
THANK YOU TO DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA



Sunday, February 4, we shall be marking the 30th National Communications Day, and on this occasion I want to express my deepest gratitude to all those in charge of communications media services in our milieu, whether it be television or radio, publications or the spoken medium, without forgetting telephony and the information superhighway. They are thousands of people who shape our daily lives, to whom we do not always express the thanks they deserve for their demanding professional work.

A THIRD MEETING

This will be a third time I meet with directors of the communications media of our region. The first time I met with them was to thank them for all they did at the time of my episcopal appointment and ordination: they really could not have accomplished any more than they did. Then in 1995 I paid a special tribute to radio personnel, and especially to those of CJEM-CKMV of Edmundston, on the occasion of the fifty years of our diocese, and this year, I want to recognise in a special way those who work in the printed media, and in the name of the Edmundston Diocese Church I want to recognise in a special way Mr. Jean Pedneault of the for his 25 years' work at *Le Madawaska* newspaper. On Saturday, February 3, at 7:15 P.M., I shall preside a eucharist at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Edmundston; the liturgical texts for this Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time induce us to communicate light and goodness.

"GIVING DIRECTION TO CULTURE"

That is the slogan for National Communications Day. We know that mass media occupies a big space in our daily lives, and the risk is great that this phenomenon grow even bigger! On average, people spend twenty-five hours a week watching television. In a few months, the TV menu to choose from will be even more varied! Just think about the forthcoming new products generated by such biggies as the Internet, the tons of "junk mail" that invade our postal boxes, and the countless publications on sale at our newsstands. The risk is great that through these developments quality will give way to quantity: in doing so, the cultural arena would suffer negative consequences. The 1996 National Day calls on us to exercise vigilance, to take an active role so that the media contribute to the promotion of values that are important for individuals and society. During the 50th Anniversary festivities, mass media certainly contributed their share in revealing to us our milieu's threefold culture, the Francophone, Anglophone, and Native cultures.

BENEFICIAL ALLIANCE

More than ever, at the end of this twentieth century we need you, media and communications personnel. The world we live is in quest of beauty and truth if it is not to collapse in despair. Beauty, like truth, brings joy to men and women of today, and it is this precious fruit that resists the wear and tear of time and unites generations in a communion of admiration. And this is thanks to your work, your writing, your daily messages. Through your daily work you contribute in constructing a civilisation of love and truth, of peace and justice. Through your communications work you link us with the rest of the world. From parish bulletin to *The National* and international journalism, one can feel the intimations of a new cultural civilisation. It is well to recall these words of St. Augustine: "Let us seek with a desire to find, and let us find with the desire to search further." Happy are those

who search and search further for this civilisation of truth and beauty in order to help it grow, to renew it, and deepen it further.

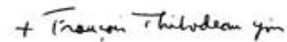
THE CHALLENGE OF COMMUNICATING

We must help one another meet the daily challenge of communicating. To find the right word for the right time. To reach those we would otherwise forget. To break down barriers between generations and cultures. To undertake a real dialogue with one's neighbour. To surround others with webs of solidarity and tenderness. Communications is surely a superior art form, composed of a thousand and one considerations that demand determination and perseverance, as well as ongoing collaboration. Specific laws and rules govern this communicating, such as: A press conference you shall call only for important news; You shall never give false news, and shall strictly adhere to the truth; You shall write press releases clearly and succinctly; You shall respect the reporters' time by scrupulously keeping the time agreed on; Saturdays and Sunday you shall keep for popular activities which could not take place otherwise; You shall find out the deadlines so that your message will be on time; Clear and well-cropped photos you shall submit, with the subject clearly focused.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

On my behalf and on that of the people of the diocese I gratefully thank the mass media personnel. A special Thank You goes out to those who look after our diocese's communications office, especially the members of the *La vie of quotidien* and *Au rythme de l'Église* teams, without forgetting those in charge of the *Aux sources de la vie* programme and the Cathedral Mass radio broadcast.

Have a nice week - and good communications!



+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.
Bishop of Edmundston

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