

THE PROS AND CONS OF FACEBOOK

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Modern technology is a wonderful thing for all of us in the twenty-first century. It helps us in every area of life with things such as medicine, education, communication, just to name a few, and so much more. When it is used to enhance or advance our purpose in life, I think it is a good thing, but so often it takes on an ugly face, and the very thing that was invented to help us, ends up hurting or destroying us.

The social networking web site Facebook.com was launched on February 4th 2004. It is a great communication tool! It was originally created so that college students could connect with each other online. Some universities and colleges are now using Facebook to support drop out students and help them get back on track. Creating a school community prevent students from dropping out. This is good.

Facebook now has 600 million active users. It is a technology that the world embraced without asking questions. The definition of Facebook: it is a social network (utility) that connects people with friends who work on their site, study, and live around the world.

People use Facebook to keep up with friends, share pictures, tidbits, and that's okay, but personal information, that is a whole different ball game, not a good idea. Here is where parents come in. We have to be vigilant and monitor what our children are choosing to make public. Some of us may or may not know that whatever is put on Facebook becomes the property of Facebook. It is accessible to the world; friends, family, neighbours, in-laws, parents, government and most important future employers.

Once you put personal information on Facebook you cannot take it back, and what you may think is funny or cute as a child or teen can come back to haunt you as a grownup. With this in mind, we also have to be aware that perverts, pedophiles, and other sexual predators are also looking at your information. We have to protect our children from these undesirables. Children think this is so cool to be able to talk to friends all over the globe, but are they really friends? Sometimes you get someone inviting you to be a friend, but that person is just a friend of a friend of a friend. *John: 15-15 I have called you friends, for all things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.* Your children have no idea if these so called friends have the same morals or values as they. They do not know if the information they receive from these global friends is true. *John: 15-14 you are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you.*

Facebook has a friendly side, but be aware it also has a dark side, and just as we have to get permission to post pictures on CWL websites, so too children should be courteous and get family members permission, to post their pictures as some people are of a private nature and would not like to be published on Facebook. If they choose to post their own picture, it is okay.

This is a topic that could fill volumes, but I hope what little I have given is a guide and may prompt you to investigate further on your own. Remember be a guide for your own families. Monitor their Facebook and computer activities. Their computers should be in a place where you can see what is going on. Parents please do not feel bad about getting involved in your children activities. We have a mandate from the Father *-Proverbs: 22-6 Train up a child in the way he/she should go.* Let us be obedient. Children may not inherit their parents' talent, but they will absorb their values.

Take stock of yourself and consider your children. Your time and your thoughts are their due. How would you reply to the Lord should He ask, *"What kind of parent are you?"*

These pros and cons on Facebook for children and adults mean that this is a double edged sword and you have to make a decision about joining Facebook or using it responsibly and cautiously. It can be useful, disruptive, or even unsafe for children. I am sure that there are many more pros and cons, you can make the decision to check it out or not. You are the parent.

I will leave you with this thought: Our children are a gift from God, on loan from heaven above; to train and nourish in the Lord, and guide them in His love. He joins hearts around the world under the banner of His Love. What a friend we have in Jesus!!! Is He your friend? He is standing at the door of your heart knocking, have you invited Him in? Do tell your friends on Facebook about this Friend? Have you introduced Him to your other friends? Do you have a close relationship with Him? Please share this with your children and grandchildren, presidents share it with your council and parish.