



Prompting with Purpose

An AI prompt guide for parishes



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Using this guide

This guide is for parish administrators, clergy, volunteers, and anyone else in your parish who may use AI tools to help create content.

You do not need to be technical to use AI well. The key skill is learning how to ask clearly. In AI language, this is called writing a good prompt.

This guide focuses on AI chat tools such as Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude. These tools can support you as you draft newsletters, posters, flyers, website copy, and other parish communications.

It is important to remember that an AI tool is not a person. Think of it as a very quick drafting assistant. It can help you get started, organise your ideas, simplify text, and suggest wording. But it can also make mistakes, invent details, or fall short of the careful pastoral tone often needed in church communications.

Used well, AI can support your work, save time, and help your creativity go further.

We advise using this guide alongside our **AI guidance for parishes**, which you can find at dioceseofyork.org.uk/parish-support/AI. This offers a template policy and guidance on ethical and sustainable use of AI.

What is a prompt?

A prompt is the instruction, question, or information you give to an AI tool to tell it what you want help with.

There is no rigid formula or need for technical language when you write a prompt. A good prompt usually gives enough context for the AI to understand the task, the audience, and the kind of response you want. The better the prompt, the better the response.

A weak prompt is vague:

Create a poster for a coffee morning.

A stronger prompt gives the AI enough information to produce something useful:

Write clear poster text for a parish coffee morning at St Mark's Church on Saturday 14 September, from 10.00am to 12 noon. The audience is local people who may not usually come to church. Use a warm, welcoming tone and British spelling. Include a clear invitation to come along. Do not invent extra details.

Using AI safely and responsibly

As Christians, we are called to use technology in ways that serve people, protect human dignity, and encourage the flourishing of individuals and communities. AI can be a useful tool, but we should use it in ways that reflect our Christian values. This means keeping people at the centre of our decisions, being alert to possible harm, and taking responsibility for how AI is used in parish life.

Use this guide alongside the Diocese of York AI guidance and any AI policy agreed by your PCC. You can find the diocesan guidance at dioceseofyork.org.uk/parish-support/AI.

Three golden rules

1. Do not share private or sensitive information

Be very careful about what you put into an AI tool. Do not enter confidential, personal, safeguarding, or other sensitive information unless its use has been specifically approved and you know it is appropriate to do so.

This includes:

- names or details connected with safeguarding concerns
- private pastoral information
- personal contact details
- information about someone's health, finances, family circumstances, or vulnerability
- complaints, disputes, or disciplinary matters that are not public
- private PCC discussions
- bank details, giving records, payroll information, or employment information
- anything else you would not be comfortable sharing publicly

Where possible, remove names and other details that could identify someone. When in doubt, leave it out.

2. Check the facts

AI can produce information that sounds convincing but is wrong or, sometimes, completely invented (or “hallucinated”). Never assume something is accurate just because an AI tool presents it confidently.

Always check important details against a reliable source, particularly:

- dates, times, and venues
- names, quotes, and contact details

- website links
- Bible references
- diocesan and Church of England policies, processes, and procedures
- statistics or research
- legal, financial, or safeguarding information

If accuracy matters, check the original source rather than asking the AI to check itself.

3. Keep people in charge

AI can help you produce a first draft, but it should not replace human judgement. Before you use or publish something created with AI, read it carefully and make it your own.

Ask yourself:

- Is it accurate?
- Does it sound like us?
- Is it clear and kind?
- Is it appropriate for the people who will read it?
- Is it accessible to someone who is not familiar with church language?
- Could anything be misleading or misunderstood?
- Am I happy to take responsibility for it?

AI can help with the work. The final decision, and responsibility for what you use, remains with you.

Key principles for parish AI use

Principle	What it means
Be safe	Protect people's information. Do not share anything confidential, personal, sensitive, or pastoral unless you are certain it is allowed and secure.
Be accurate	AI can produce information that sounds convincing but is wrong. Check everything before using it.
Be fair	AI can reflect bias or stereotypes. Look carefully at wording, images, assumptions, and examples. Ask whether the output treats people with dignity and fairness.
Be accountable	You remain responsible for the final content. AI can assist, but it should not make decisions for the parish, PCC, or ministry team.

What can AI help with in parish administration?

AI is often most useful for everyday tasks where you need help to draft, organise, summarise, or improve information. It can help you get started more quickly, particularly when you are staring at a blank page or trying to turn a jumble of notes into something useful.

For example, you could use AI to help with:

Writing and communications

- draft emails, notices, newsletter articles, and social media posts
- create text for posters and flyers
- suggest headings, subject lines, or different ways to explain something
- shorten or simplify long or complicated text

Planning and organising

- turn notes into a checklist or action plan
- create an event schedule or volunteer instructions
- organise information into headings, tables, or categories
- suggest a structure for a report, meeting, or presentation

Working with existing information

- summarise non-confidential notes or documents
- turn bullet points into a first draft
- compare different options
- adapt the same information for different audiences or formats
- rewrite text in clearer, more accessible language

Generating ideas

- suggest ideas for promoting an event
- offer different approaches to a piece of communication
- help you think through what information might be missing
- ask you questions to help develop an idea

AI is usually best used as an assistant rather than an expert. It can help you organise your thinking and produce a first draft, but you still need to check the result and decide what is right for your parish.

And remember the three golden rules: do not share private or sensitive information, check the facts, and keep people in charge.

Different ways to ask for help

There are lots of ways to ask AI for help. Here are some common examples:

What you want AI to do	Example prompt
Draft	Write a first draft of a short parish newsletter notice about our Lent lunch.
Improve	Rewrite this notice so it is clearer, warmer, and shorter.
Summarise	Summarise these non-confidential notes into five key points.
Organise	Put this information into a simple table with clear headings.
Compare	Compare these two options and set out the main advantages and disadvantages of each.
Generate ideas	Suggest five ways we could promote this event to people who do not usually come to church.
Think with me	Ask me five questions to help me plan this parish report before I start writing it.
Translate	Translate this welcome notice into Polish. Keep the tone warm and the language simple.

Writing a good prompt

Before you start

Before you write a prompt, spend a moment thinking about what you actually need.

Ask yourself:

- What am I trying to achieve?
- Who is this for?
- What do they need to know or do?
- What information does the AI need?
- What should the finished result look and sound like?
- Is there anything the AI must not include or invent?
- Does this task need AI at all?

You do not need to answer every question in every prompt. The aim is simply to be clear about what you need before you start.

Once you know that, give the AI enough information to help you well:

Include	Think about
Goal	What are you trying to achieve?
Task	What do you want the AI to do: draft, improve, summarise, organise, compare, or suggest ideas?
Audience and context	Who is it for, where will it be used, and what background does the AI need?
Key details	What facts, dates, times, places, or other information must be included?
Format and tone	Do you need an email, article, table, poster, or checklist? How should it sound?
Boundaries	What must the AI not invent, include, or assume?

Say what you *do* want

It is usually more helpful to tell the AI what good looks like, rather than only telling it what not to do.

Instead of:

Do not use jargon.

Try:

Use everyday language, short sentences, and a warm tone. Explain any church terms.

You can then add clear limits where needed:

Do not invent extra details, quotes, names, statistics, policies, or links. If important information is missing, tell me what I need to provide.

Similarly, instead of:

Do not make it too formal or too long.

Try:

Use a warm, respectful tone. Keep it under 150 words, with short paragraphs and clear headings.

Clear, positive instructions make it easier for the AI to understand what you want.

You do not need to get it perfect first time

AI works best as a conversation. Start with a clear prompt, look at the response, then correct, refine, or ask for another version.

You can say things like:

- Make it shorter.
- Make it warmer.
- Keep closer to my original wording.
- Remove the church jargon.
- Give me three alternatives.
- Tell me what information is missing.
- Ask me questions before you rewrite it.

Do not worry about writing the perfect prompt. The aim is to give the AI enough direction to produce something useful, then use your own judgement to improve the result.

A simple prompt template

You do not need to start from scratch every time. This simple structure can be adapted for most parish tasks. Replace the words in square brackets with your information and delete any lines you do not need.

I need to [describe what you are trying to achieve].

Please [describe exactly what you want the AI to do].

The audience is [describe the intended audience]. This will be used [say where or how it will be used].

Use only the information and source material I provide. Do not fill gaps with assumptions.

Include:

[key information]

[key information]

[key information]

Write this as [for example, an email, notice, newsletter item, or social media post].

Aim for [length, word count, or number of paragraphs]. Use a [for example, warm, welcoming, formal, pastoral, or reassuring] tone. Use Plain English and British spelling. Explain any church terms that may be unfamiliar to this audience.

Please:

- clearly flag anything that is uncertain or needs checking
- preserve any supplied names, dates, quotations, and approved wording accurately
- [anything particularly important]

Do not:

- invent or assume facts, names, dates, quotations, contact details, or links
- add unnecessary personal information
- [anything else you want it to avoid]

If important information is missing or unclear, ask me questions before drafting.

After the draft, list any facts or details that I should check before using it.

Information or source material:

[paste information here]

Not sure what to write? Ask AI to help

You can ask the AI to help you build the prompt before it starts the task.

For example:

I need help writing a good prompt. My goal is to [explain what you want to achieve]. Ask me five practical questions before you start. Do not ask me to share confidential, personal, pastoral, safeguarding, financial, employment, or other sensitive information.

Answer the questions, then ask the AI to use your answers to carry out the task.

Work in stages

For bigger jobs, it is often easier to work through one task at a time rather than putting everything into one long prompt.

For example:

1. Summarise the key information.
2. Turn it into a newsletter article.
3. Create shorter text for a poster.
4. Adapt it for Facebook.
5. Check the final versions for clarity, accessibility, and missing information.

Check each response before moving on. This gives you more control and makes it easier to spot mistakes.

Ready-to-use prompts for parish work

The prompts in this section are designed to be copied, pasted into an AI tool, and adapted for your parish.

Anything in **[square brackets]** needs to be replaced with your own information.

You do not need to use every part of a prompt. Delete anything that is not relevant and add any extra instructions that will help the AI understand what you need.

Remember the three golden rules: do not share private or sensitive information, check the facts, and keep people in charge.

Posters and flyers

AI can help you turn event information into clear, welcoming copy.

- A poster should work at a glance, so keep the wording brief and make the most important details easy to spot.
- A flyer can include a little more information, but should still be easy to scan.

Copy and paste prompt

Write the copy for a [poster/flyer] about [event, group, service, or activity].

It is for [audience] and will be [displayed, handed out, shared online, or used in another way].

Details:

- Name and organiser: [details]
- Date or frequency: [details]
- Time: [details]
- Place: [venue and address]
- Cost and booking: [details]
- What people can expect: [details]
- Accessibility and practical information: [details]
- Public contact or website: [details]

Use clear, welcoming Plain English and British spelling. Assume readers may not know much about church, and explain or avoid unfamiliar church terms.

For a poster, keep the wording brief and make the essential details easy to spot.

For a flyer, use short headings and paragraphs. Include a clear invitation or action.

If it will be shared online, also provide the essential information as plain text to accompany the image.

Use only the details I have supplied. Do not guess. If something important is missing, ask me before writing.

You could also ask:

- Give me three alternative headlines.
- Make it shorter.
- Make it warmer and less formal.
- Create a shorter version for Facebook.
- Check whether any church language needs explaining.
- Suggest alt text if this will be shared as an image online.

Before you use it

Check that the date, time, venue, booking details, contact information, and any other practical information are correct.

If you share a poster or flyer as an image online, include the key information in the accompanying post as well.

Newsletters

AI can help turn rough notes into a short article, improve an existing draft, suggest headlines, shorten long notices, or organise several items into a clearer newsletter.

Copy and paste prompt: writing an article

I need to [inform people about/invite people to/thank people for/explain/encourage people to] [subject or action].

Turn the information below into a short parish newsletter article for [audience].

Keep it under [word count] words.

Use Plain English, British spelling, short sentences, and short paragraphs. Use a warm, natural tone. Explain or avoid any unfamiliar church terms.

Include:

- a clear headline
- the most important information near the beginning
- a clear invitation or action where needed

Use only the information I provide. Do not invent facts, quotations, Bible references, policies, contact details, or links. Keep any supplied quotations exactly as written.

If something important is missing or unclear, ask me before writing.

Return only the headline and finished article.

Information to use:

[Paste your information here.]

Copy and paste prompt: improving a draft

Edit the newsletter article below.

Make it clearer, shorter, and warmer. Use Plain English, British spelling, short sentences, and short paragraphs.

Remove repetition and replace unfamiliar church terms with clearer wording where possible.

Keep the original meaning and all important information. Do not alter names, dates, times, figures, contact details, links, or quotations. Do not add new information or make anything sound more certain than it is.

If something is unclear or appears incorrect, flag it instead of guessing.

Return a clean, ready-to-paste version. Add a short "Points to check" section only if needed.

Text:

[Paste your draft here.]

Copy and paste prompt: organising a newsletter

Help me organise the newsletter items below.

The newsletter is for [audience]. The priorities for this issue are [priorities, if any].

Suggest a clear order for all the items. Group related items under useful headings and put urgent or priority items first.

Identify:

- anything that is too long
- anything that needs a clearer headline

- anything that needs a clearer invitation or action

- repeated or overlapping information

- anything that needs a decision from me

Include every item. Do not rewrite, shorten, merge, remove, or add information yet.

Give me:

- A proposed newsletter order

- A short list of points to address

Newsletter items:

[Paste your newsletter content here.]

You could also ask

- Give me five headline options.
- Make this article 50 words shorter.
- Make the opening stronger.
- Make this easier to read on a phone.
- Make this suitable for people outside the church.
- Keep closer to my original wording.

Emails

AI can help with routine parish emails, particularly when you know what you need to say but are struggling to find the right wording.

Do not use AI to draft emails containing confidential pastoral, safeguarding, employment, financial, or other sensitive information.

Copy and paste prompt

I need to email [audience] about [subject].

The purpose of the email is to [inform/invite/remind/thank/ask/etc.].

Include the following information:

[Add the key information here.]

Write a clear email using Plain English and British spelling.

Use a [warm/friendly/calm/pastoral/practical] tone.

Keep it concise and put the most important information near the beginning.

Make it clear what the reader needs to do, if anything.

Do not invent any information.

If something important is missing, tell me what I need to provide.

Give me a clear subject line as well.

You could also ask

- Make it warmer without making it longer.
- Make it less formal.
- Give me three subject line options.
- Make the action I am asking people to take clearer.
- Keep closer to my original wording.

Social media

AI can help turn existing parish information into social media posts.

Remember that a social media post usually needs to be shorter and more direct than a newsletter article or email.

Copy and paste prompt

Create a [Facebook/Instagram] post using the information below.

Audience: [who you want to reach]

Purpose: [what you want people to know or do]

Information:

[Paste your safe information here.]

Use Plain English, British spelling, and a warm, natural tone.

Make the important information clear without sounding like an advert.

Make it understandable to people who may not usually come to church.

Include the key details in the post itself rather than relying on an accompanying image.

Do not invent information, quotes, links, or hashtags.

If important information is missing, tell me what I need to provide.

You could also ask

- Make it shorter.
- Give me three different openings.

- Make this more suitable for people outside the church.
- Make it sound less corporate.
- Adapt this for Instagram.
- Create a version suitable for a community Facebook group.

Summarising information

AI can help you make long or complicated information easier to understand.

Only use material that is safe to share with the AI tool you are using.

Copy and paste prompt

Summarise the information below for [audience].

They need to understand [what matters most].

Use Plain English, British spelling, and short bullet points.

Include:

- the main issue
- the key points
- any decisions that need to be made
- any actions already agreed

Use only the information I provide.

Do not fill gaps or invent information.

If something is unclear or missing, say so.

Information:

[Paste your non-confidential information here.]

You could also ask

- Summarise this in five key points.
- Give me a 100-word summary.
- Explain this in language suitable for someone unfamiliar with church structures.
- Turn this into a short briefing note.
- Tell me which points need further explanation.

Translation

AI can help you create a first draft of a translation for routine parish communications.

Important: If possible, ask someone who understands the language to check the translation, particularly if it is important or contains pastoral information. Do not rely on AI translation alone for safeguarding, legal, medical, or other sensitive information.

Copy and paste prompt

Translate the text below from [original language] into [target language].

This is for [audience] and will be used for [purpose].

Use clear, natural language that is appropriate for [country or community, if relevant].

Keep names, dates, times, addresses, contact details, links, and other factual information exactly as written.

Do not add or remove information.

If a word, phrase, church term, or part of the context is unclear, flag it rather than guessing.

Text:

[Paste your non-confidential text here.]

Organising and comparing information

AI can also help when you have the information you need but want to put it into a clearer structure.

For example, it can group ideas, create tables, identify themes, or help you compare different options.

Copy and paste prompt: organising information

Organise the information below into a clearer structure.

This is for [audience] and will be used for [purpose].

Group related information together and use clear headings.

Use Plain English and British spelling.

Do not add new information.

If something does not fit clearly into a category, put it under "Other" rather than guessing.

Information:

[Paste your non-confidential information here.]

Copy and paste prompt: comparing options

Compare the options below.

For each option, identify:

- possible benefits
- possible drawbacks or risks
- practical questions we need to consider
- information that is missing

Present the comparison in a simple table.

Base the comparison on the information I have provided. You may use general reasoning to suggest possible benefits, drawbacks, or risks, but clearly describe them as possibilities rather than established facts.

Do not invent facts, figures, costs, evidence, quotations, or specific details. Do not claim that something is supported by evidence unless I have provided that evidence.

If a point depends on information that is not available, put it under "Practical questions" or "Missing information".

Do not decide which option we should choose.

Options:

[Add the options and information here.]

AI can help organise the information. The final decision remains with the appropriate person, team, or PCC.

Creating schedules, checklists, and action plans

AI can be particularly useful for turning a jumble of practical information into something easier for volunteers, PCC members, or parish teams to follow.

Copy and paste prompt: event schedule

I need to help volunteers understand what needs to happen for [event].

Create a simple event schedule.

The details are:

Event: [name]

Date: [date]

Event starts: [time]

Event finishes: [time]

Venue: [place]

Volunteers arrive: [time]

Tasks include:

[List the tasks here.]

Put the schedule in a table with:

- time
- task
- person responsible
- notes

Use Plain English, British spelling, and a practical, friendly tone.

Do not invent people's names, timings, tasks, or instructions.

If information is missing, write "information needed".

Copy and paste prompt: checklist

Turn the information below into a simple checklist for [purpose].

This will be used by [audience].

Put the tasks in a sensible order and keep each instruction short and clear.

Use Plain English and British spelling.

Do not add tasks, safety requirements, or procedures that I have not provided.

If something appears to be missing, list it separately under "Things to check".

Information:

[Paste your non-confidential information here.]

Copy and paste prompt: action plan

Turn the information below into a simple action plan.

This is for [PCC/parish team/volunteers/etc.].

Create a table with:

- action

- person responsible
- deadline
- status
- notes

Keep each action clear and specific.

Do not invent owners or deadlines.

Where an owner or deadline has not been agreed, write "to be agreed".

Use only the information provided.

Information:

[Paste your non-confidential information here.]

Before you use it

Check that responsibilities and deadlines have actually been agreed.

AI should not invent health and safety, safeguarding, legal, or other requirements. Check these separately using the appropriate parish or diocesan guidance.

Reports and PCC papers

AI can help you structure a report, turn rough notes into a clearer draft, summarise information, or create an action table.

It should not invent evidence, consultation findings, quotes, figures, financial information, recommendations, or decisions.

Copy and paste prompt: drafting a report

I need to prepare a report about [topic] for [audience].

The purpose of the report is to [inform/explain a problem/review progress/seek a decision/etc.].

Use the information below to help me create a clear report.

Information:

[Paste your non-confidential information here.]

Use Plain English, British spelling, clear headings, and a calm, professional tone.

Include:

- a short summary

- the main issues
- relevant information or evidence I have provided
- any decisions that need to be made
- any agreed or proposed actions

Do not invent facts, figures, quotes, sources, policies, evidence, recommendations, or decisions.

If information is missing, mark it clearly rather than filling the gap.

Before giving me the final version, list anything that needs to be checked or confirmed.

Copy and paste prompt: summarising a report

Summarise the report below for busy PCC members.

Use Plain English, British spelling, and short paragraphs.

Keep it under 300 words.

Include:

- what the report is about
- why it matters
- the main points
- any decisions needed
- any actions already agreed

Use only the information in the report.

Do not invent anything.

Report:

[Paste the non-confidential report here.]

Copy and paste prompt: turning notes into an action table

Turn the notes below into an action table for the PCC.

Use columns for:

- action
- owner
- deadline

- status

- notes

Keep the actions clear and specific.

Do not invent owners, deadlines, decisions, or actions.

If an owner or deadline has not been agreed, write "to be agreed".

Use only the information in the notes.

Notes:

[Paste your non-confidential notes here.]

Before you use it

Check:

- every fact, date, and figure
- that evidence has been represented accurately
- that the AI has not invented recommendations or decisions
- that risks and uncertainties are explained fairly
- that confidential or sensitive information has not been included
- whether the report needs review or approval before it is shared

AI can help you draft, organise, and summarise. It should not make decisions for the PCC or replace legal, financial, safeguarding, pastoral, or other professional advice.

Not sure what prompt to use?

You can ask the AI to help you work out what information it needs before it starts.

Copy and paste prompt

I need help with [briefly describe the task].

Before you start, ask me up to five practical questions that will help you understand what I need.

Only ask for information that is relevant to the task.

Do not ask me to share confidential, personal, pastoral, safeguarding, financial, employment, or other sensitive information.

Once I have answered, use my answers to help me complete the task.

Remember: you can keep the conversation going

You do not need to get the result right first time.

Once the AI has responded, you can give it simple follow-up instructions such as:

- Make it shorter.
- Make it warmer.
- Make it less formal.
- Keep closer to my original wording.
- Remove the jargon.
- Give me three alternatives.
- Put this into bullet points.
- Turn this into a table.
- Tell me what information is missing.
- Ask me questions before rewriting it.
- Review this for bias, stereotypes, or unfair assumptions.

Treat the first response as a draft. Check it, challenge it, and change it until it is useful.

Common mistakes and missteps

Even a good prompt can produce a poor result. These are some of the most common problems to watch for.

1. Being too vague

AI works better when it knows what you are trying to achieve, who something is for, and what the finished result should look like.

Too vague:

Write something about our church.

Better:

Write a 150-word newsletter article about St Mary's Church joining the village summer fair. It is for local residents, including people who may not usually come to church. Use a warm, welcoming tone and Plain English. Include the date, time, location, what people can expect, and an invitation to visit our stall.

The fix: Give the AI the useful information: your goal, audience, task, key details, format, and tone.

2. Trying to do too much at once

A long prompt asking for a newsletter, poster, social media campaign, report, and action plan all at once can produce muddled results.

The fix: Break bigger jobs into stages. Start with one task, check the result, then build on it.

For example:

1. Summarise the key message.
2. Turn it into a newsletter article.
3. Adapt it for a poster.
4. Create a shorter social media version.

You will usually get better results, and it is easier to spot mistakes along the way.

3. Accepting the first answer

The first response is a draft, not the finished product. If it is not quite right, tell the AI what needs to change. You can ask it to:

- make something shorter or warmer
- keep closer to your original wording
- explain church jargon
- try a different tone
- give you several alternatives
- tell you what information is missing

The fix: Treat AI as a conversation. Check the response, give feedback, and refine it until it is useful.

4. Forgetting to check the facts

AI can produce information that sounds convincing but is wrong or completely invented.

It may get dates, names, quotes, statistics, Bible references, policies, website links, or event details wrong.

Adding an instruction such as: “**Do not invent facts, figures, quotes, names, sources, policies, or links. If information is missing, tell me**” can help, but it does not remove the need to check the answer yourself.

The fix: Check important information against the original or another reliable source before using it.

5. Sharing information that should stay private

Do not paste confidential, personal, pastoral, safeguarding, financial, employment, or other sensitive information into an AI tool unless you are certain its use is permitted, secure, and appropriate.

Removing a person's name may not be enough if other details could still identify them.

The fix: Use only information that is safe to share. If the task needs sensitive information to work, AI may not be the right tool for the job.

6. Treating AI as an expert or decision-maker

AI can help you draft, organise, summarise, and explore ideas. It should not make important decisions on behalf of a person, PCC, or parish.

Do not rely on an AI tool to decide:

- how to respond to a safeguarding concern
- whether something is lawful
- how to deal with a complaint or employment issue
- what financial decision a PCC should make
- whether a particular risk is acceptable
- what pastoral response someone needs

The fix: Use the right human expertise and diocesan or professional guidance. AI can support the work, but responsibility stays with people.

7. Staying in the same chat for unrelated tasks

Many AI tools use earlier messages in a conversation to help understand later ones. This can be useful when you are working on the same job, but it can also cause confusion.

For example, an AI tool may continue using the audience, tone, or information from an earlier task when you have moved on to something completely different.

The fix: Start a new chat when you change topic, audience, event, or type of task.

8. Not checking for bias or exclusion

AI learns from large amounts of existing material and can reproduce stereotypes, assumptions, or unfair language.

Look out for assumptions about:

- age
- disability

- race or ethnicity
- gender
- sexual orientation
- family life
- social or economic background
- people's experience of church

Ask whether the result treats people with dignity, assumes everyone is the same, unintentionally excludes anyone, or uses language that could make someone feel unwelcome.

The fix: Review AI-generated material with the same care you would give anything else published by your parish. If needed, ask the AI to identify possible bias or assumptions, but make the final judgement yourself.

A simple rule

If an AI response feels wrong, unclear, insensitive, or too confident, do not use it simply because it sounds polished.

Check it, question it, and change it.

Accessibility and inclusion

AI can help make communication clearer, but it cannot make a poster, document, email, or web page accessible for you. You still need to check the finished result.

When creating parish communications:

- use clear headings and a logical reading order
- use readable text sizes
- make sure there is good contrast between text and its background
- do not rely on colour alone to communicate meaning
- avoid putting important text over busy images
- add useful alt text to images where needed
- include important information in the text of a social media post, rather than only in an image
- make sure links explain where they go, rather than simply saying "click here"
- consider how the content will work on a phone as well as on paper or a computer

AI can suggest ways to improve accessibility, but ****check the final design and content yourself****.

Copyright, images, and permissions

The same rules about copyright, consent, and permissions still apply when you use AI.

Do not assume that something is safe to use simply because an AI tool created or suggested it.

Be particularly careful about:

- uploading photographs, documents, illustrations, or other material you do not have permission to use
- asking AI to closely copy an existing poster, illustration, photograph, logo, or other creative work
- using someone's photograph or likeness without appropriate permission
- using parish, diocesan, or partner logos incorrectly
- assuming an AI-generated image or piece of writing is automatically free from copyright concerns

For parish communications, use your own photographs with appropriate consent, approved branding, licensed material, or simple original graphics wherever possible.

AI can also help you develop an idea without creating the finished image. For example:

Suggest three simple image ideas for a parish Harvest Festival poster. They should feel warm, local, and welcoming. Avoid anything cluttered or stereotypical.

Two quick checks

Before you press enter

Ask yourself:

- Is the task clear? Have I said what I want the AI to do?
- Have I given useful context? Does it know the audience and anything else it needs to understand?
- Have I included the important details?
- Have I said what the result should look and sound like?
- Have I told it what it must not invent or assume?
- Is everything I am sharing safe and appropriate to put into this AI tool?

You do not need every element for every prompt. Give the AI enough information to understand the job without making the prompt more complicated than it needs to be.

Before you use the result

Check:

- Accuracy: Are the facts, dates, names, figures, contact details, links, and references correct?
- Invention: Has the AI added anything you did not give it?
- Audience: Will the people receiving it understand it?
- Tone: Does it sound like your parish and suit the situation?
- Accessibility and inclusion: Is it clear, accessible, and free from unfair assumptions or stereotypes?
- Privacy: Does it protect confidential and sensitive information?
- Responsibility: Does it need approval or specialist advice before it is used?

Most importantly: are you happy to take responsibility for the finished version?

Final reminder

AI can be a useful assistant for drafting, organising, summarising, and developing ideas. It cannot replace local knowledge, human judgement, pastoral care, or professional advice.

Use it thoughtfully, check its work carefully, and keep people at the centre of what you do.

Sources and further advice

This guide should be used alongside the Diocese of York AI guidance for parishes and any AI policy agreed by your PCC.

Further information about writing prompts is available from organisations including:

- Grammarly, "How to Create Effective AI Prompts." <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/ai/generative-ai-prompts/>
- Harvard University Information Technology, "Getting started with prompts for text-based Generative AI tools." <https://www.huit.harvard.edu/news/ai-prompts>
- ICAS, "Writing effective AI prompts." <https://www.icas.com/news-insights-events/news/ai-technology/writing-effective-ai-prompts>
- Microsoft Copilot, "See Copilot in action with these AI prompts." <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-copilot/for-individuals/do-more-with-ai/general-ai/prompt-examples?form=MYO2PE>
- MIT Sloan Teaching & Learning Technologies, "Effective Prompts for AI: The Essentials." <https://mitsloanedtech.mit.edu/ai/basics/effective-prompts/>