

# Interactive book uses technology to empower youth

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**If Pope Francis, with his enormously popular Twitter following and selfies, has taught Catholics anything, it's that today's message of faith needs to be shared keeping young people in mind and by using their modern forms of communication.**

Dutch Fr Michel Remery has followed this lead, explaining answers to a broad range of young people's questions in tweets, an app and now a book.



The book *Tweeting with God* will help enrich readers' faith in a totally new way and will encourage Catholics to respond accurately to their own and others' questions about faith.

Born out of a group of young people from Fr Remery's parish outside of Amsterdam, the concept hit the Internet as a question-and-answer conversation of 140 characters using the hashtag #TwGOD. Now a book, app and website, participants can access more information and analysis by multiple means of technology. Readers can check out the book alone or read the book with a smartphone to scan images for a full multimedia experience.

Clever technology aside, the book's content is beneficial to any Catholic young person, in middle school to college, who has or who has been asked questions about Catholicism. Its 200 questions touch upon a broad range of topics – from prayer, ethics to natural disasters to traditions and the catechism. The questions are categorised into four parts, each of which are introduced by Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, Bishop James P. Conley of Lincoln, Nebraska, and Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco.

Fr Remery, who was a member of a Vatican advisory committee on new media and young people and is currently the vice secretary-general of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, answers the questions clearly and concisely, using the catechism and the Bible as references. The answers are meant to be accurate but succinct. But the book is useful even for the deep thinkers who need a straightforward reminder of Catholic teaching. They too will find Tweeting with God refreshing and helpful for explaining things to others.

The whole idea of the project is to empower young people with truth. For, as the Tweeting with God app highlights in a quote from the Bible, "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope" (Chapter 3, Verse 15, of the First Letter of Peter)

Taken in isolation, each passage is educational – Is prayer just talking to God? It's talking and listening. ... Did God create evil? God created everything good and gave us the free will to choose to sin or not.

But taken in totality, Fr Remery's book – and the entire Tweeting with God concept – is inspirational and encouraging to young people. It shows that there is, in fact, a reason for everything behind the church: The Mass, the consecration, the teachings of the church are all based on Catholic tradition and the Bible. So, ask away, because an answer can be found.

**Tweeting with God by Fr Michel Remery. Ignatius Press (San Francisco, 2015). 432 pp.**

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