

Indian Catholic Church's contribution to the media .

Although from the 1940 onwards several documents were encouraging the Church to get into the media, the Church's contribution has been little. Prior to Vatican II the Church authorities all over the world, had thought of media as something dangerous, bad and evil. Media was denounced, controlled and censored. But after Vatican II, the two major documents -- *Communio et Progressio* and *Aetatis Novae*—acknowledged that media are important tools for evangelisation and a potent power for the continuance and very relevance of the Church today . In this article I like to look at her contribution in the small media as well as big media, ad intra (to the Catholics) and ad extra (to the outside world) in the Indian context.

There are many lay Catholics who have made a name for themselves in the world of the media without any Church appropriation. And there are even some journals run by the laity with no reference to the church. In Kerala, K.J Jesudas, has contributed much to music through his melodious singing. However here I look at what exactly the Catholic church has promoted in name of media.

Although for the last 30 years efforts have been made, most of these have remained local or at the parish or diocesan levels. Reading through the report of the communications media group at the '*All India Seminar on Church in India*', (Bangalore, 1968) one is amazed at the clarity of thought and vision expressed by the participants regarding what the Church should be doing with communications and media in India. Unfortunately, their dreams have not been realized, as there is little awareness among the leaders of the Church with regard to the need for communications and the power of media on people. In this marvellous and yet 'big, mad, bad world' of the mass media, where crass commercialism abounds and values are trampled underfoot every day, what can the Church really do, is a major question even now. The sadder fact is that some Church leaders either because of their ignorance or because of their pre-Vatican ideas still take little interest in the area of communications. They think of media as pure entertainment and either keep it at that level, or just ignore it. As a result, media work in the Church has not acquired much momentum but remains mostly a peripheral activity of a few people. In recent years, SIGNIS (Unda/OCIC), the CBCI Commission for media, NISCORT and several other regional and diocesan media centres have taken to media animation. It is a matter of consolation that more members of the hierarchy are beginning to realize that the Church needs to take greater interest in communications. This situation has emerged almost out of necessity due to the crisis

caused by socio-political upheavals in the country. The Indian Church has yet to go a long way in the right understanding and application of communications.

A Brief History of Media in the Indian Church

The Church has contributed much to the development of languages in India. As educators and academics one of the major activities of the missionaries, was to develop local languages, dictionaries, arithmetic and other grammar books. This is much evident in Goa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and the North East. Printing presses were established more as part of their educational plan of universal literacy for the rural masses. The missionaries saw these as part of social reforms to build up the real India, which is more in villages than in cities. It is to be mentioned that the first printing press in India was established by the Jesuits in 1556 at Goa. Eminent priests like Herman Gundert and Ernest Hanxleden (Arnos Padiri) were pioneers in Kerala who popularised Sanskrit and Malayalam grammar, dictionary and poetry.

Print medium had taken roots in India towards the end of the 19th century with the founding of *Deepika*, a secular daily run by the Carmelite Missionaries, in Kerala. The news paper had great pioneering spirits behind it. It was indeed something of a brainwave that energized this missionary Congregation founded in Kerala to start a daily newspaper way back in the last century. Over the years, it has given coverage to matters Catholic along with other secular news, in a State where about 20 % is Catholic. With recent reorganization and selling of shares to the secular bodies, it still struggles to hold on as one of the major dailies in the State.

Although the print medium had early roots in the Church in India, the electronic media – cinema, radio, television and the modern communication technologies – came in very slowly. Since the electronic media have been controlled by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the Church's involvement in these have remained mostly at the level of training and the production of audio and video cassettes.

With the founding of Unda/OCIC (SIGNIS) Asia in 1972, media co-ordination efforts began in India immediately. With a few Church personnel trained abroad in communications showing keen interest, the emphasis was on using the audio-visual equipment, no matter what they produced.

From the early 70s, the idea of setting up diocesan and regional media centres to make audio cassettes and other audio visual aids began to be experimented with funding from OCIC/Unda. Catechesis found an immediate ally in media. Several media centres lent ample support to evangelical and catechetical attempts in the Church. Gradually with the video cassettes revolution, these centres began to produce video programmes for Church catechesis.

Recently the number of atrocities on the Church by fundamentalist forces is seen on the increase. These have helped the church to set up Public Relations Offices and to enforce introspection in the Church about her image and presence in India. Communications and media are areas which help the Church to examine the kind of activities she is involved in, the image she projects to Christians and to people of other faiths, and what can be done to correct the negative impacts.

General Trends

Press

As already mentioned, among the mass media, Press holds the highest priority in the Church. It is obviously the first mass medium to emerge and the Church seems to feel at home with it, with a plethora of sub-standard publications. The use of modern facilities like e-mail and internet have enabled the main Catholic English publications: *The Herald* from Calcutta, (weekly) *The Examiner* from Bombay (weekly), *The New Leader* (fortnightly) from Chennai, and recently *Sathyadeepam English* from Kerala to update their reporting. The success of the print media in the Church would depend on the ability of those who run them to go beyond the ghetto mentality and be concerned about human issues. What credibility can the Church have if she raises her voice only when Christians are attacked and keeps a 'safe' silence on other issues?

Several other dailies in secular mode *Janavahini* – 1999, a daily Catholic Newspaper in Kannada headed by the laity and supported by the diocese of Mangalore in Karnataka, Indian Communicator, Kerala Times and *Sadwaartha* from the diocese of Kochi, in Kerala tried to present Christian views, but gradually they all folded up due to financial crises.

Though the idea of starting a National Catholic Weekly has been a dream of the Catholic Church for years she has not succeeded yet. *Indian Currents* weekly started in 1989 by the Church, ran into rough weather due to poor staffing and finances. The Capuchins of the Northern Province have

resurrected it presenting a secular-dialogic face of the Catholic Church. It highlights human rights violations and comments on other socio-political issues from a Christian perspective. It has been trying to shed a churchy image and project a secular front, read and appreciated by people of other faiths as well, though at times it gives into being a church mouthpiece.

The South Asian Religious (SAR) News Service based in India with its limited resources and UCAN, the Bangkok-based Union of Catholic News Service, have done much to unearth Catholic news stories around the continent quite efficiently. In the process a good number of Catholics have been trained to be efficient news reporters.

Films

None of the Catholic media centres have really made major contribution to filmmaking in the country. *Amruthavani* – Hyderabad collaborated with T. S. Vijaychander in producing *Karunamayudu* on the life of Jesus, which has been dubbed into several languages. Recently, *Canara Communications* – Mangalore helped in the making of a dance drama based film on Jesus titled *Bhuvanajyothi*. The film “*Johny*”, on Don Bosco’s early life made by the Salesians of the Bangalore Province succeeded in recapturing youthful ideals for youngsters. Another remarkable achievement is *Mathia*, the first feature film in Kok-barok dialect, by the Salesians of the Dimapur province. The new venture *Yvring* too has been lauded as a sincere attempt to project the plight of the local poor.

Filmmaking involves enormous investment. The Church in India is more concerned about her social commitments to the less privileged, and this is understandable. However, with a little more vision regarding media services, the Church could encourage more laity to get trained in film making and help them get into secular film making. The social appeal of films cannot be ignored at all.

Another area the Church has contributed to, is film education. Though not systematically documented, the film analysis and appreciation classes initiated by priests like Besse, Errazquin, Ugarte, Da Gama, Roberge, De Rozario, Lane-smith, Srampickal and others in the different parts of the country, though a minor attempt, did pave the way for appreciating better films in the country. Lane-smith has even served on the National Film Censor Board, acted in a few films and serials and spoken on the Church’s stand on films at various fora. Roberge has contributed some of the finest books on film studies and has been awarded by the President of India for *Communication Cinema Development*. The five-day seminar organized to commemorate the centenary of cinema, at Mumbai’s National Film Development Corporation, with support from over 30 film personalities in 1996, highlighted Christian concern in films.

Radio

Four media centres – *Santhome*, Chennai, *Kalai Kaveri*, Trichy, *Tuticorin Communications*, Tuticorin, and *Amruthavani*, Hyderabad - have regular weekly programmes on Sri Lanka Radio. A few other centres produce regular programmes in Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and Chin (Burmese-Indian) for Radio Veritas, Manila, the Catholic Radio Station of FABC. These programmes are broadcast daily for an hour. Radio Vatican too is supported by some centres through productions as well as publicity.

Many media centres give programmes for local radio stations. These however limit themselves to Christian songs, bible stories, and thought for the day kind of items. Better creativity, planning and talent pooling are needed to make these programmes more secular and rich in Christian values, told in the idiom and cultural symbols of the people. Radio is going to offer immense scope for the Church in India but then the Church has to prepare personnel by the time community radio possibilities open up in the country.

Today with licensing possible for local community radio, several dioceses and colleges have taken to radio programming on a regular basis.

Television

In Television, *Amruthavani* has the credit of collaborating with T.S. Vijaychander to produce *Dayasagar*, which was aired on National Network DD-I. A similar attempt by *Navodaya* in Kerala was prematurely aborted due to various reasons. A number of catholic media centres have produced programmes for DD and other channels during festivals like Christmas and Easter at the request of various channels. Other independent occasional quality productions are being tried mainly by *Gurjarvani*, Gujarat; *Vikasvani*, Kochi; *DBICA*, Chennai; *Nav Chetana*, Bhopal; *Santhom*, Chennai, and *Tejprasarini*, Mumbai. Others who may be in the field have not come to the fore considerably, due to poor marketing and publicity. The founding of Jeevan TV by Trichur diocese (Kerala) and Shalom TV, by the shalom retreat centre in Calicut, Kerala as 24 hr channels have been significant steps.

Audio-Visual Aids

Individual efforts to produce hymns and music on audiotapes and CDs are on the rise all over India. In fact, this is the major work undertaken in most media centres – diocesan or congregational. Earlier,

puppetry, screen printing, chalk talk etc were popularised by some centres. Audiotapes produced in regional languages have limited circulation, but those produced in Hindi and English have been widely circulated all over North India. Charismatic movement has added to the audio cassettes market with their numerous songs and talks. Cassettes for all age groups and tastes are available today and in many Christian homes, housewives work to the tune of these songs.

In spite of praising such fruitful attempts we cannot avoid to point out the wrong tendency among cassette makers to imitate film songs and deprive religious music its decorum by the use of too many unnecessary instruments and racy tunes. Religious music needs to have healing power, providing a divine experience. So it is important to follow such quality in religious music so that ruthless imitation and extra 'noises' may not block God seekers from 'capturing' the divine notes.

Internet

The Internet is the latest marvel gifted by modern communication technology. As the word denotes it is a network of computers placed in different parts of the world with the possibility of connecting the whole world and its people. The discovery of the World Wide Web (WWW) with its innumerable pages of information accessible to anyone who can get hooked to a computer network is an amazing possibility for the Church. However, the Indian Church has hardly any notable achievement in this field.

While all other major religions have many appealing websites on the 'Net, the Indian Catholic Church has hardly any worth mentioning. The CBCI has a website but its style is not very inviting. We have many priests who are trained abroad and those who are fond of computers and modern technologies. But they use the system just for their personal work, and hardly seem to make any effort to 'see' beyond. Seeing that the young people are very much attracted to the Internet the Pope made it the theme for the World Communication Day (2002).

Media Education

A major achievement in media services is the gradual interest that has developed in the area of Media Education. Realizing that media are creating a new world order, with its own sets of values, many media personnel in the Church have taken up Media Education i.e., making the media consumers critically conscious of its manipulative ways and thus make the best use of the media. It is

a matter of pride that the movement began with the Church worldwide, but in India, it is a pity that it has not spread far and wide in the Church circles. The academic community has shown little willingness to accept Media Education as an important area of education.

Cultural Media

Inspired by *Kalabhavan*'s unprecedented success, a number of other centres all over India have also taken to cultural and folk media to proclaim the Word of God as well as to develop these cultural forms. Given the fact that the mass media are comparatively expensive and require electricity rural dioceses can benefit much by promoting folk media. Some dioceses in Tamil Nadu have done commendable work in this area. Along with the folk art forms of the dalits and the tribals, the Church has also shown much interest in Brahminical arts like *Bharatanatyam*, *Kathak*, etc. Centres like *Kalai Kaveri*, *Gyan Ashram*, *Sandesha*, *Abhinay Academy*, *Utkal Vani* and *Nav Sadhana* have contributed much to the development of these art forms. *Sathangai* – Madurai, *Ravi Bharati* – Patna, and *Viswajyoti* – Varanasi have developed street plays and other cultural media of the rural people in order to create social awareness in villages.

Some Major Initiatives

Among the major centres that developed certain identity, four need to be singled out.

1. XICA

Taking a bird's eye view of the various media centres in India, one instantly stops at Xavier Institute of Communication Arts (XICA), conceived in the late 60s by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of India (CBCI) and established in 1970 by the Jesuits, to train Church personnel in media. Although, the Church found media training of little relevance, over the years, the centre grew in stature and continues to make a worthy contribution to the country, as it trains would-be-television and film producers for the secular media industry today. There are hardly any media field in the country now where XICA alumni haven't set their mark.

2. Kalabhavan

Fr. Abel CMI, a bright star from the Carmelite Missionaries was probably the first in India to venture into the area of cultural media and liturgical music. Gradually with a fine blending of the electronic

media and the rich cultural arts of Kerala his *Kalabhavan* made inroads into Kerala's cultural and cinema fields with several of his stars scaling the media industry.

3. *Chitrabani*

Chitrabani's services were different. Founded in 1971 by Fr. Gaston Roberge, a French Canadian Jesuit film scholar, the centre initiated a unique kind of Diploma where the students could create their own syllabus and work under personal tutelage. Added to this are the several professional media services aimed at the media savvy Calcutta in Photography, slides production, sound recording, etc. Fr. Roberge's classes on cinema and his scholarly books on films made him an acclaimed film theoretician in the country. As the EMRC opened its doors to *Chitrabani* through St. Xavier's College, they became a regular and probably the most creative contributor to the Countrywide Classroom of the UGC that continues even today.

4. *Kalai Kaveri*

Kalai Kaveri, the Trichy diocesan centre established in 1977, has done much in the area of cultural media. Recently the Bharatidasan University has recognized their courses in Fine Arts and one can get a graduate or a post-graduate degree in Bharatnatyam, Kathak, etc, from here. In a State where a large number of Catholics are from the *dalit* community, the institute showed tremendous verve in promoting *Brahminical* arts, may be rued by some, but the effort, indeed is a great PR for the Church and worth applauding.

Regional Centres

Regional centres mushroomed rapidly in the early Seventies. *Amruthavani* – Secunderabad, *Santhome* – Chennai, *Satprakashan* – Indore, *Sandesha* – Mangalore, *KCBC Media Commission* – Kochi, *Ravi Bharati* – Patna, *Vikas Sanchar* – Jharsuguda, and *Nav Sanchar* – Varanasi aimed at pooling together media resources of the linguistic vicinity for better co-ordination and for helping smaller diocesan centres to develop their own media resource units. Lately the Bishops of North East India have taken the initiative to establish NESCOM (North Eastern Social Communications) to co-ordinate the media activities of the seven North-Eastern states though they have different languages. Regional co-ordination, however, has not been as easy as it looks (vide Chapter 32)

Centres Managed by Religious Congregations

In the late 70s and 80s a number of media centres came up under religious congregations. *Media Centre*, Bangalore, and *Gurjarvani*, Ahmedabad by Jesuits; *Nitika*, Calcutta, *DBICA*, Chennai, and *Tejprasarini*, Mumbai by Salesians; *Chetana*, Trichur and *Nav Chetana*, Bhopal by CMIs; *Ishvani*, Pune by SVDs; *Notre Dame Communications*, Patna by the SNDs; *Vishwa Jyoti*, Varanasi by IMS; *Pauline Communications*, Mumbai by DSPs etc; had the sound backing of their religious congregations. In the 90s many more congregations took initiatives to begin new centres. Among all these, *Gurjarvani's* (Gujarat Jesuits) value based videos and *Tejprasarini's* (Salesians, Mumbai) resources for Media Education have been of great use.

Diocesan Centres

Among the diocesan centres Tamil Nadu and Kerala had a number of initiatives. In fact in these two States, several dioceses began to develop communication centres with strong thrusts in cultural media like drama, music, and dance. *Kalai Kaveri*-- Trichy, *Sathangi*--Madurai, *Nanjil Natham*--Kanyakumari, *Neelavani* – Ooty, *Tejas Communications*--Calicut, *Sandesh* – Changanacherry, *CAC*--Kochi, *Vishwadarshan*--Kollam, *Vinimaya*--Thiruvananthapuram, etc. are good examples of diocesan centres that have developed as well-known cultural and media centres of the Church. *Canara Communications* – Mangalore, *Maitri Sadan*--Udaipur, *ACC*--Bangalore, *Deepti Prasarini*--Berhampur, *Sanjeevani* – Krishnagar, *Pradeepti*--Khandwa, etc. are some of the other electronic media centres involved in media training and production.

CBCI Commission for Social Communications and NISCORT

Although the CBCI Commission for Social Communication was set up in 1967, it merged with the Commission for Proclamation and Evangelisation in 1974 and the president of the Unda/OCIC used to be the Joint-Secretary of the Commission. In 1993, the Commission for Proclamation and Evangelisation was taken over by the CCBI (Latin rite only) and an independent Commission for Social Communications was set up. With this step, all the media related organizations of the Church in India such as ICPA (Indian Catholic Press Association), Association of Indian Catholic Publishers, Unda/OCIC etc. came under its purview.

One of the major achievements of this Commission was the initiative to set up a National Institute of Social Communications, Research and Training (NISCORT) on the Delhi-UP border. In fact, the founding of NISCORT by the Catholic Church in 1996 in order to respond positively to the media

boom in the country and to train talented, faith-filled and committed laity to enter the secular media was indeed a major step. Already from 1988 a 3-month course in communications had begun for Church personnel under the leadership of Fr Henry D'Souza the then president of Unda/OCIC. This was conducted at various hired places, in different parts of the country. Dr Jacob Srampickal, SJ, the director of the course from 1991 had, taking into consideration the feedback of the participants, insisted that 3-month is too short for media training and that the Church needs to initiate longer, university approved courses in media. With support from the CBCI Commission for Communication the idea was approved and NISCORT came into existence from 1996. However, lack of clear vision in those who took over from the pioneers and poor management have let it down. NISCORT needs to keep up to the spirit and commitment of its original vision to train catholic laity, clergy and religious as well as personnel from the marginalized classes—*dalits*, tribals, women, backward castes and classes, it has to credit a success record.

Some Failures

1. Lack of proper Awareness among Authorities

It has already been said that a large number of Bishops and Major Superiors are not sufficiently aware of the power and potential of media. Some are scared because it is expensive and sophisticated while there are others who think that they can manage all Church affairs without any media involvement.

If the World Communications *Day* initiated from 1967 is celebrated meaningfully in every parish annually, a lot of ignorance about the media could have been cleared up. In spite of regular appeals being made every year to communicate to the people regarding the celebration of the World Communications Day, most parish priests have hardly heard about such a celebration in the Church.

Many still believe in using media merely for proclamation. It is more important, as the document says, to be able to evangelise the media culture, “since the very evangelisation of modern culture depends to a great extent on the influence of the media, it is not enough to use the media, simply to spread the Christian message and the Church’s authentic teaching. It is also necessary to integrate that message into the ‘new culture’ created by modern communications” (RM 37c). It is a fact that when Christians with deep commitment to Christ get into media, they can surely make a difference.

Again helping people to critically understand and choose media through Media Education is becoming part of evangelisation today. Although from 1971, the Church documents have urged that priests and religious be taught about nature, functions and power of media, nothing much has been done in a systematic way in our seminaries and formation houses but for a few exceptional cases. In the context of the formation of the religious sisters, the situation is more appalling. As mentioned earlier, this is mainly because those in charge of formation of both seminarians and sisters have hardly any understanding of what media is all about.

2. Too Much Clericalism

Although OCIC and Unda were lay initiatives when these were founded in 1928, in India, the laity has almost been out of these associations. As in every other field the clergy has absorbed leadership roles here as well and quite naturally the laity has been isolated from the Church media scene. Although NISCORT was primarily aimed at helping our talented laity to find careers in the secular media, the number of laity attending classes there is minimal. It is true there are a good number of Catholics working in media, but none of them has been helped by the Church to get where they have reached today. Hence they do not have to show any extra commitment to the cause of the Church in their profession.

3. Isolated Structures

Most of the Church-run media centres have nothing to do with the secular media structures. These are run as parallel structures. The Church media persons themselves may have been trained abroad and have little knowledge of the ways of the media in the country. Besides, majority of them have hardly any contact with the secular media. Worse still is the fact that sometimes, in the same city, there are three or four centres run by the Church and they all do independent work, or even compete with each other. As a result, there is a waste of resources both financial and personnel, and non-professionalism creeps in.

4. The Financial Angle

Media is big business even in the Church. Those who can find the resources will be able to develop media structures that can play crucial roles. Hence those dioceses, regions and congregations that can raise huge funds go ahead in media. Sometimes without proper direction and vision they have indulged in so much of non-productive media that they have contributed more to a bad name for Church media.

Add to that a situation where some Bishops and Superiors have denounced media as mere glamour, technical gadgetry, “sound and fury signifying nothing”. The media workers in the Church alone are to be blamed for this situation. As the old adage goes, ‘if the stand-up comedian cannot make the audience laugh when he delivers his punch line, it is not the fault of the audience but his, for he hasn’t learned his lesson yet!’

One of the suggestions made by the participants of the All India Seminar, 1968, Bangalore was that the National Office/centres determine the priorities in allocating the available funds for media work. As of now it is either determined by the donor agencies or by Unda/OCIC National Office (now SIGNIS). The Unda/OCIC is somehow compelled to cater to the needs of the member institutions rather than the overall needs of the Church in a planned manner. Due to these reasons Tamil Nadu alone had received close to 60% of the total allotment of funds from Propaganda through Unda/OCIC from 1967 to 97, as revealed in a study in 1997. It was time and again suggested that all the dioceses and the national Church give a higher priority for the apostolate. In some dioceses this item does not appear in their budget at all and even if it does, it has the least priority.

The participants of the above mentioned seminar had also the foresight to build a central fund for media at the national level and recommended a collection on the World Communications Day of which 50% was to be utilized by the diocese and 50% to feed the central pool.

Some Important Observations

Aetatis Novae suggested the concept of Pastoral Communication in a major way, demanding that Bishops take up social communications as part of the pastoral plan in every diocese. Although in earlier years media was used mostly as a tool to proclaim the Christian message, after *Aetatis Novae*, a clear mandate has been given to the Church with regard to media services. Hence it central to the Church and ceases to be the private pastime of certain priests. The document stresses, “We therefore strongly recommend that dioceses and Episcopal conferences or assemblies include a communications component in every pastoral plan.” (AN 21).

The major thrusts for future according to Aetatis Novae

1. Provide professional training to the laity, and promote women media workers. These could either work in the professional media or contribute regularly to the secular media highlighting Christian values and thinking. .
2. Develop Media Education as a major task of urgency. Media Education is evangelisation itself as it helps people to diagnose the manipulative ways of media.
3. Undertake media research in a systematic manner. Only through proper and relevant research can one ascertain the exact need and scope for media involvement in the Church..
4. Foster right PR efforts, using appropriate media wisely. For this every parish, diocese and Christian institution should endeavour to make its goals, values and vision clear to the public. In the North Indian context the services of missionaries are interpreted as attempts to conversion. Even major humanitarian services rendered by the Church-related organizations are interpreted as attempts to proselytise.
5. Collaborate with the secular media. In the secular media there are excellent productions that highlight human values and propagate human right issues. The Church media persons have the duty to discover and promote these.
6. Commit to the real problems of the people like some NGOs do, using the different media. In this, low cost media like street play, story telling etc are excellent means not only to communicate but also to develop human dignity among the oppressed and to raise their awareness level.
7. Realize the power of the media to bring about attitudinal changes. Computers and satellites have brought in a communication revolution that covers every aspect of life. While everyone 'is busy in capturing as much space on the media as possible, the Church is still looking for space on earth to build its institutions'. The Church in India needs to look at this area with more commitment.

The Real Obstacles

Professionalism is the first casualty in all the areas of the Church's functioning. If media institutes have to grow to a professional stature they need to have genuine, talented and committed personnel

who understand the real role of the Church in communications. The bishops who are in charge of communications have to take more interest in getting up to date with the Church's teachings on Communications and enlarge their horizons. Otherwise we end up in a situation of 'the blind leading the blind'. It is also good to have more check and balances on our training centres to see whether they are really serving the purpose or are white elephants abusing the generosity of the donors. As of now, except in certain pockets, there seems to be poor networking with secular media professionals and other knowledgeable people, due to a lack of familiarity with them and a 'frog-in-the well' attitude. There are also those who hold important posts and have some media awareness, but are ignorant of media management and trends in the country. However, the most pathetic drawback seems to be the pursuit of personal glory resulting in competition and one-up-manship rather than collaboration. At the national meetings there is lot of talk about networking, but few are willing to 'walk the talk'. The Church may do well to learn from professional management patterns in the corporate sector to tide over these weaknesses. For this it is imperative that more lay people are empowered and inducted into the communication and media network of the Church. Obviously this needs requires more money, because lay people need to be paid professional salaries.

Concluding I need to say that with clericalism dominating and the laity almost being sidelined, the Church media scene is quite amateurish and need a thorough clean up. The church media personnel have to realize that among the laity there are very talented people whose work should be promoted by the Church. Often because the Church does not promote them, they go into the secular media and find their way up. Since the church has done nothing in their formation or progress, they do not find themselves responsible to stand up or speak up for the church.