

## NCR suspends comments on website

Dennis Coday | Jan. 6, 2014 NCR Today

*National Catholic Reporter* suspended the commenting feature of its website, NCRonline.org, effective Monday 10 a.m. Central time.

We ordered our Web editor to suspend the commenting feature and to hide all previously posted comments because of the malicious, abusive nature of the comments that have bombarded our site in recent days.

Comments will be suspended indefinitely. *NCR* editors will explore options that will allow commenting to return in a way that respects our writers, the subjects of our stories, and our readers.

*NCR* has always stood for open discussion of issues of importance. Our website was among the early adopters of technology that allowed readers' comments on specific articles because we believed such a feature could be a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas. Ideas and discussions were exchanged, and much of it was valuable. Even in the rough-and-tumble Internet world, where arguments tend to more freewheeling, we strove for a long time to keep the forum as open as possible.

Unfortunately, we have reached a point where the good that an open discussion can do is being outpaced by the damage it can cause when commenters do not respect civil discourse.

Comments that have appeared on the website in recent days have been vile and demeaning. We could no longer support hosting a Web feature that allows such despicable comments to appear, and that is why we ordered the suspension of that feature.

We apologize to anyone who was offended by these appalling comments.

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