

THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

John Paul Speaks

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



“UNPRECEDENTED POSSIBILITIES FOR GOOD”

Modern technology places at our disposal unprecedented possibilities for good, for spreading the truth of our salvation in Jesus Christ and for fostering harmony and reconciliation.

“UNTOLD HARM”

Yet its misuse can do untold harm, giving rise to misunderstanding, prejudice and even conflict.

“AN URGENT NEED”

The theme chosen for the 2005 World Communications Day — “The Communications Media: At the Service of Understanding Among Peoples” — addresses an urgent need: to promote the unity of the human family through the use made of these great resources.

THE MEDIA AND EDUCATION

One important way of addressing this end is through education. The media can teach billions of people about other parts of the world and other cultures.

“FRIENDS OR ENEMIES”?

Accurate knowledge promotes understanding, dispels prejudice, and awakens the desire to learn more. Images especially have the power to convey lasting impressions and to shape attitudes. They teach people how to regard members of other groups and nations, subtly influencing whether they are considered as friends or enemies, allies or potential adversaries.

“ENORMOUS POTENTIAL”

The media have enormous potential for promoting peace and building bridges between peoples, breaking the fatal cycle of violence, reprisal, and fresh violence that is so widespread today.

RESPONSE TO NATURAL DISASTERS

If such a contribution to peace-making is one of the significant ways the media can bring people together, its influence in favor of the swift mobilization of aid in response to natural disasters is another... The speed with which news travels today naturally increases the possibility for timely practical measures designed to offer maximum assistance. In this way the media can achieve an immense amount of good.

“PROMOTE A TRUE CULTURE OF LIFE”

Communicators have the opportunity to promote a true culture of life by distancing themselves from today’s conspiracy against life ... and conveying the truth about the value and dignity of every human person.

THE POPE’S PRAYER

My prayer on this year’s World Communications Day is that the men and women of the media will play their part in *breaking down the dividing walls of hostility in our world*, walls that separate peoples and nations from one another, feeding misunderstanding and mistrust. May they use the resources at their disposal to strengthen the bonds of friendship and love that clearly signal the onset of the Kingdom of God on earth.

(Source: Message for World Communications Day, issued 1/24/05)

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