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The tower of the Institute for the Works of Religion, often referred to as the Vatican bank, is p

The tower of the Institute for the Works of Religion, often referred to as the Vatican bank, is pictured in this 2019 photo file photo. (CNS/Paul Haring)

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Catholics looking to align their investment portfolios with Catholic teaching now have some help from the Vatican.

The Vatican Bank, formally known as the Institute for the Works of Religion, or IOR, announced Feb. 10 that it has launched two equity indexes in partnership with the investment research firm Morningstar. The indexes track major publicly traded companies in the United States and the eurozone that meet investment guidelines drawn from Catholic social teaching.

Among the U.S. companies currently included in the index holdings are Meta, Amazon, Tesla and JPMorgan Chase.

The two benchmarks — the Morningstar IOR US Catholic Principles Index and the Morningstar IOR Eurozone Catholic Principles Index — are "built following market best practices and in accordance with Catholic ethical criteria" and are intended to serve as reference points for Catholic investors worldwide, the bank said in a Feb. 10 statement.

According to the Vatican Bank, its investment policy is guided by five core principles: "the Sanctity of human life, respect for human life, environmental protection, and combating addictions," along with adherence to internationally recognized standards of social responsibility outlined in the United Nations Global Compact.

The bank says it excludes companies that operate hospitals or clinics providing abortion services; manufacture military weapons and small arms; or generate significant revenue from coal extraction, oil and gas production, nuclear energy, gambling, adult entertainment, tobacco or alcohol.

The bank states that its investment policy is "consistent with Social Doctrine of the Church and inspired principally by the guidelines indicated by Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis in some of their most significant encyclicals and exhortations."

In 2024, the Vatican Bank posted a profit of 32.8 million euros ($39 million).

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