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The Church's Call for Communication Formation

Free Webinar

June 17, 2023 7-9 pm MNL/SIN via Zoom



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To get the Zoom link, send your name, age, affiliation, and country of origin to vaiscom.sec@gmail.com

Formation in Social Communication: Guidelines of the Church

- * Church documents on social communication: part of **Magisterium**, a great wealth of the teaching office of the Church
- * Communication is **at the heart of the mission of the Church**
- * Church always **insisted on** the importance of systematic **formation in social communication** of its personnel, especially priests, religious and laity
- * Formators to draw up appropriate pastoral plan for the formation of their candidates and do periodic verification
- * In today's Media Age, formation in SC is **no longer optional**; it is needed for all, not just for a select few.



Formation in Social Communication : Guidelines of the Church

- * Formation teams should draw up and verify the *Ratio* in conformity with the principles and guidelines of the church
- * Formation in sound **doctrinal training** must be accompanied by development of **skills** to be effective communicators- oratorical, written, visual and aural skills, music, drama and art...
- * The church adopted every form of media as they emerged to communicate the message of Christ; new inventions offer new challenges and call for new skills and competence



Miranda Prorsus (MP) 1957

- * Urges the importance of training to study and deepen knowledge, to achieve a certain **standard of culture**, help develop **Christian conscience** and worldview
- Stresses the need for specific preparation of the clergy and religious to be listeners and viewers of radio and television (127-128,147) and other media (153-154)

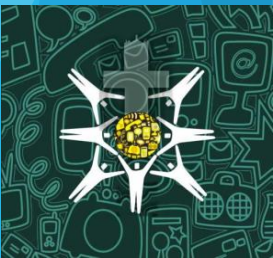
Emphasises the need for skills for use of:

- Radio for liturgical ceremonies (127)
- Religious radio programs of artistic & technical quality (128)
- Television (147)
- Exhorts priests to have sound knowledge on questions about motion pictures, radio and television (153-154)



Vatican II Inter Mirifica 1963

- . Inter Mirifica (IM) one of the first documents of Vatican II
- . Chose the expression ‘**means of social communication**’ to denote the different kinds of media
- . Called all means of communication and technological inventions as ‘**Gifts of God**’
- . Showed understanding of the need to have a **positive attitude** to the media
- . Emphasized **training** in communication for priests, religious and laity to meet the needs of the church (15)



Communio et Progressio 1971

- . published after the Council, but is the fruit of Vatican II
- . It reflects the spirit of Renewal of Vatican II
- . CP underlined the need for **training** in general (64)
- . In **specific areas** of the ministry of the church (15, 65-66,69, 106, 107)
- . Stressed specific training of the **clergy** in media (110-111)
- . Called for teaching of **moral and pastoral theology** on media (108)
- . All training in media should be for the **needs of the community** and not merely for one's personal advantage (5)



Communio et Progressio 1971

- * Urged bishops, priests, religious and laity **to write** in the press, appear on radio and television, collaborate in filming
- * Complexity of media requires sound knowledge of their impact and of the best way to use them (106)
- * Stressed clear duty of bishops, priests, religious and laity, to contribute to Christian education in the field of social communication
- * Asked to keep in touch with the **latest developments** in communications to be well informed (110)
- * Formees for priesthood and religious life should **know how the media work** on society, and techniques. This knowledge to be an integral part of their ordinary education.... (111)



A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy:

In implementation of Paul VI's Encyclical *Sacerdoalis Caelibatus*, April 11, 1974

- Though not specifically about training in media, it emphasized certain elements of media training integral into formation
- Aspirants to the priesthood should be initiated into the use of the instruments of social communication
- * Should be given practice in the art of **communicating by word of mouth or in writing** their thoughts in a manner adapted to the modern mentality
- * Stressed the importance of knowing the press, audiences and the decisive impact of radio and television



A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy: (Congregation for Catholic Education)

- * Both outside and inside the seminary the environment of the community is closely affected by the use of media, which have a large influence on the formation or on the deformation of the candidates for the priesthood’
- * Urged the need to go beyond a mere *disciplinary* approach to accept the need for a comprehensive *formation*.



A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy: (Congregation for Catholic Education)

- . Media formation is not merely a disciplinary regulation about how they are to be used:
 - it is above all a problem of giving a positive education
 - of reflecting on the social phenomenon we are immersed in
 - of preparation of masters capable of offering this aspect of training
- . Beyond damage caused by an instrument
- . But of educating to make them ready to live responsibly in the daily reality which surrounds them



Guide to the Training of Future Priests Concerning the Instruments of Social Communication (1986): Congregation for Catholic Education

- . Since 1970, the Congregation in its Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis, has given general indications on matters relating to the instruments with a view to ensure that
- . Future priests should be trained in the seminary in the correct use of these instruments of social communication
- . The objectives envisaged:
 - *Self -discipline of the seminarians in the use of media
 - *That they may be able to train the laity
 - *That they may use media in their apostolate

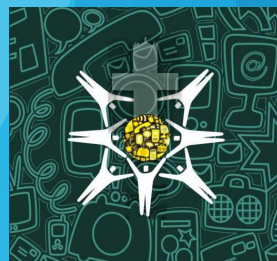


The Ratio suggested three levels of training in social communication media:

- i) The Basic level: focus on the receivers, readers, viewers and listeners of mass media. Since every student must be classified as a receiver, training from this aspect is given to all of them without distinction.

- ii) The Pastoral Level: formation in the second level is Pastoral. This is to be done in view of the future ministry, to be able to train the faithful in the right use of mass media. To know how they themselves can use the media best for the purpose of their apostolate.

- iii) Specialised Training: to be able to affect those who work in the mass media or to be able to work in the field, those who are preparing to teach and give training in mass media on the first two levels.



Criteria for the training in media proposed by the church

The training, the Ratio, urged, should keep in mind the following guidelines:

- It should be **comprehensive**. The media ought to be treated as a whole
- **practical as well as theoretical**: include production, practical use of the tools of social communication
- include **cultural and aesthetic** aspect and related fields (literature, drama, philosophy, figurative arts, and music)
- should take care to preserve **religious and moral aspect** while avoiding moralization and reducing media to monitor sexual morality alone
- Emphasise **positive, constructive** elements



Criteria for the training in media proposed by the church

- * avoid a totally defensive and closed attitude to the mass media
- * make education to use of mass media not merely or exclusively for entertainment, but for information, broadening the mind, for cultural and social growth
- * avoid excessive use or misuse, imbalance, spiritual stagnation
- * learn to preserve sound doctrine
- * undergo basic studies aimed at acquiring enlightenment
- * learn to be refined in their critical sense and forming their conscience
- * receive education to responsible use of media
- * Make formation in media progressive



Criteria for the training in media proposed by the church

- . Should receive training in practical skills
- . Acquire skills and competence in public **speaking, writing, theatre**
- . Should receive formation and training in group media

Have access to reading materials and literature, library with resource materials for media studies

- . Production equipment, hardware to be made available
- . Encourage preparing newsletters and other publications in seminaries and formation houses
- . Periodic evaluation and examinations on communication theory and practice
- . Contact with those who work in church media and secular media



Aetatis Novae (AN), 1992

- * Education and training in communications should be an integral part of the formation of pastoral workers and priests.
- * Church personnel must have at least a **working grasp of the impact new information technologies** and mass media have on individuals and society
- * They must be prepared to minister both to the ‘information rich’ and the ‘information poor’
- * Those actively engaged in media work for the church need to acquire professional skills in media along with doctrinal and spiritual formation (AN 18)



Pornography and Violence in the Communication Media: a Pastoral Response 1989

- Stresses importance of media education and training in seminaries, in formation programs of religious and secular institutes and in the continuing formation of priests (29)

Criteria for ecumenical collaboration and inter-religious cooperation 1989

* It is 'essential to develop on all levels of the Catholic social communications apostolate a team of church personnel who are professionally competent, technically sophisticated and theologically well grounded.'



Ethics in Communications 2000

- * 'The church would be well served if more of those who hold offices and perform functions in her name received communication training
- * This is true not only of seminarians, persons in formation in religious communities, and young lay Catholics, but church personnel generally (26)



Church and Internet 2002

- Pastoral planning for social communication should make provision for the training in internet in the formation of seminarians, priests, religious and lay pastoral personnel, teachers, parents and students.
-
- Such training should **go beyond teaching techniques** but must enable individuals to develop standards of good taste and truthful moral judgment, an aspect of conscience formation (7).
- Priests, deacons, religious and lay pastoral workers should have media education to increase their understanding of the impact of social communications
- Help them acquire a manner of communicating that speaks to the sensibilities and interests of people **in a media culture**

*Includes training in internet, including how to use it in their work
Professional training is required for church personnel directly involved in media (11).



Provide a soul to the internet



- ▶ “Without fear we must set sail on the digital sea, going into the deep with the same passion that has governed the ship of the Church for 2000 years.... We must live in the digital world with a believer’s heart, helping to give a soul to the Internet’s incessant flow of communication.”

Pope Benedict XVI (24 April, 2010)

The Church and New Media



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New Media for Evangelization

- ▶ “The voice of the divine word must echo even through the radio, the information highway of the internet, the channels of "online" virtual circulation, CDs, DVDs, podcasts, etc. It must appear on all television and movie screens, in the press, and in cultural and social events.”

(Synod on the Word of God, 2010)



The Church and New Media



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Media can help us greatly now when the networks of human communication have made unprecedented advances.

The internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good- a gift from God.

Pope Francis, World Communications Day Message 2014



#FullyPresent



Towards Full Presence

A PASTORAL REFLECTION ON ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA



Towards Full Presence:

A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media

29 May 2023



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- ❖ Foster a culture of being “**loving neighbours**” in the digital sphere
- ❖ Inspired by the parable of the **Good Samaritan**
- ❖ search for a **faith-filled response**, Witness on the social media
- ❖ Building a **sense of community**, becoming “weavers of **communion**”
- ❖ Cautions about **pitfalls** along the “digital highways”
- ❖ Make the online environment a place of sharing, collaborating, and belonging

Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media





- ❖ Listening, openness of the heart, a genuine encounter, recognize our digital neighbour
- ❖ The Good Samaritan heals the wounds created by a **toxic digital environment**.
- ❖ Bring a distinctive “style” to social media, rooted in Christ
- ❖ Be **reflective, not reactive** and promote human dignity
- ❖ Be Synodal, helping to open our hearts to others
- ❖ Forge communion in social media that unites in Christ.

Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media



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Towards Full Presence

A PASTORAL REFLECTION ON ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

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