

# PRESS PROGRESS

1932 — *The Catholic Courier Develops News and Editorial Service* — 1939

Emerging from the valley of fifty strenuous years, the CATHOLIC COURIER — realizing dreams of its founders—prepares for a greater tomorrow.

The past appears in panoramic review.

Within these historical pages we see many of the colorful figures who had parts in creating and continuing this newspaper, reenacting their roles in its dramatic story, living again all of the sacrifices and emotions of its struggles for life.

We go with them through the travail that led to its reorganization in 1932—when its star began ascending out of the darkness of depression.

We see them as the making of a better Catholic newspaper produced successful results, intensified with each passing year, and may well pause to contemplate achievements of the past, to analyze efforts of the present, and to outline plans for the future.

We may also appraise the functions of the Catholic Press, guided by the light within the editorial sanctum.

When the introduction of modern business methods gradually made improvements in this newspaper possible—with correspondents throughout the diocese—and the better product helped to accelerate that advance, a major improvement which came at the end of the first year under reorganization was the introduction of the N. C. W. C. News Service.

This international Catholic news-gathering and distributing agency was founded in 1920, with the blessing of Pope Benedict XV, and its subsequent development brought an epochal improvement.

Formed and controlled by Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, its purchase is dedicated to searching out news throughout the whole world that is interesting and vital to members of the faith, presenting it fully and truthfully.

Its correspondents are now located throughout the world.

The N. C. W. C. offers material for all departments of Catholic newspapers. Cable and radio bring immediate news of importance from all capitals; its weekly letter from Washington interprets events and trends at the national capital.

Its feature service covers this field generally, in both lighter and serious departments, appealing to various members in every family.

There is a picture service "geared to Catholic news."

A biographical service, syndicated articles by famous Catholic writers, material for supplements on special occasions are all included.

Complete texts of Encyclicals and other important Papal documents are brought from Vatican City.

This news service makes a valuable contribution in providing a foundation of truth upon which to build a fair appraisal of happenings throughout the world.

To do so is often to expose erroneous reports of events and pronouncements affecting Catholics; and, by presenting the truth, to refute false and erroneous impressions many persons had obtained of Catholics and the Church as a result of getting their information from prejudiced sources.

(Mr. Frank A. Hall, director of the N. C. W. C. News Service, has written an illuminating commentary on the services rendered by

his organization, which we are proud to present on this page).

But this is only a part of the responsibility of the Catholic Press, which must be an enlightening torch of truth and a mighty factor in education of all classes of people of all ages.

Archbishop Mooney, when in Rochester, declared that it "interprets the teaching of the Church; it defends the cause of the Church; and it portrays the world-wide life of the Church."

That is a succinct and thoughtful summary.

There is general agreement that Catholic youth should gain its knowledge from a dependable source; that its interpretation to them should be from a Catholic viewpoint.

To do so, is to help in the building of character and faith; to teach what is true; to warn against things that are false—besides

helping to formulate good reading habits.

They will last through life.

What is fully as important, the CATHOLIC COURIER extends the education of adults throughout the years.

It brings weekly supplements of new information to all that has been learned, keeping the reader informed of developments as they are taking place throughout the world.

Perhaps there has never been a time when the light of understanding was needed more than now—a time when the darkness of intolerance and bigotry is spread over so much of the world; when their shadows extend even to our own beloved country.

The Catholic press is a potent factor in promoting the Church and its varied institutions because it publicizes their needs—keeps them before the people.

More than that, it works with the Church in helping to bring success to all of its planned events by making them known to thousands of readers; by giving the reasons why, they should attend and give their co-operation.

Finally—and even more important—the Catholic press is a bulwark of defense to the Church and its institutions whenever or wherever they are attacked throughout the world.

Giving the news of these attacks, it makes possible the early marshaling of forces against injustice.

Stories of modern heroes and heroines of the Church appear in the news while these events are in the making—serving as living models of conduct for all members of the Catholic Church.

The past is brought into intimate view.

There was a salutary illustration

in the beatification of Mother Cabrini, which brought home to all persons the fact that a saint need not be someone from a far distant page of history.

In this newspaper, each step in the beatification has been pictured with appealing vividness; the great example of the life of Mother Cabrini has been made intimate in the engrossing stories of her deeds for humanity.

Through the news they have become a part of the records of our time—as clear and understandable as any other news of the day.

The stories of martyred missionaries in countries of today—the persecution of religion which is taking place—being given to the public as the presses turn each week, make it easy to understand that the spirit which moved the early Christians is still a vital force in spreading the doctrines of Jesus Christ.

In still another way the Catholic Press is educational because questions of doctrine, treatises and history are every day being answered in its columns.

Its news of the faith whose adherents number many millions and whose shrines are in every land is interpreted in the unflinching light of Catholic teaching and truth.

It offers a ready source of information for refutation of many charges that are constantly being made against the Church.

It is a continuing influence for good which readers receive as they peruse its entertaining pages.

The Catholic press has the advantage over the secular press which seeks to give news "hot off the wire." It has time for checking to insure accuracy; for contemplation to determine relative importance of happenings.

A Catholic newspaper must be good enough to interest its thousands of readers—meeting a test which proves they will be interested rather than that they should be interested.

A defender and promoter of its faith, it must also be entertaining to give assurance that it will be read.

With our eyes fixed upon definite ideals—buoyed by the proof in results that they are also the ideals of readers who want a good Catholic newspaper—a steady improvement in the CATHOLIC COURIER has been made since its reorganization.

Our purpose is to cover completely the news of the Vatican, official news from other sources; important Catholic news from other countries, in fact, any events in other countries having a possible Catholic angle.

Within the national scope there is a definite purpose of giving detailed and informative reports of happenings of the Apostolic Legation, the hierarchy, events in other dioceses and a news summary with names and events in the news.

Official diocesan events are also within the "must" province for this newspaper, covering the Chancery announcements, the Bishop's schedule and official deanery news—characteristic of the content of each edition.

Lay events of the diocese are covered partially, including news of organizations and societies, parish groups, important individuals and miscellaneous news. Eventually it may be wise to treat each of these groups in two

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## The NCWC NEWS SERVICE

by Frank A. Hall, Director

Attainment of a half century of life by an institution such as THE CATHOLIC COURIER can only produce rejoicing and felicitation. In this the National Catholic Welfare Conference Press Department certainly joins heartily and earnestly.

Mere age can bring no such gratification and congratulations as growth, progress and attainment. For its strides in these latter, THE CATHOLIC COURIER doubtless will receive the plaudits of its friends. We at the N.C.W.C. News Service add our own, after watching the Courier's advancement intimately and, I may say, with a trained judgment, for almost twenty years. During that period, we have been privileged to be of service to the paper in the providing of news, feature and pictorial material, and our collaboration has ever been cordial. We have observed your vicissitudes, have admired the courage with which you have met the problems that come to all newspapers, and in particular we have taken inspiration from your forward policy and your aggressive though sane progress.

Three truisms can be restated here: that any newspaper is judged by its content; that essentially the content will be what its staff makes it; and that the material in a modern newspaper consists (1) of what the paper itself gathers and prepares, and (2) of what it obtains for its readers from other sources. Readers in the Rochester area can best evaluate the COURIER'S locally-prepared copy, and I think will evaluate it highly. I can speak more directly about the news, feature and pictorial matter which goes to the COURIER'S desk beyond the effort of its own writers.

The day has long passed when any enterprising newspaper gave to its readers only what its own writers could prepare. General newspapers have for years looked to great news, feature and picture-gathering agencies to supply them with outside material covering world and national news, which could not be made available by the individual efforts of any one editor. For the last twenty years the Catholic Press, for its supply of such outside material, has likewise looked to its own agency, the N.C.W.C. News Service, set up and maintained under the sponsorship of the Bishops of the country.

Our Catholic Press has thus led powerfully in expanding the interests of our people to a more truly Catholic point. Today "parochialism," in the derogatory sense, has largely passed and our people take a broad, healthy and inspiring interest in the trials and triumphs of the Church in all lands. This interest is a tremendously valuable unifying service to the Church. Moreover, it helps us all as Catholics and as men and women.

I think it is fair to say that the enterprise of a Catholic paper, and its will to serve its readers completely and effectively, depend to a considerable degree upon the usage it makes of this "service" material constantly made available to it. I am happy to say that THE CATHOLIC COURIER in this respect stands among our most progressive and alert journals. It avails itself of a very extensive schedule of the material we offer.

I believe it worth while listing some of this aid that the COURIER thus calls to its service week by week from this one agency, the N.C.W.C.

From 50,000 to 55,000 words of Catholic news, gathered by trained journalists in all parts of the world.

Immediate dispatches from Vatican City and other world capitals brought by radio and cable.

A Catholic pictorial service illustrating the news and presenting interesting sidelights, including the Catholic cartoon "Strange But True."

Numerous other specially syndicated articles such as texts of Papal documents, letters on national events, commentaries on pressing questions of the moment.

It is repeated that a paper is essentially what its editors make it. Obviously also, it cannot, nor can any other paper, print everything we provide; knowing the interests and needs of its readers, it properly makes selection in accord with its individual requirements. The point is that, for the benefit of its subscribers, it regularly fortifies itself with a great supply of material from which to make selection, so that it may miss nothing useful.

Again, felicitations to the COURIER, to its editors, and to its readers, and the confident hope that in this Golden Jubilee observation there are the auspices for continued growth and success in a great and difficult mission.