

# Mass media and evangelization in the church assignment

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## MASS MEDIA AND EVANGELISATION IN THE CHURCH GENERAL

INTRODUCTION Communication is a necessity in the world of human beings, animals and plants and is an ever continuing process going on all the time. It is as necessary to human, animal and vegetable existence as life itself.

Absence of communication and the life process wither and die. The need for communication is as basic as the hunger for food and drink, perhaps even more so. In the beginning after all, was the 'word' or 'aum'; the first syllable even uttered. Communication is the name we give to the countless ways that humans have of keeping in touch, not just words and music, pictures and print, nods and becks, posters and plumages; to every move that catches someone's eye and every sound that resonates upon another's ear. "

Interaction, interchange, a sharing and commonness are ideas that crop up in any attempt to define the term communication. Derived as it is from the Latin's 'communis', which means 'common', the idea of commonality is stressed frequently in talking about communication.

Communication is a process, which increases commonality, but also requires elements of commonality for it to occur at all. Communication then presupposes a shared environment, a social relationship between those who participate. What it leads to is a social interaction, contributing to a sense of community. Since the world of birds and beasts too possess communication we speak of human communication in our study, rather than communication alone in our study. In the olden days human beings used to communicate face to face which could be called as interpersonal communication.

As he civilizations grew and human relations spread far and wide and the need for better means of communication also became very essential. The <https://assignbuster.com/mass-media-and-evangelization-in-the-church-assignment/>

kings and emperors used messengers who walked the required distance and conveyed the messages. Now the time has changed and a messenger going and informing things has become rather impossible as it would be very much delayed, and the message that has to be conveyed is not to a single person but often it is to a big group of people. In this context the Mass Media became very important.

The Media texts which the individual picks up or turns on must be understood in the way of a dialogue. The Media are involved in relationships of a dialogue because they inspire some kind of response on the part of the reader, viewer or listener. Media texts are fundamentally dialogic, i. e. , they are fundamentally involved in a dialogue. This is because they are intended to provoke some kind of response from the audience. Keith Tester says that, " it is even possible to understand a dialogic Media text something similar to an academic lecture. It can be seen that it is vitally important to pay attention to the Media audiences. Adorns and Horkheimer argue that " within the single, mass audience each individual is isolated from every other individual...Modern communications Media have an isolating effect; this is not mere intellectual paradox. " It is worth thinking about this comment. On the one hand they are saying that the Media turn us all into isolated individuals. But on the other hand, they are saying that the Media do this more or less equally to everyone. It means that we experience the Media alone.

It also means that the Media treat us as if we were all the same. The Media therefore have the effect of leveling down all individuals, so that they

actually become the same in all important respects. The Media challenge anything that stands out as different. From the point of view of the Media all social and cultural differences, all the specific relationships and activities which makes us precisely who we are, become things to be marginalised in the interest of the construction and maintenance of a passive and conformist audience. The current era is radically different from any other.

It is nevertheless the case that current situation of cultural and moral value is indeed different from any known and discussed before. The difference is due to a number of connected factors, inevitably many are centrally concerned with the impact of the growth and establishment of the Media.

Firstly, cultural production is today dominated by the Media to such an extent that no cultural activity or production is untouched by them.

Secondly, the Media presents everything as interesting in and for itself, they tend to utterly destroy the possibility that some thing may be qualitatively better than others.

Thanks to Media, things tend to be interesting or boring and that is all what they are. Thirdly, and this is the factor which makes the current situations so very different from any other, the domination of the Media and the collapse of all critical faculties into the categories of the interesting or boring means that it is not just cultural value that has tended to be destroyed, moral values have been seriously harmed as well. With the term Media I am referring to the means of communication in social and cultural relationships that do not rely on the face to face interaction of individuals.

These Media are invariably based on electronic or printing technology. They are typified by the institution and the processes associated with such things as the Press, Television, Advertising, Radio and Recorded music. Here we try to understand and appreciate some of the implications for cultural and moral values of these different institutions, technologies and processes. In the first chapter, we try to examine and see the different types of these Media ranging from journalism and press to the most modern electronic Media of computers and Internet.

In the second chapter, we try to examine the different types of effects of the Mass Media on the audience. We examine both the positive and negative effects of Media on the audience. We try to study the problem of Media exploitation by a group of people for their profit and personal interests. In the third chapter, we try to make a study of Mass Media of communication and the Church. We study the various aspects of communication in the Church in connection to the pastoral ministry of the Church.

We here examine and see what is the position and the attitude of the Church towards the Mass Media of communication by examining the important documents of the Church. In the last chapter we see about an attempt to make use of Mass Media for evangelization. It is not in general but in particular context of North-East, India which includes few practical and concrete ways to make use of the same to proclaim Jesus our Lord. CHAPTER I MEDIA AND THE CHURCH Introduction If communication is what makes the world go, it is the very life of the Church. The Church is above all and basically a communicator.

Its mission is communication of the good-news and communion is the fruit of all-round communication. Pope Paul VI once wrote: The split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time.... Every effort must be made to ensure a full evangelisation of culture, or more correctly, of cultures. They have to be regenerated by an encounter with the Gospel. But this encounter will not take place if the Gospel is not proclaimed. The proclamation of the Gospel is essentially communication and for this communication in the modern world Media are necessary. The recipients, i. . , those who listen and watch Media, first of all should be selective, and should have the courage to choose Media that reinforces Catholic commitment and reject that which does not. The Christian communicators should always look at it. In the modern world which has advanced so much in communication technologies, the Catholic Church should make use of the communication Media for the spread of the Gospel and for the evangelisation of the world. Very often the Church was unwilling to come forward with the new ideas and innovations to which there is a change in the recent years.

In this chapter, we make an attempt to understand what is Church's communication and how far Church has made use of the available communication technologies for this purpose, together with the teachings of the Church on the use of Mass Media. 1. 1. Theology of Communication The dialogue between communication and theology has developed in various parts of the world. It is not an easy dialogue. For many people, communication is still of secondary importance. They accept that it be considered in the so-called practical theology, as they assume that communication has only to do with methods and techniques.

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We must bear in mind that the human being is, himself or herself God's act of communication and that he or she becomes human exactly through the way in which he or she communicates. When we reflect theologically on communication, we are not trying, in the first place, to make it understandable from an intellectual point of view. However, we want to understand how the practice of faith makes the human being more human. For today's Christian theology this does not refer to academical definitions but rather to the reflection that springs from God's presence in our lives, and therefore in our practice of faith.

We should make use of our theology of communication to evaluate our apostolate and to draw inspiration to improve it. It is the theology of revelation and faith, theology of grace and relationship, theology of community building and universal salvation, and theology of creation and history. Both social communication and Christian communion, which is promoted by Church's mission or pastoral work, consists in the effective deep, genuine and universal communication using adequate Media. 1. 1. 1. Divine Revelation Divine Revelation is primarily and essentially an interpersonal, inter-group relationship, between God and people, and among the people themselves through sharing and communication, bringing about a greater solidarity among all, universal human fellowship and one world community. " Not only God and men meet each other but also men themselves meet one another as individuals and groups within the reality of the world in the course of history with its trends and events where men are, where history is made, and where the society is being shaped.

Thus whatever happens in this world and in our times, the profane and the secular, and all the realities of the temporal order include another reality: the dynamic self-communication of God in creation and history. It is not a single or isolated act, but a process that covers the whole of creation, includes all human beings and lasts throughout history. By its dynamic interaction, it is capable of bringing about change of attitude and heart in persons and transformation of society by change of structures and values. 1. 1. 1. 1.

#### Divine Revelation: Social and Communitarian Communication

Divine Revelation is always social and communitarian addressed to a living people, a community of persons and not merely to individuals. God relates himself to human beings in communication and communion as members of a living community so that the interpersonal relationship between God and human beings may be the source and climax, the pattern and model of the interpersonal relationship among men so that the community in which revelation takes place may gradually be built up and transformed in to a community of brothers and sisters, a human community, a community of faith and love, witness and service, a community of salvation.

Human beings are called to imitate God in their relationships. This constitutes the theological basis for any communication whether among human beings, or between human beings and God. This mission of the Church as building up in Christ a new humanity and a world community springs from within revelation, the pattern of authentic relationship and perfect communication. Communication calls for community both as condition and as consequence. Revelation supposes and calls for community



and brings about and leads to community. 1. 1. 1. 2. Revelation Calling for Faith: A Two Way Process Any real and effective communication is a two-way process.

It takes place only when the relationships become mutual and dialectical. Communication is real only when a response is given. Revelation calls for faith. If God's word is revelation human beings' word is faith. If the initiative is God's the response is human beings' as awareness to his presence and sensitivity to his action. God's self-manifestation and unveiling of his mystery suppose human being's discovery and discernment of God. The manifestation of God's plan in history through Jesus Christ invites human being to identify himself or herself with that plan and collaborate with God to share and fulfil it by his action and life.

If God's revelation is in fact salvation of human being, then human being's climax of response in faith is prayer and worship. It implies essentially an attention and disposability, hearing and listening, openness and acceptance, response and self-surrender. This is the process by which Christian communion is realised. 1. 2. Christian Task and Responsibility towards Media If a Christian communicator roots and grounds his profession of journalism in his Christian faith response to God's on-going action in the history of the world, then some implications and consequences are obvious.

To have a global and integral Christian world view and to spread it by sharing it with his audience and situating every small event or trend within this global and general perspective, in this breadth of vision covering space and time and to spell out the major realities of the world (temporal and the

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secular, the historical and the human) and to propose some main thrusts for the orientation of history, shaping of human society and channeling of human efforts and plans are very important among them. The Christian communicator has the task not only to report happenings and to inform people but also to fulfil a prophetic role of discernment and interpretation. The Christian communicator should also try, through his professional techniques, to facilitate among his readers a faith-reflection through interiorization and personalisation, a faith ??? outlook and for faith interpretation of the secular reality and to inspire them within, an inner dynamic to give a faith response.

1. Develop A Christian World Vision

Out of a prayerful understanding of divine revelation and faith in the course of history, one acquires a Christian world vision. It is a picture of the totality in a glance.

The vision is structured and organised and includes all the major realities: God and human beings, the world and the Church. The four realities should not be juxta-posed in a static order. They should not be made to appear as distant and separated from each other, opposed to and exclusive of each other. It should imply no separation and opposition between the world and the Church, society and religion, culture and cult, lack of contact and dialogue of life between the communicator and the audience. It should not involve any dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, the temporal and spiritual.

A negative and pessimistic attitude towards the world, the temporal order, human beings and other religions should be shed. In this vision, the four

realities should be related as immanent to one another and making a single whole, though they remain distinct with openness and dialogue, interaction and collaboration. In this process should take place the transformation of persons and society. It will then indeed be a goal-directed and not self-centered involvement. Keeping alive this vision, holding it aloft, and spreading it are part of the task of the communicator through the Media. 1. 2. 2.

Christian Discernment and Prophetic Interpretation Media not only report events and developments all over the world and the Church. They should also discern, unveil, and interpret them critically. If so, they are not just Media, they are also a message. They are not only object of interpretation but also subject of interpretation. The Christian communicators need to discern in the happenings and trends, God's presence and interpret his designs for the world, in the light of the Gospel. One needs interiorisation to discover the hidden reality. It is the present happenings that involve people and give values, reliability, credibility and relevance to revelation. At the same time, the present has no basis or meaning unless it is closely linked with the past and the future. So on the one hand, the Word of God in its various sources has to be reinterpreted for the people of today with reference to their life-situations so that the word of God may become a word of today. On the other hand, today's revelation has to be recognised and discerned, interpreted and understood, verified and confirmed by the signs of the past revelation. It is thus a prophetic mission. 1. 2. 3. Christian Communication as a Faith Formator

Catholic communicator, through whatever he or she does makes the work a genuine catechesis or apostolate. Like any catechesis or pastoral service the Media can also interpret the signs of revelation, namely the signs of god's self gift in our life and world, facilitate a faith response, and deepen thereby our relationship with God and with human beings. It enables a group of faithful to meet and discover God in the midst of their life-situations and to understand His designs through the world, to commit themselves to spreading and to fulfilling God's design for the world.

Catechetical ministry guides people to discern and discover God's presence in their life and to help others to make the same discovery by interpreting their life situation by the word of God. 1. 3. Spirituality of Communication An authentic spirituality is the source and basis for anybody if one wants to make of one's life or pastoral ministry a continuous experience of God. Pastoral work or any form of evangelisation can only emerge from a deep, personal experience of God. Here one needs to speak of a spirituality of communication.

Old Testament spirituality is based on the experience of God who encounters and transforms human beings on the one hand and their response to God on the other. This is made clear in the experience of Abraham, Moses and prophets like Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Psalms are best understood as response made by the people of Israel towards Yahweh. In the Gospel, Christ is pictured as the presence of God as person and as love. This presence is communicated through the incarnation, through the cross and through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Now the communicator as a leader should be not only a person of vision, he should also be a person of intuition to be able to recognise in the reality and in all that takes place and occurs around, God's abiding presence and to see his face under various images. The spirituality of communications thus is a discerning of the will of God in all that occur and then responding to it in faith and trust.

#### 1. 4. Mass Media in the Official Documents of the Church

Throughout the centuries the Church has brought out many documents and guidelines on the use of mass Media in pastoral activity.

As we discuss the topic, Church, communication and mass Media it is indeed necessary to have a glance at the various documents that have been brought out by the official teaching authority of the Church.

#### 1. 4. 1. ' Ad Catholici Sacerdoti'

The Encyclical letter of Pius XI, dated 20th December 1935 spoke about the cultural updating of the clergy. It says that " the priest even in the midst of the pressing occupations of his ministry, and always in order that he may carry them out in a better way shall continue to study seriously and deeply ...something that will go a long way to make his pastoral life effective. As the document says we should not be content with what might possibly have sufficed in other times, but should feel under compulsion to reach a standard of culture corresponding in depth and extent to that generally enjoyed by people today in comparison with those of times past. Thus the document exhorts everyone to have a deeper knowledge of the mass Media and communication technologies of the modern times that everyone; especially those engaged in pastoral ministry may be competent enough to do their ministry effectively.

#### 1. 4. 2. Pontifical Commission for Cinema

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The pontifical commission for cinema states that we must oppose immoral and vulgar cinema and give preference to educative cinema to cultivate moral and ethical values in the society. The worrying phenomenon of the immoral cinema has already crept into a great part of the population, both in the towns and rural areas. The document says: " Let us use all our influence to create a Christian conscience in the moviegoers who throng the public halls. " With this end in view, study circles have been established in many towns. These ought to be inspired by Christian morality and by the norms issuing from the ecclesiastical authority.

1. 4. 3. Pius XII: Exhortation Concerning Television In his exhortation concerning television to the Italian bishops Pope Pius XII tells, " it is more than ever necessary and urgent to form in the faithful a right conscience regarding the duties of Christians concerning the use they make of television. " The television programmes should be made use so as to create values and moral conscience in the society. It should warn the people, of the possible dangers and keep them attentive of the judgements of the ecclesiastical authorities concerning the events in the world.

Those who are engaged in the pastoral ministry should make sure of it and for this purpose they need to be given Media education.

1. 4. 4. Vatican Council II At the time of Vatican II there was a rapid development of new technologies of communication. New Media had created a new communication environment. In her pastoral care, the Church had to address the issue. A new life situation had called for a new stand on the part of the Church. While the Church was busy developing and formulating her

particular theory of signs, of Media and of communications, she also created several forms of action.

The first action was, of course, sacramental life. The Church's theological and spiritual thoughts found application in daily life. The Church was also concerned with the various signs created outside of her control. There her attitude was mostly hostile and negative, perhaps in some cases harmful. The Vatican Council II was a turning point in the idea of Church regarding many matters. The use of mass Media of communication in the transmitting of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the pastoral ministry of the clergy also was influenced by the various changes came out after the Second Vatican Council. 1. 4. 4. 1. ' Sacro Sanctum Concilium'

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy deals with transmission of sacred ceremonies and functions on radio and television. It says, " transmission of the sacred rites by radio and television, especially in the case of mass, shall be done with delicacy and dignity. A suitable person appointed by the bishops, should direct it and have the responsibility for it. " We see a change in the attitude of the Church towards modern means of communication. The Church which never allowed any of these modern means to be used in the liturgy before the Council was open to the changes after the council and it was indeed a welcome sign. 1. 4. 4. 2. Inter Mirifica' Inter Mirifica, the decree on the instruments of social communication fixes the pastoral task of the Church respecting the use of the mass Media. Numbers 3, 9 and 16 of the document deal with the theoretical and practical preparation of all receivers. Number 15 finally treats of world communications day as an occasion to

admonish the faithful on Media matters. The document says: “ the Catholic Church was founded by Christ our Lord to bring salvation to all men. It feels obliged therefore, to preach the Gospel. It believes that its task involves employing the means of social communications to announce the Goodnews of salvation. The document also goes on to affirm the right of the Church to own and make use of any of the Media for its ministry. It also says that pastors of souls have the obligation to instruct and direct the faithful on how to make use of this Media in a way that will ensure their own salvation and perfection and that of all mankind. 1. 4. 4. 3. ‘ Communio et Progressio’ This document deals with training of both the receivers and the communicators with teaching in moral and pastoral theology concerning Media matters and with the specific training of the clergy themselves.

It says that, “ a training that grounds a man in the basic principles of governing the working of Media in human society is now a days clearly necessary for all. ” According to the document this training should include a practical consideration of the special nature of each medium and of its status in the local community and how it can be best utilised. Moreover, this should be done with special reference to man and society. The training should be meant both, for the communicators and the receivers or the audience. 1. 4. 4. 4. Redemptoris Missio

This Encyclical Letter written by Pope John Paul II Speaks about the permanent validity of the Church’s missionary mandate. He insists that today’s world has become Global Village due to the advancement of modern means of communications and asks encourages the missionaries to use the



all these to proclaim Jesus the way the truth and the life to everyone. (RM 37) 1. 4. 4. 5. Ecclesia in Asia This Apostolic Exhortation promulgated by John Paul II in 1999 at New Delhi speaks of ' Jesus as a gift to Asia'. In order to proclaim him we need to make use of Social communications.

He advocates Media education to all the Christ's faithful Specially to Priests, Seminarians, Religious and students in Catholic schools and parish communities. (EA 48) Conclusion We have just made our reflection on Media, communication and Church. From the study, it is very much clear that though in the beginning the Catholic Church was very much reluctant to the technological advancements and progress, especially in the field of information and communication, after the Second Vatican Council it has realised the need to make use of the communication Media for its ministry in the world.

There is a theology of communication and it is a communication of God, divine revelation, which calls for a human response, which is adequate. The duty entrusted to the Church by her master and Lord Jesus Christ is the task to proclaim the Goodnews to the whole world. In today's world by the advent of the new information and communication technologies, this task of the Church has become very easy. However, in making use of the various means of communication the Church must always be prudent and sensible. It should, by all means keep up the spirit of the Gospel upholding moral values and principles.

It should avoid all that will harm human dignity. For this purpose there must be an adequate training be given to the Church leaders in the field of

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communication Media. After the Second Vatican Council there is a strong move towards this goal. CHAPTER II MASS MEDIA AND EVANGELIZATION  
Introduction Having seen what Mass Media are all about with the effects and interaction between Church and Media we move on to see how these could be used in order to proclaim the Gospel of Christ in an effective way. In this chapter we take into consideration the context of North East India where there is still a scope for Evangelization.

If Jesus were to be physically part of this age of speed-of-light data transmission, world-wide computer networks (Internet), inter-continental video teleconferences and spectacular television extravaganzas, he would have certainly found in the Media the most effective and efficacious tool for communicating the Gospel and paving the way for the establishment of his Kingdom. Speaking on the effectiveness of the Media as a tool for the realization of the Kingdom, Pope Paul VI asserted that the Church would feel guilty before the Lord if She did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfect.

It is through them that She proclaims from the 'housetops' the message of which She is the depository... in them She finds a modern and effective version of the pulpit (EN 45). The recent Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia* reflects the same view. "In the era of globalization, the means of social communication have become so important as to be for many the chief means of information and education of guidance and inspiration in their behaviour as individuals, families and within society at large.

In particular the young generation is growing up in a world conditioned by the Mass Media" (EA 48) Before going into the topic it is important to note the present situation of North East India. Definitely this region is much different from early 20th century when the missionaries came from abroad and toiled. The area has developed considerably in all the fields including communications. It gives us much joy to note the remarkable growth of the Church despite oppositions. Today's people are less interested to listen to the preaching.

By this, approaching Non ??? Christians is less possible. So there is great need to look for something different. Surely with the help of Mass Media this goal can be achieved. Having said that we move on to see the relationship between Church and Media. There is also an urgent need to educate people about Mass Media. Not only lay people but this has to be an academic requirement for the students of priesthood so that they are not outdated in future. Let me also present Jesus as the model of communication, besides point out certain concrete ways to use Media for proclamation of the

Gospel. 2. 1. Media Education the Need of the Hour The movement to Media education to our younger generation is catching up. The movement began in the late seventies by Church related institutions. But the Church has a long way to go taking up Media education. Through its massive hold on education, it has the power to influence the lives of thousands of young people through a semi-formal implementation of Media Education. A few institutions are already giving it a try. Various experiments such as one-day exposures, three-day seminars, full year courses are being attempted.

Social development activists too are experimenting with Media education in a more flexible way. They are emphasizing folk culture and empowering people to assert their rights through traditional Media. The resources in terms of personnel and material are available in the Church. But what is still lacking is the will to implement such courses with urgency. We may be late, but we are right on target. We have to prepare ourselves to meet the Multi-Mediated cyber space of the 21st century and for that purpose there is no other way but to give Media education.

Therefore, we need to conclude that Media education is a need of the hour.

2. 2. Developing a Catholic Voice The communication Media has a powerful contribution to make to Christ's Church. If we think about the statement 'informed Catholics can offer a valuable contribution to a troubled world', it becomes a challenge for the Church to move into Media on a major scale. Media assist Catholics in three important ways. First of all, they make the Church known to the modern world. Secondly, they foster a wholesome communication, dialogue and ultimately a solid unity within the Church herself.

Thirdly, they reveal to the Church the opinions and attitudes of people of the contemporary world, their needs, their weaknesses etc. , so that a Church divinely instituted can offer to suffering humanity the answers capable of transforming individuals and ultimately the world. Media can portray the true image of man as made in the image of God. It can give to millions the truths of faith and moral values necessary to face life as convinced Catholics.

Informed Catholics then have the facts necessary to speak on vital issues. 2.

3. Jesus the Model of Communicators While Jesus was on earth he revealed himself as the Perfect Communicator.

Through his incarnation he utterly identified himself with those who were to receive his communications and he gave his message not only in words but in whole manner of his life. (C. P. 11) Jesus was one of the greatest teachers and eloquent communicators the world has ever known. Among the numerous titles used to describe the person and work of Jesus in the Gospel, the most frequent used title (45 times) is teacher. It is the unanimous witness of the Gospel tradition and reductions that one of the prominent functions of Jesus during his public ministry was teaching.

On the eloquence of Jesus as a communicator the Gospel of Mark affirms, "... and the large crowd was listening to him with delight" (Mk 12: 37). As a communicator Jesus was simple and direct and his illustrations were meaningful and relevant. And Jesus showed himself to be a man of perception and penetrating insight into inner thoughts and motivations. Every scene described in the Gospels was Jesus dealing with the situation according to the kind of person he encountered. The stories that Jesus used were concise as within the comprehension of his audience.

His parables expressed profound truths in simple way. Not only his words but his deeds especially his miracles were acts of communication, pointing to his identity and manifesting the power of God. In his communications he showed respect for his listeners, sympathy for their situation and needs, compassion for their suffering and resolute determination to tell them what they needed to hear in a way that would command their attention and help them receive

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the message, without compromise, deception or manipulation. His own life was a living evidence of all the truths that he taught.

He was the supreme example of one who practiced what he preached. "... learn from me" (Mt 11: 29) shows his moral integrity. He upheld truthfulness and condemned hypocrisy. He says " Let what you say be simply yes or no; anything more than this comes from evil one" (Mt 5: 37). Thus he advocates a kind of communication which is authentic and genuine. Jesus used all forms of communication which includes stories, parables, overstatements, (e. g. If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father... Lk 14: 26). Simile, metaphor, proverbs, riddle and paradox, irony, questions, and poetry.

Therefore, Jesus is the Perfect Communicator. He is the model and the standard of our communications. It is meant for all who follow Christ to use all these methods to win people for Christ. So as St. Paul say, " therefore, putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth to his neighbour..." (Eph 4 : 25-27). It is the duty of the one (who proclaims) to imitate the Perfect Communicator. 2. 4. Few ways for an effective proclamation Jesus commanded the apostles and their successors to teach all nations and to announce the Goodnews in all places at all times (Cf. Mt. 28: 19; Mk. 16: 15; Lk. 4: 47; Acts 1: 8). The modern Media offer new ways confronting people with the message of the Gospel. In order to make the teachings of Christ more interesting and effective the Media should be used as much as possible. One of the primary forms of communication in the Church is undoubtedly preaching. Because it is the main mode of communication of the Christian faith. Besides this preaching there are few other ways too, let

us consider them. 2. 4. 1 Electronic Media In North East people are using computer, Internet and Television (TV) today these are no more seen as possession of rich only especially TV.

Everyone has it. It is the most powerful means of communication even in the rural area, as such it has the potentiality to influence the people. Recognizing the power of Media, Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference (KCBC) has opened a new TV channel known as Jeevan TV. In Chennai there is a TV network known as Miracle network which presents Christ as the Saviour although it is not a Catholic set up, still it is to be appreciated. Why cannot we the Church in North East also do the same? Definitely we have the potentiality. We have here good number of other Churches too.

In collaboration with them we can work out a plan for action. Due to diversity of language it may look impossible, but actually this diversity provides variety. I have a dream that we the Church in North East will have a TV Channel of our own in the near future. It is not enough to wait for some one to take the responsibility. Our prominent persons should involve themselves giving talk and interviews in other private owned TV Channels too. Not only TV but also Radio and the Internet. Whenever there is an opportunity we should put across the message of Christ.

Church in North East has realized the importance of the Media already.

Therefore they have opened a organization North Eastern Social

Communications known as NESCOM situated at Dimapur. It is something

going towards right direction. There is a urgent need to use this God given

gift to promote Christian values in North East. 2. 4. 2. Catholic Newspaper

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Yet it is another area neglected by the Church. In Kerala the popular Catholic newspaper Deepika plays a vital role in bringing out information and proclamation. Such newspapers are possible in our region too. Given the situation it is important to start right now.

It need not be a daily but can be monthly in the beginning. Fifty years back our people did not know how to read or write. Today they are not so. Most of the states are having high literacy rate. There are dioceses who have their monthly magazines and news letters. But still if our hierarchy comes forward they can bring out an uniformed newspaper where they can express views to build up the Catholic community. It can be in English and can be translated into other languages too. Not only newspaper even small forms of leaflets carrying certain topics such as love of God etc. can bring many people to Christ.

In this regard the Separated Brethren have made considerable progress. We need to learn from them to make these copies available at free of cost. 2. 4. 3. Street Theatre It is also a means communication of the Gospel. What is this? It is a play on a particular theme and can be presented anywhere. No need for a well-organized stage. The only effort needed is training and discipline from the performers. The topic of the presentation should be meaningful and relevant. The ending is often open allowing audience participation and interaction by way of group discussion or debates leading to faith and action.

Generally people have the belief that street plays are good only for issues regarding social awareness. It is not so. The important thing to keep in mind

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is that street theatre is only a medium and the content is determined by those who use this medium. Hence issues that can help form the faith of the evangelized or those that may enlighten non-believers can easily be tried. Such type of street theatre can be a powerful means of communication in our land. Because is lively and keeps the audience involved in it without much of complication.

It can be very well followed by uneducated people too. Yet another plus point is that it is less expensive. This type of proclamation can be tried in our situation. 2. 4. 4. Art and Banners Art is also a means to Evangelization. It can be a painting of scenery from the Gospel such as Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection. If it is presented in a place where people (both Christians and non-Christians) pass thorough, can be a powerful way of presenting Christ in our society. In the same way we can put up statues of Jesus Christ, Our Lady and the Saints too on the way side.

Even a cross can be a powerful symbol. Such a cross is found on Assam and Meghalaya border in West Garo Hills ( Tikrikilla ). where it is written ' salvation through cross'. It is seen by everyone who passes by. Sure it makes an impact on the people. Another example I would like to present here is ' peace tower' in Gossaigoan and the Church at Barama which are built on the National highway, constantly proclaiming to the people those who pass by the loving message of Our Lord. Such things can be very well put up in our area. Today banners have become another way of proclamation.

A place like Guwahati any one can see hundreds of banners carrying advertisements. I feel pained when I see not even a single banner, which

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reads about Christ. This is the time for us to wake up. Even the Church walls outside can be a means of proclamation provided we present certain important passages from the Scripture. 2. 4. 5. Multi-Media Shows It is a presentation of a theme in a well arranged multiple locations. Here there is a merger of every possible medium. It can be done together with dances, shadow play, projected aids like slides, etc.

If it is done in open ground with all these elements integrated well the impact is much more than watching a 70-mm film. The recorded sound with actors can attract the audience of every sort. If miming of the performing artists is accurate to the sound, then the show can be described in superlative terms by the audience. It leaves a tremendous impact on them. The parables such as Good Samaritan, the story of Prodigal Son can be well presented using this method. In South India it has come already. It is the favourable time for us to do something with regard to this in our mission area. . 4. 6. Religious Films Today no one can deny the important role of cinema in shaping the values of modern society. So this can be used for Evangelization too. There are films already made on Jesus Christ, Francis of Assisi, etc. Cinema is a powerful medium. The films on Bible such as Ten Commandments, Greatest Story Ever Told, The Bible, etc. have become popular even among non-Christians. The films like Ben Hur, The Robe, Quo Vardis, Samson and Delilah etc have spread knowledge about the Biblical characters far and wide. So in one way these have become successful evangelizers.

But among all these Jesus of Nazareth stands out as the best. In India also attempts are made especially in the South in this area. Films like Annai Velanganni (Tamil) Snapaka Yohannan (Malayalam) Sr. Alphonsa etc have served means to Evangelization to some extent. Now the question arises. Is it no possible for the Church in North East to venture into such areas.

Attempts are made already. There are few video cassettes films in Assamese, Boro, Karbi, etc. What about other areas and languages. If a film is produced in one language it can be very well dubbed in other languages too.

So Church has to come forward with these ideas. Conclusion The Church has the right and duty to use Mass Media for proclaiming Jesus as the Universal Saviour. If the Media are effectively employed, it essential that all who use them know the principles of the same. The Church asks the pastors of the souls should be participatory zealous in the field of communication, since it is closely linked with the task of proclamation. In our context it is a must. Instead of acting merely as a critic of the Media industry, ways must be found by the Church to become a more active catalyst, a creative artist and a visionary collaborator.

She must over come the fear of mistrust of Media as a means of communicating the Gospel and continuing the work of Jesus in the modern world. In using the Media for the Kingdom, She need not compromise her message. She does not have to popularize, sensationalize or commercialize her message in order to gain an audience. Along with the task of effectively utilizing Media in a pastoral way the Church confronted with the task of

raising people's awareness of the impact of Media have on their lives. It is also the duty of the Church.

At the same time She should give recognition and encouragement to those who use the Media for expanding Kingdom. Mass Media should be considered as a free gift of God in the Church, which offers tremendous opportunities for Evangelization. The Mass Media offer diverse opportunities for the Church to present Jesus, the Perfect Communicator as the Way, the Truth and the Life. So it is the favorable time to act. Shall we use all these to proclaim Jesus as the only Son of the living God in our region? GENERAL CONCLUSION We should not involve into any dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, the temporal and spiritual.

We must remember that much of our audience consists of young people, who can easily be led astray or directed towards the good, the beautiful and the true. What is communicated must be true and complete. In the gathering and publication of news, the norms of morality and the legitimate rights and dignity of human beings must be held high. The narration description and portrayal of moral evil can indeed serve to make human beings more deeply known and studied, and to reveal and enhance the grandeur of truth and goodness. Immense harm can be done by suppression, distortion, selective presentation and manipulation of facts.

What is in fact violence, vengeance or reprisal can be presented as justice. Pope John Paul II teaches: " These means (means of social communication) wield an enormous power in today's world, a power that can be easily misused by giving in to the temptation to employ them in order to dominate

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public opinion and in order to manipulate people's orientations, scale of values and conduct. " The teachings of the Holy Father proves the fact that the Church is aware of the changes that take place in the field of communication technology and Mass Media.

Special duties bind those readers, viewers, or listeners who personally and freely choose to receive what these Media have to communicate. For good choosing dictates that ample favour be shown to whatever fosters virtue, knowledge, or art. People should reject whatever could become a cause or an occasion of spiritual harm to themselves, whatever could endanger others through bad example, and whatever would impede good selections and promote bad ones. The last effect generally results when financial assistance is given to people who exploit these Media for commercial reasons.

If those who use these Media are to honour the moral law, they must not neglect to inform themselves in good time of the judgements made in these affairs by competent authority. Those judgements they should respect according to the requirements of good conscience. Public authority, which properly concerns itself with the health of its citizens, has the duty of seeing to it in a just and vigilant manner that serious danger to public morals and social progress do not result from a perverted use of these instruments.

This goal should be achieved by enactment of laws and their energetic enforcement. The freedom of individuals and groups is not at all infringed upon by such watchful care, especially if those who have taken on themselves the responsibility of using these Media have failed to observe sensible cautions. At the same time availability of information from a variety of

sources should be permitted as standard. Instead of forcing the public to rely on one official version of news and interpretation of news, and open dialogue ought to be admitted.

This would not only allow the general public to compare the different versions of the news and make an intelligent judgement for themselves, but it would also ensure that a free exchange of valuable ideas could take place among the more noble minds in the community. The Catholic Church has been commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ to bring salvation to every individual, and is consequently bound to proclaim the gospel. Hence she judges it part of her duty to preach the news of redemption with the aid of the instruments of social communication, and to instruct humankind as well, in their worthy use.

Therefore the Church claims as a birthright the use and possession of all instruments of this kind, which are necessary or useful for the formation of Christian and for every activity undertaken on behalf of human beings' salvation. On religious leaders devolves the task of so training and directing the faithful that by the help of these instruments too, they may pursue their own salvation and fulfilment, and that of the entire human family. For the rest, it is the people's particular obligation to animate these instruments with a human and Christian spirit.

Thus, they will abundantly satisfy the high hopes of humankind and the will of God himself. We conclude by using the same words of Pope Paul VI who asserted that the Church would feel guilty before the Lord if She did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more

perfect. It is through them that She proclaims from the 'housetops' the message of which She is the depository... in them She finds a modern and effective version of the pulpit (EN 45). BIBLIOGRAPHY A. Books 1.

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