

# Readers View Newspaper as Middle-Road

Continued from Page 1  
the Church" — 313, and "informative" — 270.

Layty differed somewhat, with the greatest number, 866, choosing "to keep up with what's happening in the Church" as the main reason for reading the Courier-Journal. Perhaps this answer fits in with an earlier question in the survey, discussed last week, where 53 per cent of the laity said they read no other religious publication regularly.

Next in order of reasons for the laity was local diocesan news, 841, followed by "informative," 564.

On the other side of the coin, why readers do not read the Courier-Journal, the greatest number, 91, in the random mail survey said because it is uninteresting. This was followed by 70 who prefer another Catholic periodical and 32 who say it is too conservative.

Among priests, 31 said they do not read the newspaper because it is uninteresting, followed by 16 who say it is too churchy or preachy. Religious who do not read the newspaper, 39, also chose "it is uninteresting" as the first reason, followed by 37 who prefer another Catholic periodical.

Lack of interest was also the principal choice among laity in this area, followed by "it is too churchy or preachy." An interesting finding was that an equal number, 12, either found the newspaper too conservative or too liberal.

There were other questions aimed at refining these attitudes. For instance, readers were asked if they agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly or have no opinion on the statement, "The Courier-Journal gives sufficient information about the continuing changes in the Church."

Of the random total, 67 per

cent agreed with the circulation sampling (every 14th name) yielding an even higher 73 per cent. The figure declined among priests (56 per cent) and religious (60 per cent) but reached a high level among Parish Council presidents (66 per cent) and direct subscribers (72 per cent).

Another statement posed the idea, "Selection and featuring of news items in the Courier-Journal is satisfactory." The total agreed by 62 per cent to 22 per cent. Again the affirmative percentages among priests were lower, 46 per cent to 40 who disagree. Religious agreed by 56 per cent to 30. The percentages for those who agree pick up among the laity (Parish Council presidents 64 per cent, direct subscribers 70 per cent).

Should controversial issues be kept off Page 1? Only 28 per cent of the total said yes, and this kind of figure held firm throughout the various categories. This being one of the more specific questions it

gives the Courier-Journal staff a clear verdict that readers do not want controversial issues hidden.

Another direct statement was, "The Courier-Journal presents an acceptable balance of local and national news."

The total random survey agreed by 61 per cent to 25 that the balance of news is acceptable. With the exception of priests, this finding held true for all categories. While priests more often agreed, the percentage was lower, 46 per cent to 42 per cent.

Judging from comments of those who disagreed with this finding, the principal indication is that there is not enough national and international news in the Courier-Journal. Needless to say, this is one of the areas where the staff will be working to improve the product.

One of the more controversial departments in the Courier-Journal has been its Opinion page, Letters to the editor. The

statement was posed, "To be a true voice of the people it is important that letters to the Courier-Journal that indicate opposing views to the Pope, Bishop, priests and editor be printed."

This drew an overwhelmingly favorable response. Seventy-nine per cent of the random total agreed, 50 per cent strongly. Only 11 per cent disagreed. (Figures do not total 100 per cent because of "no opinions" or those that answered other questions in the survey but not this particular one).

Interestingly, Parish Council presidents took the firmest stance on this question — 68 per cent agreeing strongly that such letters should be printed. Another 18 per cent agreed somewhat while only 4 per cent disagreed.

We will continue this report to our readers in upcoming issues. Next week we will look into the survey results concerning special features and columnists.

## COURIER SURVEY REPORT

8. How would you categorize yourself?

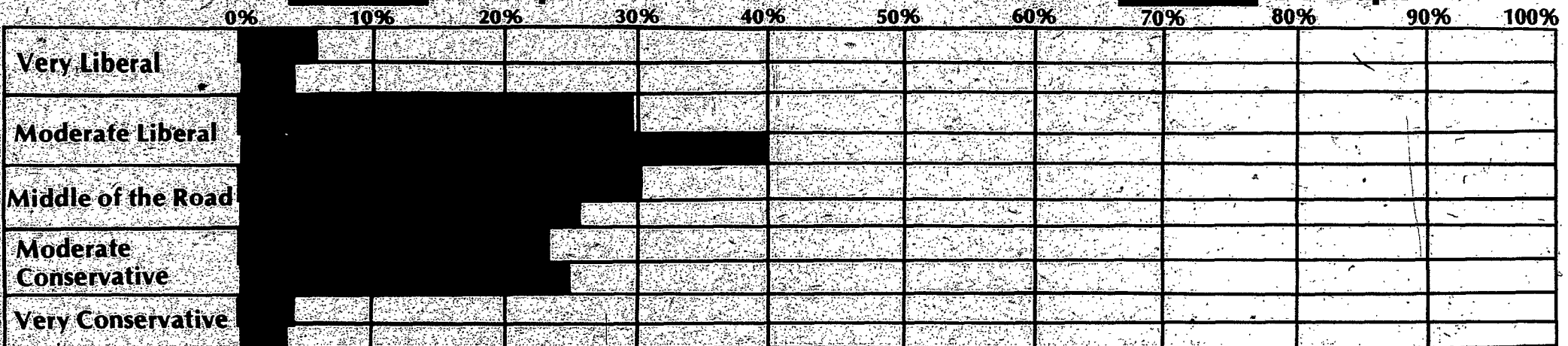
a. Very liberal	4	3	4	4	6
b. Moderate liberal	40	49	47	34	29
c. Middle of the Road	26	28	28	25	30
d. Moderate conservative	25	15	18	29	29
e. Very conservative	3	3	2	4	3

8. How would you categorize the COURIER-JOURNAL?

a. Very liberal	6	7	4	7	8
b. Moderate liberal	30	34	24	32	32
c. Middle of the Road	31	34	37	27	34
d. Moderate conservative	23	20	25	22	17
e. Very conservative	4	1	4	4	3

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Shown in **GREEN** on Graph



For Question No. 10, consider total persons who checked rather than per cents.

10. I read the COURIER-JOURNAL because

	Random	Priests	Religious	Laily	Newspaper
a. To keep up with what's happening in the Church	1,276	97	313	866	569
b. For local diocesan news	1,537	218	478	841	536
c. It is interesting	805	30	191	564	369
d. It is informative	1,015	76	270	669	455
e. It is available	772	72	241	459	277
f. It is challenging	209	16	62	141	70
g. Other	130	19	18	93	22

I don't read the COURIER-JOURNAL because

	Random	Priests	Religious	Laily	Newspaper
a. It is uninteresting	91	31	39	33	13
b. It is too churchy or preachy	29	16	8	16	3
c. I prefer another Catholic periodical	70	7	37	7	10
d. It is too liberal	16	7	2	12	5
e. It is too conservative	32	10	17	12	5
f. It is not available	8	—	8	0	2
g. Other	60	40	12	41	5

Choose the phrase that comes closest to your thinking about each of the following: Indicate by placing letter in appropriate space.

Agree Strongly, Agree Somewhat, Disagree Somewhat, Disagree Strongly, No Opinion

Selection and featuring of News Items in the Courier-Journal is Satisfactory

Random Total	19	43	16	6	9
Circulation Sampling	24	43	12	3	10
Priests	6	40	26	14	8
Religious	15	41	20	10	8
Parish Council Presidents	18	46	18	7	7
Direct Subscribers	24	46	15	3	9
In Paper Survey	23	44	17	7	4

Controversial issues should be kept off page one

Random Total	12	16	20	37	9
Circulation Sampling	12	16	20	33	10
Priests	17	16	17	39	8
Religious	9	15	21	40	8
Parish Council Presidents	7	16	27	46	2
Direct Subscribers	9	15	18	55	3
In Paper Survey	12	15	22	38	7

The Courier-Journal presents an acceptable balance of local and National News

Random Total	21	40	18	7	7
Circulation Sampling	26	39	13	4	8
Priests	7	39	26	16	7
Religious	15	41	22	9	5
Parish Council Presidents	16	34	36	9	2
Direct Subscribers	30	39	12	6	6
In Paper Survey	26	38	16	9	6

The Courier-Journal gives sufficient information about the Continuing changes in the Church

Random Total	25	42	17	7	3
Circulation Sampling	32	41	12	4	4
Priests	13	43	24	14	2
Religious	17	43	23	10	2
Parish Council Presidents	18	48	21	11	2
Direct Subscribers	33	39	12	9	3
In Paper Survey	26	41	19	8	2

To be a True Voice of the People it is important that letters to the Courier-Journal that indicate opposing views to the Pope, Bishop, Priests and Editor be printed

Random Total	50	29	7	4	3
Circulation Sampling	51	26	6	3	3
Priests	43	31	11	10	1
Religious	47	32	8	4	4
Parish Council Presidents	68	18	2	2	5
Direct Subscribers	64	24	3	6	3
In Paper Survey	49	28	10	5	2

Atwell	8	Editorials	4
Beahon	18	Greeley	11
Bishop Hogan	3	Hohman	21
Calendar	20	Letters	4
Capitol Letters	11	Movies	14
Child	6	Murphy	15
Classified	18	Radio-TV	23
Costa	14	Shamon	5
Cuddy	9	Viglucchi	16
Doser	19		