

# February Is

*Your activity is indispensable for the Church's*

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THE

# COURIER-JOURNAL

*Unanimously Approved — Courier-Journal Board of Directors, March 30, 1982*

### PREAMBLE

The Courier-Journal, the official newspaper of the Diocese of Rochester, is a ministry of the Church of Rochester under the presidency of the bishop. This ministry is guided by the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and by the teachings of the Church, especially as found in the Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Means of Social Communication and in the Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication published consequently.

The Courier-Journal seeks to help the Church reveal itself and thereby to proclaim the Gospel by providing balance and depth to news about religion and Christian life.

The Courier-Journal seeks (1) to provide a public forum for the exchange of ideas; (2) to form, consolidate and promote a public opinion consistent with the natural law, with the Gospel and with the teachings of the Church; and (3) to make apparent to both the Church and society the various contemporary attitudes and opinions of each. The normal flow of life within the Church requires a steady two-way flow of information.

The Courier-Journal believes that responsible Christian journalism requires both truth and timeliness and that it has the privileged ministry to share with the people of the diocese all the information which is vital to an informed and mature Christian life. This is at the very heart of Catholic Christian Education and formation. Individuals have the right to information that will aid them in fulfilling their baptismal mandate to participate in the life of the Church.

### SPECIFIC FUNCTIONAL PURPOSES

- I. **INCARNATION OF THE WORD AND REFLECT THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE**
  - A. By printing the Good News.
  - B. By not ignoring unwelcome news and events.
- II. **TEACHING VEHICLE FOR THE DIOCESE.**
  - A. Papal statements and information.
  - B. The Bishop's statements and information.
  - C. Other official Church documents; e.g., Roman Congregational statements, pastoral letters of the U.S. Bishops.
- III. **PROVIDE ACCURATE AND UP-TO-DATE COVERAGE OF HARD NEWS.**
  - A. World News with emphasis on the Vatican.
  - B. National news of a religious nature and other developments affecting the life of the Church.
  - C. Diocesan news such as hierarchical appointments.
  - D. Secular world, national and diocesan developments affecting the life of the Church.

### IV. PRESENT OFFICIAL DIOCESAN DIVISIONAL AND DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS.

- A. Information from and about the consultative bodies.
- B. Announces diocesan personnel appointments and changes.
- C. Notifies readers of scheduled events and activities to promote attendance.
- D. Describes and promotes participation in fund raising efforts, i.e., Bishop's Thanksgiving Appeal and Campaign for Human Development.

### V. ASSIST PASTORS AND PARISH STAFFS IN COMMUNICATING.

- A. To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas.
- B. To promote activities and events to stimulate participation and attendance.
- C. Announces parish personnel appointments and changes.

### VI. INTERPRETS EDITORIAL NEWS DEVELOPMENTS.

- A. Editorials on the editorial page.
- B. Provides Gospel insights.
- C. Presents hierarchical guidelines based on the magisterium.

### VII. TO PUBLISH OPINIONS.

- A. Offers views of a wide range of columnists.
- B. Permits free dialogue by readers within these guidelines:
  - Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, no longer than 1 1/2 pages.
  - We routinely condense letters, edit offensive words and libelous statements, and reserve the right to reject letters. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made and the letters will reflect the writer's own style.
  - Because submitted opinions exceed the space for letters, we publish only original letters addressed to us. We will not use poetry, open letters, or copies of letters sent elsewhere. To ensure diversity, we limit each writer to one letter per month.
- C. Current opinions and issues reflecting the variety of life and positions within the Church.

### VIII. TO PRESENT WORTHWHILE INFORMATION THROUGH ADVERTISING.

- A. To educate and promote sound opinion on various issues and causes; i.e., Right to Life, aid to parochial schools, product boycotts.
- B. To provide messages from various institutions and orders to encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life.
- C. To assist readers in acquiring worthwhile books, periodicals and articles.
- D. To display graphically various diocesan appeals.

## Vatican Council II Decree on the means of Social Communication

### II. THE USE OF THE MEDIA FOR GIVING THE GOOD NEWS

Christ commanded the apostles and their successors to "teach all nations," to be "the light of the world," and to announce the Good News in all places at all times.

*Part Three, Chapter II, p. 126*

#### I. THE PRINTED WORD

The Press, of its power and nature, is of towering importance. Because of its adaptability, because of its variety and of the number of its publications, it can go into detail when reporting the news. It can also comment on the news and, without boring the reader, interpret it in a way that makes him think for himself. It is a most useful complement to the audio-visual means of communication. It is a most effective means of stimulating men's critical faculties and of helping them form their own opinions. Since it is able to deal with such a variety of material, and since it can so admirably encourage men to think, it has prime place in the promotion of social dialogue.

Moreover, today all the classic of religious literature are available to everybody in the form of paperbacks, booklets and every sort of leaflet. So also are the accepted masterpieces of every nation, scientific works and every sort of light reading that can provide pleasant relaxation. "Comics" and illustrated stories are not to be despised. They can for instance be used to illustrate the sacred scriptures and the lives of the saints. All these productions of the printing press deserve our interest and support.

The Catholic Press — and this includes reviews, magazines and periodicals — can be marvellously effective in bringing a knowledge of the Church to the world and a knowledge of the world to the Church. It does this by imparting information and by stimulating those processes by which public opinion is formed. There is, however, no advantage in founding new publications if quantity is achieved at the cost of quality and if the new injure the old.

That part of the Catholic Press which is of general interest publishes news and opinions and background articles about all the facets and problems and worries of modern life. This it does in the light of Christian principles. It is the task of the Catholic Press to balance, to complete and, if necessary, to correct the news and comments about religion and the Christian life. At one and the same time it will be a

glass that reflects the world and a light to show it the way. It will be a forum, a meeting place for the exchange of views. This Press needs talented men and funds if its professional competence is to be above dispute.

The Catholic Press must be able to acquire suitable offices and the proper facilities for obtaining news reports and features. Otherwise, a Catholic-run Press cannot effectively promote dialogue inside the Church and between the Church and the outside world. It must also achieve professional standards in printing up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive news about the life of the Church. In the collecting, collating and passing on of the news throughout the world there is need for cooperation at the international level.

Catholics are encouraged to read Catholic publications regularly. Naturally these must deserve the name of being Catholic. It is hard to see how people can keep in touch with what is happening in the Church without the Catholic Press. Neither can people keep a Catholic attitude towards what happens in the world without the help of commentaries on the news written in the light of Christian principles. This is certainly not intended as an interference in the individual's right to read what he chooses. Still less is it intended as an interference with the freedom of expression of writers with different convictions, nor is it intended to discourage the diversity ordinarily taken for granted in a particular area. It is self-evident that Catholic writers must earn their popularity and following by the high standard of their work.

When the events of the day raise questions that touch fundamental Christian principles, the Catholic Press will try to interpret these in accordance with the Magisterium of the Church. Apart from this, clergy and laity will encourage a free expression of opinion and a wide variety of publications and points of view. They should do this because it will satisfy the different interests and concerns of readers, and because it contributes to the formation of public opinion in the Church and the world. Those Catholic newspapers which are recognized as the official organs of the various authorities and institutions of the Church should always, in accordance with usual press practice, try to explain fully the thinking of the organization for which they are accepted as public spokesmen. In these newspapers, an unrestricted liberty of expression should be maintained in those pages where it is made quite clear that the editors are not committing themselves in a particular question that is still under discussion.

*Part Three, Chapter III, Section I, pp. 136-141*

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