Ten tips for parish webmasters:

1. **Identify your target audience.** You are likely to have 3 audiences: a) your congregation b) Christians looking for a new church c) local people who are thinking about coming along. Which is the most important audience for your church?

2. **Make the content relevant to your audience.** Each of the 3 groups listed above have different information requirements. Make sure you cater for all you are targeting, and that this is obvious on the homepage.

3. **The homepage can make or break first impressions.** You have literally seconds to persuade a new visitor that it's worthwhile reading on.

4. **A bad website reflects badly on your church.** It may prevent a potential visitor from coming along, and can reinforce perceptions that you are out of date and irrelevant. On the other hand, a good website can impact on your local community and keep your congregation stimulated and informed.

5. **Aim for your website to prompt action.** Parish websites have the potential to engage and inspire. What could your website prompt someone to do: bring their kids along to Messy Church for the first time; listen to the sermon they missed on Sunday; engage with your deanery ministry plan in an on-line forum; what else?

6. **Keep it simple.** It is much better to have a small, simple, well-organised site that meets all its objectives, than a big rambling one that is too unwieldy to manage.

7. **Avoid out of date content:** everyone knows that out of date content is a bad, but it's really hard to keep on top of it. Please try because it gives the impression you don't care enough to bother.

8. **Church is about people:** Bring your site to life with testimonies, images and blogs.

9. **Audio/video links.** A great resource and easy to achieve these days.

10. **An on-going commitment.** Share the load by giving others responsibility for different sections of the website. If they are not confident to edit the site themselves, at least get them to write the content and pass it to you to put up. This prevents the webmaster from having to write content as well as update the site.

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