



Dear friends,

God bless this new year of yours! On this occasion, let us thank you for your continuous support of the Christian cause through your prayer and your life, your commitment, your friendships, your work, and your Christian action.

Christian action is always necessary – also online! The internet is an important part of the world we live in. It has become more than a mere “virtual” reality. Our calling as Christians to be “salt of the earth” extends to the internet as well. The worldwide web is manifold – and so is online Christian Action. Below, we explain some of the main possibilities. Don’t worry - it’s less complicated than it seems!

Let us be Christians with a calling when we enter the internet. Let us be a “fish” in the web!

For a renewed Europe,

Your Europe for Christ! Team

PS: Don’t forget to pray an Our Father a day for a Europe built upon Christian values.

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## **Christian Action ONLINE: How to use the internet for the Christian cause**

### **Snowball Effect: Alerting each other**

Via the internet we communicate worldwide free of charge and instantaneously. Use this tool to help create a critical mass well-informed of vital Christian issues. Have a mailing group of committed Christians ready to send them information when needed. Imagine you alert 20, and each one of the 20 alerts another 20, and so forth... within a few hours hundreds of thousands of Christians in Europe would be alerted and ready to speak up! As a consequence, Christians will be better heard and represented in the public square.

### **Email Forwards: Promote good initiatives and events**

Good things need people to support them. Events need to be made known. The more people join, the stronger a Christian initiative will be. Let us be less reluctant in forwarding interesting mails.

### **Online Debates: Take the Christian standpoint**

Online debates on major news sites are read by thousands of people. The thoughts expressed there may strongly influence the readers' opinion. Thus, it is all the more important to have Christian voices weighing in! You can usually participate easily, with or without a free registration. You will find it helpful to make a list of all your usernames and passwords.

Always maintain civility, calmness, and a spirit of Christian charity. Be the "voice of reason". If comments offend you, pray for the commenter and then give a calm response. Charitable and reasoned answers may even win over readers who otherwise do not share the Christian world-view.

### **Online Polls: Vote and inform other Christians**

Opinion polls inform legislators of what people think and want. Often, they are conducted online. Don't forget to participate! If an issue is crucial for Christians, inform others of the possibility to vote. A result in our favour is a great gain.

### **Christian Opinion: Consider creating your personal blog**

Blogs are a means of expressing your opinion. Several have become quite famous and contribute significantly to public opinion. A major advantage is that search engine results might show your blogged opinion in a high ranking. Thereby you will be able to present the Christian cause well. Blogs are also an excellent tool for networking, because bloggers tend to read each other's work, link to each other etc. If you regularly read other Christian blogs and comment on them (especially on the "big ones"), you will build up a regular readership for your own blog, gain valuable allies and influence.

Blogs are easy to create and to maintain - you usually only have to register and then choose a blog name and design. The most common blog providers are [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) and [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com) (both free of charge).

### **Christian Facts: Consider creating your own website**

If you have an issue that is particularly important to you, consider creating your own website, providing up-to-date and accurate information. There are several free content management systems (CMS) available. If someone created the site for you once, even without IT skills, you could use and update the website yourself.

### **Christian Links: Improve search engine rankings for Christian sites**

Many people draw their information from using an online search engine. Search engines list results also according to how many links point to a specific page. If you have your own blog or website, you help Christian sites to become more prominent by linking up to them.

### **Online Encyclopaedia: Contribute to [www.Wikipedia.org](http://www.Wikipedia.org)**

Wikipedia is for many a main source of information. It is an online encyclopaedia edited by everyone who wants to contribute. Sometimes the information seems biased against the Christian faith. Some vital Christian information is fully missing. You can contribute your information by clicking on the editing button.

**There are many other possibilities.** You can post videos of a good homily or interviews about the faith on website like [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). You can create networks or use existing ones to begin Christian exchange and cooperation (such as [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and many others). And so on, and so forth.

### **Please note:**

- Always guard your time wisely. Internet Action is useful – as long as it doesn't take up most of your time and energy. Yes, the internet world is a lot more than bytes and bits – but it's not where *your* life takes place.
- When sending emails and forwards to mailing groups, it might be good to add a sentence in the end of your mail, asking people to tell you if they don't wish to get such emails. In some countries, this is even legally required.
- If you create a blog or a website, you might find it useful to add a 'disclaimer' saying that you are not responsible for websites you link to.