

Impacts of Social Media

Objective: Some make it happen, some watch it happen, some say “what happened?”

When it comes to the use, awareness, and our involvement in the topic of social media as it relates to our children, it behooves us as parents to be part of the make it happen group. The staggering amount of data and opinion that is not just available but posted/pushed to our young people necessitates we stay current on social media content, issues and how it is used by our children. They need to be aware and mindful in their postings, and so do we. Commit yourself to get and stay current.... Make it Happen!

Song Suggestion: Christ Be Our Light (Blue 91, Red 512)

Bible and Catechism Readings:

Proverbs 22:6

Train a boy in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not swerve from it.

Romans 2:12

Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Catechism 2224

The home is the natural environment for initiating a human being into solidarity and communal responsibilities. Parents should teach children to avoid the compromising and degrading influences which threaten human societies.

Catechism 2496

The means of social communication (especially the mass media) can give rise to a certain passivity among users, making them less than vigilant consumers of what is said or shown. Users should practice moderation and discipline in their approach to social media. They will want to form enlightened and correct consciences the more easily to resist unwholesome influences.

Saint: The patron saint of the internet is widely considered to be Saint Isidore of Seville, a Bishop and scholar, who was nominated for the role by the late Pope John Paul II. Saint Isidore, who was born around 536 AD wrote a 20 book opus Etymologies, also known as the Origins, in which he tried to record everything that was known.

Vignette: Greg longed for the day when he and his wife Shelly negotiated with their kids about what age they had to be before they could get their own smartphone. Greg in fact was pleasantly surprised at how he was better able to communicate with them quickly and often on everything from logistics to accessing important information, from schoolwork to sports schedules. He even passed on snippets of fatherly advice he thought would be useful. Today however, it felt as if he was being “left behind” as his now older offspring seemed to be in warp-speed using “apps” he was unfamiliar with and “posting” content to sites that he knew and feared could be used against them long into the future. How could he influence them to keep the posting and communication ...which lasts forever...appropriate and under control?

Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

Do you permit your child to participate in social media? Why or why not?

Can you share an example of how a social media post has turned into a problem for you? Has someone you know been bullied?

How do encourage your child to keep perspective and not compare themselves to the “perfect image” others try to present in profiles and posts?

Do you regularly discuss with your children the importance of considering how what they post or comment on may be used against them YEARS into the future?

How do you use social media to consistently learn and be informed on your faith? Blogs? Podcasts?

Action Plan:

Make a commitment to stay informed on social media issues. There is a wealth of information available to assist parents in understanding various aspects of social media...for good and for evil.

[Using Media and Technology](http://www.catholicfamilyfaith.org/using-media-and-technology.html)

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[Catholic Standard: Parents Should Monitor Children's Use of Social Media](https://cathstan.org/news/us-world/official-urges-parents-to-monitor-their-childrens-social-media-usage)

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[Top 100 Catholic Blogs, Websites and Influencers 2020](https://blog.feedspot.com/catholic_blogs/)

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[US Conf Of Bishops - Social Media](http://www.usccb.org/about/communications/social-media-guidelines.cfm)

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Author: Reid Rooney updated from material by Dan Driggers and Tony Heekin