

Pope Francis to web companies: guard against human traffickers' bait

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Pope Francis called on internet-based companies Sunday to be vigilant about keeping human traffickers from using electronic communications to entrap victims.

Francis said during his remarks to the public in St. Peter's Square on Sunday that the "plague" of human trafficking "exploits the weakest". He said research has shown that criminal organizations use the "most modern means of communications to snare their victims with deception".

The pope said education is needed on the "healthy" use of modern technology and "suppliers of such electronic services must be held to their responsibilities".

Jobs advertised on the internet have sometimes turned out to be ruses for tricking people who respond into prostitution, slave labor or other forms of exploitation.

Migrants have traveled to wealthy countries, had their passports seized by the human smugglers who brought them, and forced into prostitution or other illegal activities.

- AP