

THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

John Paul Speaks

*Notable quotations from Pope John Paul II and
official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church*

COMMUNICATION AND THE TRUTH

The fundamental moral requirement of all communication is respect for and service of the truth.

FREEDOM AND TRUTH

Freedom to seek and speak what is true is essential to human communication, not only in relation to facts and information but also, and especially, regarding the nature and destiny of the human person, regarding society and the common good, regarding our relationship with God.

“AN INESCAPABLE RESPONSIBILITY”

The mass media have an inescapable responsibility ..., since they constitute the modern arena in which ideas are shared and people can grow in mutual understanding and solidarity.

“JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY”

By accurately reporting events, correctly explaining issues, and fairly representing diverse points of view, the media have a strict duty to foster justice and solidarity in human relationships at all levels of society. This does not mean glossing over grievances but getting at their roots so that they can be understood and healed.

FREEDOM AND PEACE

Freedom is a precondition of true peace as well as one of its most precious fruits.

THE MEDIA AND FREEDOM

The media serve freedom by serving truth; they obstruct freedom to the extent that they depart from what is true by disseminating falsehoods or creating a climate of unsound emotional reactions to events.

SERVANTS OF FREEDOM

If the media are to serve freedom, they themselves must be free and correctly use that freedom. Their privileged status obliges the media to rise above purely commercial concerns and serve society's true needs and interests.

“RESIST PRESSURES”

Reporters and commentators in particular have a grave duty to follow the demands of their moral conscience and to resist pressures to “adapt” the truth to satisfy the demands of wealth or political power.

INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE

The men and women of the media are especially bound to contribute to peace in all parts of the world by breaking down the barriers of mistrust, fostering consideration of the point of view of others, and striving always to bring peoples and nations together in mutual understanding and respect — and beyond understanding and respect, to reconciliation and mercy!

THE POPE'S PRAYER

My prayer ... is that the men and women of the media will ever more wholly live up to the challenge of their calling: service of the universal common good. Their personal fulfillment and the peace and happiness of the world depend greatly on this. May God bless them with light and courage.

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