



# GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

*from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study*

#104 - August 2019

## A Best Practice: Tips for Using Social Media

In our digitally-connected world today, social media is all around us. More and more today there are questions surrounding it. Do we use it? What's the best way to use it?

This issue of **GEMS** explores just a few (of the many) tips that can:

- guide us in our use of social media – individually and in our ministry
- be passed on to parishioners to help them be responsible tweeters and posters

Social media platforms continue to grow; for this **GEMS** issue we look at two of the tools:

- Twitter delivers real-time news and facilitates rapid response in short, 280-character communications (tweets).
- Facebook supports slower responses and lengthier observations (posts).

“Don’t use social media to impress people;  
use it to impact people.”

- *DaveWillis.org*

## Tips for Managing Stress that Might Come from Using Social Media

- Establish a time (or times) to log online daily or weekly.
- Determine a timeframe for how long to stay on Twitter and/or Facebook during your online session.
- Set a timer or use a browser extension to stay out of digital rabbit holes:
  - [www.stayfocusedapp.me](http://www.stayfocusedapp.me)
  - [www.tomato-timer.com](http://www.tomato-timer.com)
  - [www.marinaratimer.com](http://www.marinaratimer.com)

- Learn how to scroll right on by. Some people criticize Facebook; often it is because they don't know what to follow, spending too much time looking through pointless posts. Scroll right on by.
- Pay attention to who you friend. If you receive a friend request from someone with whom you are already friends, double-check; don't just accept requests.
- Explore options for tools that temporarily block online distractions:  
<https://99u.adobe.com/articles/6969/10-online-tools-for-better-attention-focus>
- Explore options for online tools to manage what you see on Twitter and Facebook:
  - <http://socialfixer.com/>
  - <https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/>
- Review and revise Privacy and Safety/Security settings on Twitter and Facebook.
- On *Twitter*: Learn the difference between muting and blocking—and do either or both:
  - *Muting*: <https://support.twitter.com/articles/20171399>
  - *Blocking*: <https://support.twitter.com/articles/117063> and <https://support.twitter.com/articles/20172663>
- On *Facebook*: Learn the difference between unfollowing, blocking, and restricting and do any or all:
  - <https://www.howtogeek.com/292867/how-to-block-someone-on-facebook/>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/help/www/276458109035418>

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- Resist the temptation to get pulled into an online debate with Internet trolls. (*Note:* Not everyone who disagrees with you is a troll, it's a matter of tone and style.)
  - <https://www.lifewire.com/types-of-internet-trolls-3485894>

“Social media is not a media.  
The key is to listen, engage, and build relationships.”  
-David Alston

## Tips for Establishing Expertise and Credibility

- Retweet and share credible content. If you're in doubt, check:
  - Snopes: [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com)
  - Follow on Twitter: @factcheckarmy
  - <https://www.technorms.com/454/get-your-facts-right-6-fact-checking-websites-that-help-you-know-the-truth>
- You might want to ask yourself:
  - Does this need to be RT'd (retweeted)/shared *yet again*?
  - Does this need to be RT'd/shared *by me*?
  - Does this need to be RT'd/shared *right now*?

“Listening is one of the most important things  
a brand can do online.

If your brand is just broadcasting its own agenda,  
it isn't truly engaging in a conversation.”  
- Jeremy Goldman

## Tips for Reaching Your Intended Audience

On Twitter:

- Use keywords (e.g., care for creation, spirituality, Catholic news) or recognized hashtags (e.g., #Lent, #Scripture, #faith) into Twitter's search function to find people.
- Use lists - creating ones to organize followers into categories and following existing ones:  
<https://support.twitter.com/articles/76460>
- Discover and use recognized hashtags.

On Facebook:

- Find groups of like-minded/hearted people.
- For more privacy, join a “Closed” group.
- For optimal privacy, join a “Secret” group.
- Use lists to organize friends into categories:  
<https://www.facebook.com/help/204604196335128/>

“We don't have a choice on whether we do  
social media,  
the question is how well we do it.”  
- Erik Qualman

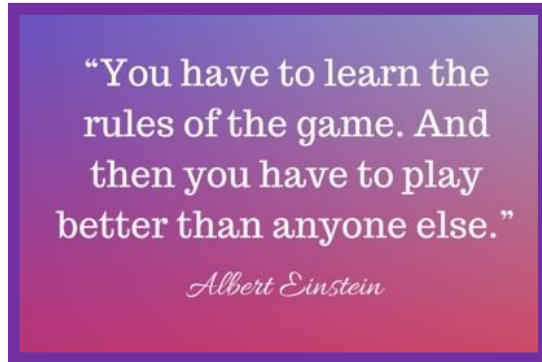
## Tips for Social Media Etiquette

In the midst of this digital world, rules have changed; yet etiquette remains and, perhaps, is more important than ever.

- <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/twitter/8434855/Netiquette-Debretts-guide-to-Twitter-and-Facebook.html>
- <http://www.alexandrasamuel.com/world/25-rules-of-social-media-netiquette>
- [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/courtney-price/netiquette-pointers-for-social-media-users-and-bloggers\\_b\\_7786356.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/courtney-price/netiquette-pointers-for-social-media-users-and-bloggers_b_7786356.html)

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- <https://socialmediaforlearning.com/2015/08/12/nettiquette-and-appropriate-use-of-web-2-0/>
- <https://twitter.com/netiquetterules?lang=en>



*Albert Einstein*

## Tips for Using Social Media in Ministry

- 12 Guidelines for Church Social Media: <https://ministrytech.com/social-media/12-guidelines-church-social-media/>
- 21 Social Media Tips: <https://www.stevefogg.com/2015/11/12/social-media-tips-church/>
- Social Media Policies for Churches: <https://socialchurch.co/social-media-policies-churches-ministries/>
- How Catholic Churches can Use Social Media Effectively: <https://ecatholic.com/blog/catholic-social-media>
- Friend Thy Neighbor: How to Use Facebook for Churches: <https://blog.capterra.com/friend-thy-neighbor-how-to-use-facebook-for-churches/>
- Tweet It from the Mountaintop: How to Use Twitter for Churches: <https://blog.capterra.com/how-to-use-twitter-for-churches/>

- Facebook Content Matters: <http://www.catholicwebsolutions.com/2016/12/06/facebook-content-matters/>

## GEMS Wonderings and Suggestions

- Is social media a challenge for you? For the parish staff? For your parishioners?
- Is there someone in the parish who might be able to help with the parish's endeavors, with the adult faith formation endeavors related to social media?
- Might we help people to become comfortable with today's technology? See GEMS #40, #41, #59, #60 and #70.



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Past issues of **GEMS** are archived at [www.janetschaeffler.com](http://www.janetschaeffler.com)

Additional ideas for Adult Faith Formation Planning and Best Practices can be found in:

- *Deepening Faith: Adult Faith Formation in the Parish* <https://www.litpress.org/Products/4652/Deepening-Faith>
- *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation* [http://www.lifelongfaith.com/store/p25/The\\_Seasons\\_of\\_Adult\\_Faith\\_Formation.html](http://www.lifelongfaith.com/store/p25/The_Seasons_of_Adult_Faith_Formation.html) and <http://www.lifelongfaith.com/2015-adult-faith-formation-symposium.html>