



What's the one thing you think all clergy should keep in mind while using digital? We asked lay and ordained people on Twitter, and this is what they said...

We have trained more than 2,500 churches to use digital. Since the Church of England's digital team formed in 2016, we have taken thousands of people through courses looking at how to use social media to invite more people into their church and how to use websites to tell people more about their worshipping communities.

**You can find out more about our digital training [here](#).**

However, we're often asked by clergy, lay leaders, youth workers and others with a church role how they should use their personal channels for the same purpose – to engage with people they haven't traditionally reached or to stay in touch with those who have approached them for life events, who they would love to see at one of their services and events.

Earlier this year, I met curates from the Diocese of Chelmsford to explore how they can use their social media channels to reach a range of audiences. Beforehand, I asked Twitter's advice: what is the one thing that clergy should keep in mind while using digital? And Twitter delivered! Lay and ordained people replied with a range of thoughtful and helpful ideas, so we've put together some of our favourites for you to consider adopting on your own platforms.

If you can commit to making social media and the web more widely positive places for conversations to happen, have a look and sign up to the Church of England's Digital Charter [here](#).

Lot of replies I received followed the same theme: don't share something on social media that you wouldn't say to someone's face. The account of St Peter and Paul, Seal spelt this out:

Also, keep in mind that when you're sharing on public platforms, anyone can read what you're posting.

We all make mistakes, and it can be easy to share something you later regret. If you follow the principles you try to live out in the rest of your life though, you'll be heading in the right direction. As Jules Middleton shared:

Life can get busy. Clergy have many demands on their time, and it can feel like keeping your Instagram feed up-to-date or sharing to a Facebook page is just another task on the list. However, Olivia Haines shared a story that we have heard many times as we travel across the Church of England training churches to use digital.

Finn Johnston agrees, saying that social media can be a useful tool in discipleship. How can you use Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to show the difference your faith makes to your life?

The internet has changed many people's lives for the better, and we're constantly reminded how digital platforms have enabled people to connect with a community and engage with resources from the Church of England and beyond that they might not otherwise be able to, due to age, disability or circumstance. Father Bill Braviner reminded us of that.

If you've used social media for a while and have not considered before how you're using platforms, why not follow Madeleine Davies advice?

Some of the people responding introduced the idea of balance – using the platforms regularly, but keeping set times when clergy should take time away from social media. Rev Graham Hunter suggested that clergy should keep a weekly social media sabbath.

And what about when things get difficult online? It can be tempting to reply in the heat of the moment, but David warned against this.

Whether you're posting in a personal capacity or as a church, it will take time to increase your engagements and grow followers. Keep going, try new things and stay up to date with all that's possible. Signing up to get our [Labs Latest emails](#) is a good place to start! You can do that [here](#).

If you're feeling overwhelmed by all the advice, Elsbeth Gruteke shared a very simple principle, but one that will ensure we all keep our integrity online.

Digital platforms offer an incredible opportunity to share our faith and reach people in our communities who we might otherwise not have come into contact with. Find out more about using these opportunities in our [Labs Learning blogs](#).

What one thing do you think all clergy should keep in mind while using digital? We'd love to hear our thoughts. Tweet us at [@churchofengland](#).

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