

A vice so many have': Pope admits nuns and priests not immune to porn

Francis urges use of social media to promote Christian message but says vice of pornography, even among clergy, allows devil to enter

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Wed 26 Oct 2022 17.20 BST

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Pope Francis has warned seminarians against the “devil” of digital pornography, while admitting that watching online porn is also a vice of priests and nuns.

The pontiff made the remarks during a convention with seminarians in Rome on Monday, in response to a question about how a new generation of clergy immersed in social media can use digital tools to “share the joy about being Christian, without forgetting our identity or being too exposed and arrogant”.

In the full text of the event, published by the **Vatican** on Wednesday, Francis urged the seminarians to use social media “to advance, to communicate” while warning them about the dangers, namely digital pornography.

“I will not say, ‘raise your hand if you have had at least one experience of this’,” the pope said. “But if each of you think you have had the experience or temptation ... It is a vice that so many people have. So many laymen, so many laywomen, and also priests and nuns. The devil enters from there. And I’m not just talking about digital pornography like that of child abuse, this is already degeneracy. Dear brothers, pay attention to this.”

Despite having 64.3 million followers on Twitter, the pope, 85, said he did not use social media tools “because I arrived too late”.

A team of people manage the pope’s various social media accounts.

In late 2020, the Vatican was left in an embarrassing predicament when it was forced to “seek explanations from Instagram” after Pope Francis’s official Instagram **account liked a photo** of a Brazilian model, Natalia Garibotto.

The “like” from the pope’s account was visible on the photo on Garibotto’s page for several days before being unliked.

Nevertheless, Garibotto's management company, COY Co, made the most of the publicity and reposted the image on its own Instagram account with a message saying that the company had "received the Pope's official blessing". Garibotto, who has over 3.3 million followers, joked: "At least I'm going to heaven."

The Vatican said at the time that "we can exclude that the 'like' came from the Holy See".