

The Trouble With Sliders

Sliders can be the perfect way to convey to your visitors how active, youthful, traditional, and welcoming your parish is...if it is done the right way. Many parishes do not know or take the time to learn how to curate their slider and end up with an eyesore on their website. In an age where the Catholic Church should be calling to youth, they are instead ignoring the fact that the youth are an extremely visual group.

To combat this, Diocesan has listed the top reasons why sliders should be handled with the utmost care:

First Impressions

First impressions are everything, so what you put in your slider is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT**. Studies show that you have 2.7 seconds to convince someone to stay on your homepage. Having images that are hand-picked to feel Catholic and welcoming will help your chances of a visitor staying because while they display who you are as a parish, they are also visually appealing and tell visitors that you care about your message and wanting to bring people in.

Low-Quality Images

If the slider is the first thing people see on your website, make sure that they are high-quality images. Low-quality images can take a top-notch website and immediately make it look outdated and unkempt. That means no grainy, dark, blurry, or “small” images on your website. Homepage images should typically be at least 2048 px wide and 1024 px tall.

Load Time

Today's society is impatient and when your homepage has a large amount of high-quality images, the page may take longer to load. As mentioned earlier, you have a very short amount of time to captivate your visitor. If someone visits your website and sees that there are 12 images that this is scrolling through, they will leave and search for another parish website in your area with a quicker website.

Distractions

People may be distracted by your slider, doing more harm than help. The majority of your visitors will come to your website for a specific reason (bulletin, registration, forms, etc.) and if the slider is too busy, they will forget why they are there. Since a website is to share information, your slider can single handedly undermine all the work you have done and defeat the purpose of your website altogether.

Information Overload

Putting too much information in the slides means that no one will scroll down to see the rest of your homepage. If your slider is not managed correctly, you end up training your parishioners to only look at the slider and ignore your calendar, posts, bulletins, and whatever else is on your homepage. Instead, they should look for news in the News & Events section.

Focusing on the Wrong Thing

Your slider should showcase who you are as a parish, but should not be the only focus of your homepage. Your website is to allow people to have access to information that is specific to your parish, but they may never see this information if they only look at the slider. Instead, they should immediately recognize that while the slider images are lovely, they are not where they will get their information. Instead, information may be found further down the homepage or on pages in the menu.

Lastly, Sliders are Not Photo Galleries

The homepage is not the place to display 10 minutes worth of pictures. While we are not saying you should not display the fact that your parish is active, it is not fair of you to make your visitors wait through 15+ pictures in order to see a specific one. If you have a lot of images, we can create a Photo Gallery page using Envira Galleries.

