

Religion in a Wired World

We are a wired species. We use the internet and various electronic devices to read the news, magazines and books, to pay our bills, to bank, to shop, to exchange ideas, to collaborate, to connect with family and friends. Did you know that almost two-thirds of North Americans with internet access also use it for spiritual and religious reasons? Users range from teens to older adults with about half in the 30-49 year old group. The majority of 'online faithful' use the internet *in addition* to their congregational affiliation. And 54% of them describe themselves as both 'spiritual *and* religious'.

How might we use the internet to grow in our religious knowledge or foster our spirituality? What follows is but a teaser of what the internet has to offer. Interested in Catholic news? Check out [Catholic News](#), [Independent Catholic News](#), [Whispers](#), or [Catholic News Online](#). Want to check coverage of the Holy Father, life in the Holy See, and events of interest to the Church? Go to <http://www.zenit.org/>.

Wondering what's on Catholic television? [Salt and Light TV](#) (S & L TV) offers Canadians a national Catholic television network. Find podcasts and publications, weekly updates and Vatican messages, view streaming live television or check the schedule for the latest programs. At Eternal Word Television Network [EWTN](#) check the Catholic Q and A, document and audio libraries, the latest Catholic News, send an Online Prayer Card to a family member, friend or anyone who needs prayer and much more.

If learning about other faith traditions interests you, then check [BBC World Religions](#) for a comprehensive online guide to world religions and beliefs. Want 'just the facts' on various religions? Then [religions Facts](#) will provide just what you need. Or check the very helpful chart of world religions at [Religion Chart](#) for a quick overview.

Are you interested in finding out about the liturgical year, religious holidays and related religious services? Take a look at [CatholicCulture.org](#). Want to understand the liturgical year or help your kids' understanding, then check out [Liturgical calendar](#). Perhaps you'll make the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton www.caedm.ca, the Catholic Bishops of Canada www.cccb.ca or of the United States www.usccb.org or the [Vatican](#) some of your 'go to' sites.

The internet is not just for information, of course. It also can convey the potential of prayer and retreat. Consider subscribing to the three minute retreat at [Retreat](#). Download to your mobile device or to your desktop. You can even sign up for automatic daily delivery. Quiet music, peaceful imagery and food for thought can start your day or provide a brief oasis in the midst of busyness. [Prayer Windows](#) is another prayer site by Jesuit artist, Bob Gilroy. Enjoy the original art and learn how to incorporate it into your prayer at this site. The Irish Jesuits' site www.sacredspace.ie offers daily prayer in twenty one different languages. Its link to 'Living Space', a commentary on the Gospel of the day, is also provided. Read the Bible at [Bible Gateway](#) which has an online Bible concordance, several translations of the Bible and easy to use search features.

These are also great podcasts. [Speaking of Faith](#) and [Tapestry](#) provide listeners a weekly window into the spiritual life and practices of people from many religions and all walks of life. Podcasts are also found at the online magazine [Busted Halo](#), a site that will have particular appeal to those in their 20s and 30s.

The new media can offer many helpful supports for putting our spiritual life into practice. Perhaps this brief sampling will help you discover some favourites of your own.