Companion to Pregnancy" (Ava Maria Press, \$14.95) and "Catholic Family Fun" (Pauline Books and Media, \$11.95).

INDISPENSABLE CATHOLIC WEBSITES

There is no shortage of Catholic websites. In fact, even if you spent all day wading through just the Catholic Internet, you still couldn't see it all. Part of that is due to the abundance of information out there, and part is due to the fact that in the last five years especially, more people, apostolates and organizations have taken the time to craft really great websites.

These websites are what I consider indispensable. Whether you're looking for news or information about the Faith, trying to clarify what the Church teaches or to understand some difficult concept, these sites aren't those you bookmark, they're the ones you just know.



The Vatican
vatican.va

You'll find enough here to keep you busy for hours on end.

On the home page is a handy way to find all the recent writings, activity and news relating to Pope Francis. You can check out photos and follow his current and upcoming activities.

Do a bit more clicking and you can find just about any encyclical, papal writing or Church document you could want to read. The site's been overhauled recently, and while it's not perfect, it's better than it was — and there's no denying the usefulness and opportunity that's here!

EWTN Global Catholic Network
ewtn.com

I once had a project where I had to dig through some of the content on the EWTN website. I thought it would



be quickly done, but that's because I vastly underestimated the amount of content that's there.

Yes, there's the media linkage you'd expect to the TV and radio programming and the tireless news work they conduct. But there also are subsites on faith that could take you the rest of the year to plumb, including devotions, a document library and a dozen mini-sites that are beautiful, educational and awesome.

They also have a subsite dedicated to kids, with games, prayers and TV programs.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
uscbb.org



Brace yourself. I always get a little dizzy on the USCCB website, in part because it reminds me of just how much there is to Catholicism. You'll find everything from news to readings for the day, beliefs and teachings to the complete Bible. In the 10 years I spent as our parish's bulletin editor, I was on this site no less than twice a week, and usually more.



New Advent
newadvent.org

This isn't an optional site for me. It's a bit of everything: the Catholic Encyclopedia, St. Thomas

Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* in its complete text, writings of the Fathers of the Church, the Bible, a library of Church documents that still makes me swoon, and my favorite part, if I'm honest: content curation.

Kevin Knight, founder, editor and webmaster, must read faster than I can imagine, because every day there's a collection of links from around the Internet (sometimes not just Catholic). There's no doubt that Knight's work at New Advent is having an impact in the here-and-now.

Catechism of the Catholic Church
scborromeo.org/cc.htm



Have you ever wished you could look up a reference in the catechism or find all the places where a certain phrase was mentioned? Have you ever struggled to remember where you read something or wondered what the catechism has to say about a topic?

While there are a couple of other places you can go to search the catechism, what this parish in Mississippi has put together beats them all. You can search by a search string or phrase, by paragraph numbers or just peruse the entire book. The administrators just recently made the site mobile-friendly, so there's no need to shy away from getting all your questions answered, even when you're away from your computer.

GO-TO CATHOLIC SITES

You know that favorite pair of shoes you have? Well, I have a few favorite Catholic sites. They're all unfailingly true to the magisterium, and I love them each for different reasons.



Decent Films Guide
decentfilms.com

Though I like a good movie as much as the next gal, I'm not up on what's hot and what's not — or, more importantly, what's good and what's not. That's where film critic Steven Greydanus comes in. Not only is he Catholic, but he must watch movies all day long. And then he writes about them, rates them and lets you know what he thinks. It's a source I trust and a way to discover gems, too.



Word on Fire
wordonfire.org

Confession: I'm a Father Robert Barron fangirl. When I met him a few months ago, I barely restrained myself from just giving him a big fat hug. (No, really.) Part of what makes me such a fan of his is the amazing work he has done and continues to do through his Word on Fire apostolate. There are videos and podcasts and articles and more.



Star Quest Production Network (SQPN)
sqpn.com

One of the first things I did when I got my iPod seven years ago was start subscribing to almost all of the shows available through the SQPN network. There are shows for everyone, they're done professionally, and they're all free. This remains one of the best resources I know of for Catholic content.



Catholic Answers
catholic.com

When it comes to "getting the best Catholic web address," I think it's safe to say Catholic Answers won. The founders of the site haven't stopped just with a cool URL, though; they're working tirelessly to help us all know how to explain and defend our faith by teaching us to better understand it.



Catholic Culture
catholicculture.org

In addition to news and commentary, you'll find liturgical readings, links, history, resources and even reviews of Catholic websites. It's a site well-done and one worth visiting often.

STAYING ON TOP OF THE CATHOLIC NEWS

Finding out what's going on in the Catholic world is sometimes a little tricky if you're relying on mainstream media. Thankfully, Catholic news sources have jumped into the online world and are savvy, relevant and worth following.



News.VA
news.va
The Vatican's official news network.



Catholic News Service
catholicnews.com
This is compiled by the USCCB and is full of great links and information.



Zenit
zenit.org
It's a newspaper in your Web browser, with Catholic perspectives on everything.



Rome Reports
romereports.com
Not just news to read, there's also video. You won't be bored, and you don't have to watch the video if you're more inclined to read.



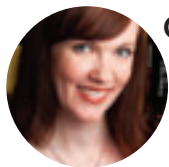
OPINIONS YOU CAN TRUST

Here a blog, there a blog, everywhere a blog ... and yes, I'm guilty of blogging, too. (And no, I'm not listing mine.) There are far more blogs than there is space in my word count, and while I considered pitching a piece just on Catholic blogging, I can't help but think that if you can only read five blogs, these are among the best.



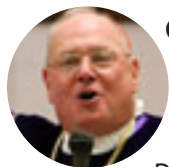
The Deacon's Bench
patheos.com/blogs/deaconsbench

Deacon Greg Kandra is a pro, and he saves me from having to read other sites. His blogging is equal parts interesting links and insightful commentary.



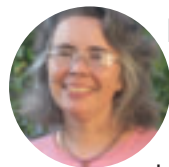
Conversion Diary
conversiondiary.com

Jennifer Fulwiler writes about conversion, life with small children and, if the season's right, scorpions. Her posts are always entertaining, unfailingly penetrating and usually worth sharing at least twice.



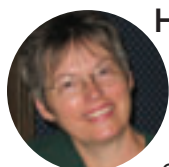
Gospel in the Digital Age
blog.archny.org

Cardinal Timothy Dolan blogs, and he blogs well. Reading his blog makes me appreciate the image of bishops as shepherds.



Ironic Catholic
www.ironiccatholic.com

Susan Windley-Daoust has been making me laugh for years. She writes in her site description, "Think The Onion written by someone who loves the Catholic Church."



Happy Catholic
happycatholic.blogspot.com

Julie Davis has been blogging since the early days, and she's as down-to-earth now as she was then. Her blogging includes links to other sites of interest, book reviews, movie comments and art. Yes, art. I visit her site often and always leave with a smile.

OSV.COM

After revamping our website last year, OSV.com has more content than ever — and we're constantly updating it with more news, opinions, spiritual reflections and much more. Here is just a sample of the things you shouldn't be missing at OSV.com:

NEWS

OSV Newsweekly
<http://osv.cm/1gY62eE>

Get all the stories from the Newsweekly anywhere at any time. We make it easy to search stories by individual issues or by the topics you're interested in.

All things Pope Francis
<http://osv.cm/1ieode6>

Keep track of what the pope is doing and saying at our page dedicated to the Holy Father.

Catholic Newshound
<http://osv.cm/1cpF8cO>

Updated several times a day on our website and on Twitter, our newshound sniffs out the latest in news about the Church.

BLOGS

Editor's Notebook
<http://osv.cm/Rj7YUj>

Every weekday, OSV Newsweekly editor Gretchen R. Crowe keeps readers up-to-date about what's going on in the Church, as well as other hot topics.

Confessions of a Catholic Dad
<http://osv.cm/1vTgc6b>

OSV Newsweekly associate editor Scott Warden gives you a laugh-out-loud look into the busy life of a Catholic husband and father.

FAITH

My Daily Visitor
<http://osv.cm/1jLCAAd>
 Daily Mass readings and reflections.

Prayer intentions
<http://osv.cm/1ibd4e5>
 Fill out an easy online form and have your requests heard.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: [facebook.com/OurSundayVisitor](https://www.facebook.com/OurSundayVisitor)
Twitter: twitter.com/OSV

Pinterest: pinterest.com/osv
Tumblr: <http://osvnews.tumblr.com>
YouTube: youtube.com/oursunday-visitor

APOLO-WHAT? KEEP ON LEARNING THE FAITH

Two-thousand years of information and history about the Catholic faith — how's a person to keep up? Enter the fine folks who make teaching the rest of us their life's work. They call it apologetics, and I'm glad they do it.



Jimmy Akin
jimmyakin.com

What's not to love about Jimmy Akin? He wears a cowboy hat, has a beard and can explain the Faith in ways that even someone who's slow to accept things can understand. (I speak of myself there.) He has weekly roundups, such as The Weekly Francis, as well as a Secret Information Club, which may be the most entertaining marketing scheme I've ever seen done so well.

LifeTeen
lifeteen.com

This is aimed at a younger audience, but I think that just makes it more entertaining for the old fogies like me who follow along. If all you do is listen to the "Sunday, Sunday, Sunday" podcast or watch the "Beyond Words" video podcast, you'll see what I mean. I've grown in my faith just from taking in Mark Hart's reflections on the upcoming weekend readings. The teaching component of the content on the website is attractive and well done.



Amazing Catechists
amazingcatechists.com

Founder Lisa Mladinich has pulled together two dozen catechists who post daily on topics of interest to parents and catechists and, really, anyone who wants to know their faith.



Cardinal Newman Society
cardinalnewmansociety.org



It's all about Catholic education, from grade school to college and beyond. How do you apply Catholic principles to educational needs? Here's a site to show you how it's done.

Strange Notions
strangenotions.com

This is designed as a place of dialogue for Catholics and atheists. Have questions about Catholicism and atheism? Here you go. Well done and with conversation to boot.



A BOUQUET OF GOOD FAITH WRITING

These are the sites you can get lost in — I mean, for hours. You'll get done reading one brilliant piece and notice another, then another ...



Catholic Channel at Patheos
patheos.com/catholic

There is no other one-stop-shop for Catholic blogs like what managing editor Elizabeth Scalia has put together in the Catholic Channel at Patheos. You have priests and religious sisters, moms and dads, commentators and newshounds, critics and world travelers, normal people and quirky writers. It's truly a little bit of everything, and it's a buffet of good writing.

Integrated Catholic Life
integratedcatholiclife.org

Founded by Randy Hain and Deacon Mike Bickerstaff, this is an e-magazine that focuses on integrating faith, family and work. It features timely articles, quotes from the saints, questions and answers and blogs.



Catholic Exchange
catholicexchange.com

It is enriching Catholic reading from a variety of writers, with topics that range from news and feast days to books and opinion.

Ignitum Today
ignitumtoday.com

Not a dull moment here. It bills itself as "the social network of the New Evangelization Generation." They're on fire for their faith and that makes them fun to read — period.



Catholic Lane
catholiclane.com

This may be the only place you'll find new Catholic poetry, though I haven't researched that exhaustively. It's hard to categorize how I feel about Catholic Lane: there's plenty of news and commentary, but there's also unique content from an interesting group of writers. I never get bored here.



uCatholic
ucatholic.com

It's a lot of everything, from daily readings to saints of the day to apologetics. There's a daily catechism feature, a variety of prayers and commentary.

Catholic Stand
catholicstand.com

"Take a stand," urge the folks behind Catholic Stand. And the columns here do — without a doubt. This is reading that will make you think (and maybe squirm).



SPEND TIME WITH GOD IN PRAYER

A few of the sites I've listed already have great prayer resources. And, don't get me wrong, I use them. These two sites, though, are unique in that their primary focus is prayer.

Divine Office
divineoffice.org

Aside from the Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours is the official prayer of the Church. On this site, you can opt to just read the prayers, or you can listen to the audio and follow along. It's available free online and as a podcast. The apps associated with it are excellent and, while not free, are well worth the investment.



Come, pray the Rosary
comepraytherosary.org

Not only is this a lovely website, but it's also a complete prayer experience. You can select whether you want to pray in real time with a "worldwide rosary" or on your own. You can also share your intentions.

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Catholics are family-oriented, and I'd be remiss not to include sites that foster family life.



Catholic Mom
catholic-mom.com

Founded by popular speaker and writer Lisa Hendey,

the site is almost a portal of things Catholic. There are daily features such as Daily Gospel Reflections, Tech Talk and Book Notes. Each Sunday, there are new Gospel activities. Each week there's a giveaway of great Catholic resources. There are book club discussions and posts, a weekly Small Success link-up for moms to encourage one another and at least a half-dozen new columns a day from various contributors.

Catholic Dads
catholicdadsonline.com



"Catholic moms rock when it comes to building community. We men ... not so good." And according to their "about" page, that's what Catholic Dads is out to do. The topics range from masculinity to finances and include reviews, family life and culture concerns.

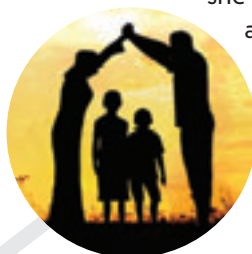


Catholic Icing
catholicicing.com

Who said raising Catholic kids was boring? As someone who's decidedly craft-challenged, I appreciate Lacy Rabideau's sunny instructions and her plethora of ideas. She makes it easy to smile about sharing the Faith with my kids.

Equipping Catholic Families
equippingcatholicfamilies.com

Some people, I have decided, must not sleep, and Monica McConkey is one of them. How else do you explain the way she transforms things like egg cartons into a liturgical feast day celebration centerpiece, complete with a prayer service and a pseudo-bingo game on top? Well, OK, I'm exaggerating, but only slightly. Equipping Catholic Families shares plenty of ways to involve your whole family in actively being Catholic.



Catholic Foodie
catholic-foodie.com

You don't have to love to cook to love Jeff Young's brand of Catholic. His goal is to highlight "how food — good food — can be a sign of God's love and care for each of us and our families."



YOUR TURN

As wide and deep as the Catholic Web is, I know I've left off some of your favorites. (For that matter, I've left off some of MY favorites.) Let us know what websites, resources and blogs we've missed. Send your suggestions to feedback@osv.com or share them in the comments section of the story at OSV.com.