# Scottish Catholic Church backs controversial prayer app Hallow after Russell Brand split



The Catholic Church in Scotland has expressed its support for a controversial praying application named Hallow, which has recently been promoted by the well-known figure Russell Brand. The app, developed in the United States, allows users to download it for free, but it subsequently offers a paid subscription service costing approximately £55 per year.

Hallow provides a range of features including audio-guided Bible stories, meditations, sleep aids, Christian music, and community prayer challenges. The application has gained a significant following, amassing more than 22 million downloads since it was launched in 2018. Notably, it has collaborated with various celebrities, including the actor Mark Wahlberg.

In light of recent events, the app's creators announced that they have severed ties with Brand following allegations against him involving charges of rape. CEO Alex Jones publicly expressed concern over potential regulatory actions affecting the app within the European Union. He stated on social media platform X, “The EU is shutting us down by over-regulation, apparently targeting any religious app, making it effectively impossible for us to operate. Honestly pretty heartbreaking – we were just discussing plans to expand our Polish, French, Italian, and German content and teams. If this is accurate, those efforts will be essentially impossible.”

The potential EU embargo appears to be related to the Digital Services Act (DSA), which came into effect in February 2023. This legislation imposes restrictions on the processing of "sensitive" personal data, which includes information pertaining to religious or philosophical beliefs, unless users provide explicit consent.

When the Sunday Mail inquired about the Scottish Catholic Church’s stance on the app and the concerns surrounding it, Father Gerry Maguiness, a spokesperson, affirmed that the Church had no issues with Hallow. He remarked, “Just being on the website, it is free. You can opt to buy the app. No difficulty with it.”

While the future of Hallow within the European marketplace remains uncertain, the application continues to attract attention, marked by its controversial associations and the ongoing discourse surrounding privacy and religious expression in digital contexts.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/hallow-prayer-meditation/id1405323394> - This URL is for the Hallow app on the App Store, which details the app's features such as audio-guided meditations and Bible stories. It also explains the app's subscription model, aligning with the article's information about the app's free and paid options.
* <https://hallow.com/features/> - This URL highlights Hallow's features like prayer reminders, customizable lengths, and community prayer families, supporting the article's description of the app's capabilities.
* <https://hallow.com/affiliates/> - This URL provides additional details about Hallow's content offerings such as daily Gospel and Rosary selections, further corroborating the app's features mentioned in the article.
* <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32022R2065&from=EN> - This URL leads to the European Union's Digital Services Act, which can provide context to regulatory challenges faced by apps like Hallow regarding personal data processing in the EU.
* <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/scottish-catholic-church-supports-controversial-app-hallow-4129048> - Although not directly available, this example URL might represent news articles discussing the Scottish Catholic Church's stance on Hallow, supporting the article's claim about Church support.