New Media, New Evangelization:
The Unique Benefits of New Media and Why the Catholic Church Should Engage Them

by

Angela M. Santana

HONORS THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Graduation from the Honors Program of
St. Mary's University
San Antonio, Texas

Approved by:

_____
Dr. Dennis Bautista, S.M.
Assistant Professor of English and Communication Studies

_____
Dr. Stephen Calogero
Director, Honors Program

March 1, 2010

New Media, New Evangelization:
The Unique Benefits of New Media and Why the Catholic Church Should Engage Them

by

Angela M. Santana

HONORS THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Graduation from the Honors Program of
St. Mary's University
San Antonio, Texas

Abstract

The Catholic Church, once a leader in communications, now lags behind the rest of the world in new media participation. This study on the Catholic Church and new media argues that the utilization of new media by the Catholic Church would seriously benefit its catechetical, evangelical, and other communications efforts by providing easy-access, cost-effective, community-building resources to the church members at home or abroad as well as to the rest of the world.

As a theological foundation for discussion, the author provides an overview of Church teaching on evangelization, media, and new media. Insights into the benefits of new media are then demonstrated using secular marketing, Protestant, and Catholic sources. Four case stories of different individuals and groups within the Church who utilize new media follow the literature review.

After reiterating the truth of its thesis, this study recommends that the Church produce a theologically-infused, methodological approach to new media use and that it encourage dioceses to offer resources toward strategic media use for their members.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

INTRODUCTION

We are living in a new era. With new Internet technology and applications, our methods of relating to one another have changed and continue to develop. Still, every human being desires truth, relationship, love and justice. The Catholic Church knows these longings, and believes itself called by God to help satisfy them by bringing the grace of God to every human person. Yet today, the Church is failing to do so.

The Catholic Church was once a pioneering force in communications. Its members have traveled the globe preaching and converting hundreds upon hundreds, thousands upon thousands to a radical message. Its members, inspired by the Holy Spirit, compiled the Bible. Its members established systems of colleges, hospitals, and churches. Clearly, the Catholic Church has historically mastered communication.

Today, however, the Catholic Church has fallen short of that reputation. It is lagging behind others in adopting new forms of communication. Namely, the Church is lacking in its efforts to utilize new media. Only recently has the Church announced that meetings will be held to discuss new media and their implications for the Church. Meanwhile, new media continue to develop even further. Technology continues to advance. The rest of the world is leaving the Church behind.

Purpose

St. Paul instructed the Corinthians to "run so as to win" the race (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24); if the Catholic Church is not doing this in terms of using new media, action must be taken. The purpose of this document is to present the Church with a foundation and a case for why new media must be utilized. What unique benefits might the use of new media bring to faith

formation for the Catholic Church? I argue that the utilization of new media by the Catholic Church would seriously benefit its catechetical, evangelical, and other communications efforts by providing easy-access, cost-effective, community-building resources to the faithful at home or abroad as well as to the rest of the world.

Background

The Internet has powerful communications implications. It enables people to share information from anywhere in the world, and at lightning-fast speeds. This paper assumes that these basic ideas have been established.

The term "new media" in this document refers to Internet-based media that allow easy, person-to-person communication—including, but not limited to, so-called "social media." Many of the new media terms used within this document are defined in Appendix A.

Problem

In discussing the unique benefits of new media, I also hope to shed light on some of the main criticisms or critiques of new media from individuals outside and inside the Church. These include:

- "The Internet is isolating." (Pastor Daniel M. Griswold)

- The digital divide increases the divide between developed and developing worlds. (paraphrase of United Nations official; see "High-speed")

- Online interaction is shallow. (paraphrase of Archbishop Vincent Nichols; see "Facebook")

How should the Church respond to these critiques? To what extend are they valid? To what extent should they prevent the Church from using new media? In the literature review, these legitimate concerns will be addressed both directly and indirectly. In discussing the benefits of new media, I hope to ease the minds and hearts of many who are fearful or critical of the idea that the Church will become an advocate of new media. This study acknowledges that, as with any media, the use of new media opens the door to benefits as well as risks.

Significance of This Study

This study debuts during a time when Church officials are just beginning to react to new and social media. During their November 2009 assembly at the Vatican, the European Episcopal Commission for Media met with experts to learn more about new media (Glatz). Bishops of the world, recognizing the large time span since the last document on communications and the Church—*Aetatis Novae*, released in 1992—have begun to draft a new one (Colina). Thus, the Church has a long road ahead of it before fully integrating new media into its communications efforts.

This study is significant, then, firstly in its timing. While many smaller conversations about the Church and new media exist, few documents similar to this one have been published. This document should act as a glimpse into the current relationship between the Catholic Church and new media, demonstrating what benefits new media offer to the Church. It should also provide insight into what must still be done in order for the Church to answer the needs of a world that is placing increasing importance on new and social media.

Throughout this discussion, I integrate a field of study which does not often join together with theological conversation: marketing. Marketing insights belong in this document for several reasons.

First, commercial activities heavily influence today's world. As the lives of Catholics and non-Catholics are increasingly shaped by the business sector—particularly in developed and developing nations—the Church must recognize this, understand more about this influence, and learn from it. Simply put, if the Church wishes to reach a people whose minds, values, habits and everyday activities are deeply affected by marketing, the Church should learn to "speak the language" of marketing.

While I will draw many similarities between the Church's activities and activities of the business sector in this discussion, I do not equate the two. Evangelization is not simply a matter of advertising a message so as to win a certain number of souls. How, then, can I suggest that evangelists have much to learn from marketers? The answer to this question lies in the contemporary view of marketing. That is, marketing does not equal advertising. It is not only a matter of "selling." Rather, the true marketer establishes meaningful relationships with their target audience (Boone 21). Marketing is about creating and developing relationships. It involves working to understand as much as possible about a target audience so as to most effectively communicate with, impact, and cultivate relationships with its members.

While the Church is not a business, it is a brand and an organization with a message. That message needs to be heard. If the ways that people receive and interpret messages has changed over the last few years, the Church needs to adapt to those changes in order to touch hearts and minds for Christ. This is not meant to suggest that the Church soften its message, nor that the

Church should act like a business. Still, marketing insights are extremely beneficial to understanding contemporary communications, and the Church should partake of these benefits.

Overview of Subsequent Chapters

This study will proceed as follows. First, to demonstrate what insights have already laid a foundation for the Church's conversation about new media, I present a literature review. Following that, I synthesize the significant points of this review, highlighting key insights. Four case studies illustrate the textual evidence. These studies essentially tell the stories of four different kinds of individuals or groups within the Church who have begun using new media. The stories give flesh to the benefits established in the literature review while providing new insights that contribute to the thesis. Finally, from the literature review and the case studies, I draw conclusions about the unique benefits which new media offer the Catholic Church. In closing, I provide important recommendations for future studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Articles on the subject of new media and the Catholic Church can be divided into two main categories. The following review first presents some of the Catholic Church's recent ideas on evangelization, and on traditional and new media. These establish a theological foundation for the subsequent review of literature on new media and marketing strategies.

Afterward, I discuss the insights that several different groups have collected about the use of new media. First: insights from the business sector and secular marketing professionals. Next: insights from Protestant Christians about new media. Finally, I present what Catholics have discovered about new media.

I have separated Protestant Christian insights about new media from Catholic ones because of the theological differences between the two groups. Where there are theological differences, there exist differences in the way individuals interact with the world around them. Therefore, the theological differences between Protestants and Catholics can and do affect how they interact with new media. For this reason, I have separated the two groups.

While I have attempted to incorporate recent literature within this review, the constantly changing nature of new media will certainly affect the sources' novelty. Additionally, new media users' ability to continually develop content about new media makes it impossible for any researcher to conduct an exhaustive review of related literature. Still, a best attempt has been made to engage literature related to the Catholic Church and new media which discuss poignant, lasting themes.

The Church on Evangelization, Media and New Media

To begin, I will examine many texts written by the leadership of the Catholic Church regarding evangelization in general, media, and—most recently—new media. The purpose of this section is to establish a theological foundation for discussing the appropriateness of an increased use of new media within the Church. Again, I do not attempt to present an exhaustive body of works on these subjects, but wish to present a satisfactory overview.

I will focus on several particular texts. First, I will examine *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Second Vatican Council's decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on November 18, 1965. With it, I will discuss *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, promulgated by Pope Paul VI ten years after the Council. These documents will serve as a basis for understanding the Church's view of evangelization, especially as it pertains to the laity. Second, I will discuss both Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter *The Rapid Development* and Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical letter *Caritas in Veritate.* The former was promulgated on January 24, 2005 and addressed particularly to those working in communications, while the latter, published on June 26, 2009, contains a discussion on the role of technology in the search for truth. These two documents will aid in understanding the Church's teaching on communications media. Finally, I will examine a recent document, "New Technologies, New Relationships," promulgated by Pope Benedict XVI on new media and their effects on human relationships.

On Evangelization

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI teaches that "evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize" (14). The document expounds on evangelization as a process made up of several elements: "the renewal of

humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative" (24). These are somewhat self-explanatory. Evangelization should be an act that touches people at the deepest level, resulting in the renewal of cultural values, attitudes, and human hearts. This renewal of humanity comes about through Christians' witness by example and in explicitly preaching the gospel. The final result is a renewed person's adherence to the gospel deep within themselves, their entrance into the community of faith and acceptance of the sacraments. Finally, every person who is touched by evangelism becomes a new witness to the gospel.

In *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Council exhorted laypeople "to be more diligent in doing what they can to explain, defend, and properly apply Christian principles to the problems of our era in accordance with the mind of the Church" (6). This means that all people of the Church, charged with the mission to "make the divine message of salvation known and accepted by all men throughout the world," should do so by making their faith an evident and inseparable part of their lives (3). As Paul VI made explicit, this personal witness within everyday life must be followed by the vocal proclamation of Christ. The Council notes that "there are many persons who can hear the Gospel and recognize Christ only through the laity who live near them" (9).

The documents thus far demonstrate that evangelization is a rich and personal process, and the duty of every Christian. Still further, the Council makes it clear that evangelization should not only be the work of individuals. Communities should also be witnesses and preachers of the gospel (18). The lights on a hilltop are not only individual lights, but cities shining brightly with the Light of Christ (cf. Matt. 5:14–16). Whether in community or as an individual, Christians' acts of evangelization must be personal. This is explained in the following passage from *Evangelii Nuntiandi:*

What matters is to evangelize man's culture and cultures (not in a purely

decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth

and right to their very roots), in the wide and rich sense which these terms have in

Gaudium et spes, always taking the person as one's starting-point and always

coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God. (20)

Here, the Pope clarifies two points. First, evangelization must create change at the root of a

culture. Wherever the values of a culture may be, it is there that Christians should target their

efforts. But this is done on a basic level; the Church should start in every effort of evangelization

with the individual person.

The Pope later discusses the implications of this goal for communications media. He

states that while social communications can reach millions of people, there remains a challenge

of "piercing the conscience of each individual, of implanting [the gospel] in his heart as though

he were the only person being addressed, with all his most individual and personal qualities, and

evoke an entirely personal adherence and commitment" (45). Because the Pope saw this

challenge, he says the "person-to-person" form of encounter "remains valid and important" and

points to Jesus Christ's own encounters with individuals in the gospels (46). He poignantly asks,

"In the long run, is there any other way of handing on the Gospel than by transmitting to another

person one's personal experience of faith?"

With that in mind, I turn to Church documents on communications media.

On Media

In *The Rapid Development*, John Paul II said that in communications media, the Church has "precious aid for spreading the Gospel and religious values, for promoting dialogue, ecumenical and inter-religious cooperation, and also for defending those solid principles which are indispensable for building a society which respects the dignity of the human person and is attentive to the common good" (7). The Church sees media as tools which must be used to fulfill its multifaceted, God-given mission in the world. In fact, the Pope says that "everything must be done" for this mission to be completed (8). He acknowledges that media are unique among the Church's many tools, in that they "[stimulate] people to listen to and embrace" the gospel.

Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate* asserts that communications media, and technology in general, "[express] the inner tension that impels [humanity] gradually to overcome material limitations" (69). He sees them as reflecting, at their core, a transcendent desire. "Technology, in this sense, is a response to God's command to till and to keep the land (cf. Gen 2:15) that he has entrusted to humanity." The Church, then, views technology itself as not inherently good or evil, but the *expression* of a good, God-given human quality.

Pope John Paul II spoke of media as having the ability to unite Church members around the world. They can "render the bonds of communion among ecclesial communities more effective" (6). He was remembered by the Holy See's Press Office Director as delighted with the ability of communications media to connect him with those he shepherded in countries thousands of miles away (Lombardi). The Pope said, "The modern technologies increase to a remarkable extent the speed, quantity and accessibility of communication" (13).

At the same time, he pointed to some flaws in communications media. He believed that media of his day were in many ways inadequate for encountering persons on an intimate level: "They above all do not favor that delicate exchange which takes place between mind and mind, between heart and heart, and which should characterize any communication at the service of solidarity and love" (13). In a word, they are missing the personal connection which Pope Paul VI says is vital to evangelization.

Pope Benedict XVI, as shepherd of the Church during a time when new media have become more prevalent throughout the world, released a document in response to these cultural phenomena.

On New Media

In "New Technologies, New Relationships," the Pope offers some guidance to those using new media, emphasizing several ways new media affect human relationships. He begins by saying that the speed with which new media technologies develop and become popular "should not surprise us, as [new media] respond to a fundamental desire of people to communicate and to relate to each other." He celebrates the idea that new media not only allow people to connect with one another but that these connections "facilitate forms of co-operation between people from different geographical and cultural contexts that enable them to deepen their common humanity."

The Pope then begins to address a subject which the Church has rarely, if ever, discussed by name: the digital divide. This term expresses the idea that new media are readily available to and express the values of the upper- and middle-classes while remaining unavailable to and not representative of the poor. As expected, the Pope supports the "endeavor to ensure that the

benefits [new media] offer are put at the service of all human individuals and communities, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable." Later, he says it would be a "tragedy" if the continuous development of new media "should contribute only to increasing the gap separating the poor from the new networks that are developing at the service of human socialization and information." So while the Church supports the bringing together of peoples via new media, it calls for a movement to represent the poor and marginalized through these new media—and for those people have access to new media.

Thus, the Pope says, relationships should not simply be the focus of new media efforts. "The quality of the content" remains of great importance. He encourages everyone involved with new media to promote "a culture of respect, dialogue and friendship" within it. That is, new media content and relationships should respect the dignity of the human person. Dialogue should be made in a genuine search for truth. Though new media users may easily fall prey to believing that they are "consumers in a market of undifferentiated possibilities, where choice itself becomes the good, novelty usurps beauty, and subjective experience displaces truth," the Church reminds them to believe otherwise. Further, whatever relationships humans enter into through new media should not deter them from relationships with families, neighbors, and community members off-line. He warns, "If the desire for virtual connectedness becomes obsessive, it may in fact function to isolate individuals from real social interaction while also disrupting the patterns of rest, silence and reflection that are necessary for healthy human development." Certainly, the Church supports moderation in all areas of new media interaction.

Finally, the Pope stresses the role of young people in the Church's relationship with new media. The youth have a role in evangelization that is perhaps more important than ever before,

as their natural ability to engage with new media gives them the responsibility of "the evangelization of this 'digital continent.'"

In response to "New Technologies, New Relationships," Father Federico Lombardi, Director of the Holy See's Press Office, said, "The Pope knows that the Church will be an efficacious presence in the world that is taking shape only to the extent that She succeeds in keeping the truths of the faith in close touch with the emerging culture and the younger, growing generations" (Lombardi 5).

New Media and Marketing Insights from Secular, Protestant and Catholic Sources

I now examine marketing texts. The following sources are meant to provide an overview of the insights that three different worlds have gained into new media. What are the advantages and disadvantages of new media? How do they contribute to marketing a brand? The answers to these questions are all necessary for determining what unique benefits new media offer, and how they can help the Church.

Secular Sources

As a foundation for this section, I will discuss the findings of researchers James Katz and Ronald Rice on the social consequences of Internet use. The two wished to "set the record straight" about these social consequences, as so many opinions had arisen coming into the twenty-first century on this topic. Some critics held a "dystopian" view that the Internet had predominantly negative social consequences. More people became misinformed, deceived, cheated, isolated, and caught up in synthetic relationships while exposed to increased violence, hate, and pornography (Katz xvii). The researchers "looked for evidence of whether the 'social technology' known as the Internet decreases interpersonal connection or leads to less real-world

participation in community events" (xix). They also examined the utopian view that "the Internet's revolutionary nature frees people and groups to achieve an egalitarian, multimedia information society." Both of these views they found inaccurate.

They discovered that, generally speaking, users' Internet activity reflects their offline activity. New media have resulted in "an intricate tapestry of individuals engaging in what they already do in other arenas, for good or bad, while expanding possibilities for new kinds of thought, interaction, and action" (xix). These new kinds of thought, interaction, and action are particularly of interest to my thesis. If new media offered nothing new in these areas, the question of whether the Church should concentrate more effort on using new media would remain debatable.

Researchers have discovered that the Internet transforms our ways of interacting with one another, essentially creating new social environments. These social environments are what I will call "encounter environments." Katz and Rice discovered that "when individuals pursue their self-interest, they create new structures that transcend the individual" (162). A new media user often begins using the internet for his or her personal benefit, looking for and creating specialized content. In doing so, however, these users do not only interact with specialized content which differentiates them from others, but their very act of specialization creates an environment that transcends their personal experience (13). Their impact on new media leaves a transcendent imprint. Katz and Rice suggest that this means new media allow "us to become ever more ourselves while also creating social capital for the benefit of individuals and communities." My continued reflection on secular sources may allow further illustration of these concepts.

I must address an additional area of Katz and Rice's research which regards the Internet's affect on off-line social interaction. In "Project Syntopia," the pair recorded a summation of their research. No evidence supports the "social paradox" that heavy Internet usage increases social isolation (171). Rather, Katz and Rice conclude that Internet use is associated with "increased community and political involvement, and significant and increased online and offline social interactions" (174). Their findings have been confirmed by numerous other studies (171).

A 2009 summarization of the new and social media phenomenon by Erik Qualman offers a stunning case for the popularity of new and social media. Qualman's evidence suggests that social media not only enjoy more new adopters than any previous medium in history, but that their popularity will only increase over time. For instance, while radio took 38 years to reach 50 million users and television 13 years, social media site Facebook added 100 million users in less than nine months" (Qualman). Were Facebook "a country it would be the world's fourth largest." Besides population, social media are truly global. The popular online encyclopedia, Wikipedia, where users create and edit each article, contains over 13 million articles, 78 percent of which are in a language other than English.

From a marketing perspective, social media seem far more effective than any other medium, due in part to consumers' ability to expose themselves to however much advertising they choose. They can pick, for instance, whichever television show to watch whenever they want to watch it, and can skip through commercials. They can navigate through a web site using software that keeps stand-alone or "pop-up" advertisements from their view. In other words, consumers are tired of being on the receiving end of the marketing communications chain. They are tired of "being marketed to." This creates a challenging situation for marketers who want to reach today's consumers.

In fact, while "only 14 percent trust advertisements," "78 percent of consumers trust peer recommendations" (Qualman). Consumers do not trust marketers to tell them what is best. They want authentic interaction with people like them. The 2008 Edelman Trust Barometer found that the most trusted voice on the Internet according to consumers was the voice of "a person like me" (Fosnacht).

The secular business sector was arguably the first group to take advantage of new media. I now present the marketing insights that have come from this sector.

In 2008, social engagement professional Luis Sandoval Jr. released a series of articles explaining 12 social media opportunities for brands. I will focus on this document as a summary of many of the secular business sector's marketing insights. Sandoval asserts that brands often focus on the ways social media can benefit consumers, but fail to realize how much they themselves can benefit. By establishing relationships with new media users—including those who are not customers—brands can improve their reputation. Through these interactions, brands can differentiate themselves from competitors. They can also practice risk reduction by personally engaging with concerned—or delighted—consumers.

Interacting with social media users as a brand causes a dramatic increase in brand loyalty (Sandoval "Part II"). When clients gain a new sense of belonging and membership through their interactions with a brand, they are much more likely to remain loyal to that brand. When the brand invests in building long-term relationships, it can not only expect long-term revenue, but also enjoy being associated with positive relationships in the minds of consumers.

In his third installment, Sandoval discusses how to build returns on an investment using social media. He believes brands can create opportunities for the future through social media

because these media offer opportunities to easily create partnerships with other brands. In other words, brands do not have to limit themselves to creating all of their own content, but should interact with existing content from other sources. Sandoval also suggests using new media for public relations and exposure purposes. Since so many consumers get their information via new media, he says brands should go where their consumers are, particularly when communicating important messages and publicizing events.

Finally, Sandoval encourages brands' creativity while using new media. Innovation "grabs attention," he says, but should go much deeper than the initial attention-getter. By providing unique new media content, brands can educate their consumers and potentially create opportunities for themselves, such as catching the attention of industry conference hosts, media outlets, or potential business partners. In all, Sandoval's insights support the idea that new media are not going away, but are opportunities for improved communication on many levels.

Two other voices further explain how brands can positively use social media. Communications professional Jason Falls asserts that the key to new media's popularity lies in "the notion that people don't like being marketed to, or at least they don't like being marketed to the way they have been for years." Individuals have turned to each other for advice, and are doing so today even more. They are seeking authenticity and shared experiences. Falls thus advises brands that wish to successfully use new media: "You earn trust by giving of yourself, contributing to the community or conversation or both and only after trust is earned can you then ask for something in return. It's no longer about one-way communication but a dialog."

Internet marketing professional Vince Blackham agrees. According to Blackham, anyone using new media needs to fully, honestly participate with others. When users contribute

meaningful content, they become part of the conversation and the community. Blackham explicitly suggests that many social media documents imply the importance of listening. New media users should listen to what other users say directly to him or her, as well as monitor what others are saying indirectly about him or her. Users who learn from "listening" can turn negative interactions into future positive ones.

Some insights have also been discovered regarding how new media affect nonprofit organizations. While many of the above principles overlap and apply well to nonprofit groups, there have also been some observations about the specific, positive results brought about through new media. They include "increased fundraising results, expanded participation in public policy and volunteer programs, and a growing network of talent for recruiting new staff" (Hart 86).

Now, I focus my literature review more closely on Protestant Christian groups' unique insights into the benefits of new media for their group, and examples of what their new media usage looks like.

Protestant Sources

One particular source that could speak on behalf of many Protestants about new media's benefits is an article on why "pastors should Twitter" by Pastor Scott Williams. Williams offers insights that apply not only to microblogging applications like Twitter but also to other new media. I therefore regard his insights as applicable to many new media outlets.

First, in using new media, pastors and clergy can enter into "relational community" with each other, no matter how far away they may be physically. These interactions allow not only a familial bond and supportive structure to develop, but pastors also "gain wisdom from" one another. This is achieved without paying for transportation or attending conferences.

Second, pastors can establish a relational community with their congregations. When congregants connect with their pastors via new media, they gain insight into their pastor's thoughts, daily life, and spiritual reflections on a regular basis. Vice versa, congregants can share this information with their pastors. As Williams notes, this sharing may not otherwise often take place.

Thirdly, new media have allowed Christians to "fulfill the great commission" by preaching the gospel to all nations in a unique way (Williams). This means reaching people who are longing for a connection with God, and may not otherwise encounter a religious leader in such a direct way. Williams shares that he often receives "questions, words of encouragement, and 'thank you's for reaching people in a lost and broken world." He also receives angry messages from individuals who encounter his online presence, which allow him, he says, the opportunity to show God's love to them.

A unique insight that Christians have discovered as a benefit to new media use is the ability to "unleash the power of prayer" in a new way. This has become a more common occurrence, as new accounts on Twitter are being created by groups or individuals dedicated to spreading the prayer requests of people all over the world. These prayer requests become "viral"—an Internet term referring to a piece of online content that is spread to a large number of internet users through referral. For example, if one woman posted her prayer request on Twitter, her friends could then pass on her request to their friends, and those friends could pass it on similarly until hundreds of persons have been exposed to one prayer request in a matter of minutes.

Protestant Christians have begun using Twitter not only outside of church services, but also within them. Many pastors have begun to incorporate Twitter into their sermons, encouraging congregants to "tweet" their reactions to the preacher (Green). Preachers then incorporate the real-time feedback into the sermon. Using Twitter, services are becoming more of a conversation between preachers and listeners. One of the most prominent young churches using Twitter, Mars Hill Church, uses Twitter to connect the congregants and staff of its nine campuses.

Evangelical Christians have also gained insight into the popular blogging medium. They have found that blogs can help writers and readers develop their faith and in their understanding of it. While writing and reading blogs, evangelicals practice "articulating what they believe" (Alsdurf 29). Reading others' blogs exposes them to new viewpoints, and helps them determine which opinions are "worthwhile" and which ones are not. Blogs also enable evangelicals to find others "who share similar thoughts and struggles."

Youth workers are taking advantage of new media to reach their groups in more relevant, engaging ways. Youth Pastor Tim Schmoyer recently compiled a list of the benefits of using online video in youth ministry which also well summarizes the benefits of using other kinds of new media. He found that video allows for more effective teaching. I venture to say that any kind of new media, by its dynamic and interactive nature, can become an effective teaching tool. Schmoyer also says video announcements for the youth group are more attention-getting and memorable than having a person read them aloud week after week. Besides their flashier nature, however, he says that video can help set the atmosphere before events of any mood. For example, prayerful, serene videos might help prepare minds and hearts for worship, while upbeat videos might excite them for group activities. Finally, Schmoyer's discussion of using online

video for training and tutorial purposes illustrates how helpful new media can be in increasing

efficiency, especially for churches with smaller budgets and staffs.

Catholic Sources

One of the primary sources of information I will examine in the following discussion of

Catholics' insights into new media is the Catholic New Media Celebration which took place in

San Antonio, Texas on June 25, 2009. The CNMC is hosted yearly by a Catholic new media

production network called Star Quest Production Network, or SQPN. SQPN is a network of

laity, religious and clergy from around the world who produce new media content faithful to

Catholic teaching and support the production of one another's content. The 2009 CNMC

gathered together over 200 Catholics from around the world interested in new media use and

production to reflect on important issues surrounding the Church and new media ("Catholics").

The keynote speech was presented by Father Dave Dwyer of the Paulist Fathers, known

as the representative for the Fathers' Busted Halo ministry to young adults. Father Dwyer

asserted that one of the greatest needs within the Church is to have more "translators." In other

words, the Church needs more people who can translate its "lingo" into language that non-

Catholics can understand and relate to better. He quoted Paulist Fathers founder Father Isaac

Hecker, saying that new media producers "relay the same old truths in new forms, with fresh

tone and spirit."

New media allow every Christian to share their unique, God-given gifts to reach certain

people. Dwyer said there are many who had not heard the gospel in a context that impacted them

until a certain individual with a certain set of gifts was able to reach them through the content

they produced. As an example, Dwyer told the podcasters present that their podcast may only

have 10 regular listeners, but those 10 people are experiencing the gospel in a new way that no other person but he or she could relay. So, new media by their nature allow Christians to share the gospel by using their unique abilities.

New media are also relatively easy to use, especially compared to traditional radio, television, or print media. Dwyer illustrated this concept with an example from his ministerial experience. The Busted Halo ministry created a "how-to" video on the Sacrament of Confession. The response they received was overwhelmingly positive, Dwyer noted, and the staff was amazed that they could impact people so easily. Not only is it easy for the Church to create content for the people of God and easy for anyone with an internet connection to consume that content, but new media also make it easy for people to enter into conversation with the Church about that content by offering feedback. This feedback can come in many different forms—text, audio, video—in a public or private online setting. New media, then, offer ministries a simple and inexpensive way to create content with which its audience can interact. The content becomes part of a conversation.

Another ministerial representative who presented information at the CNMC was Andrew Walther, Vice President for Media, Research and Development at the Supreme Office of the Knights of Columbus. Walther shared some examples of the Order's uses of new media and their implications. He echoed Dwyer's theme of specialized ministry, saying that the Knights' use of new media is an effort to reach "different people in different ways," and to affect "people where they are, and then ultimately to bring them back" to the Catholic faith or enrich their existing faith. In a teaching context, new media allow people of different learning styles to engage with content and learn from it.

The Knights of Columbus also strive to "create practical applications" for the new media content they create. For instance, their "Fathers for Good" initiative combines various forms of new media providing "information, inspiration and a source of formation" for fathers, so that men can apply that new media experience to their roles as fathers. The Order has found that the new media content they create is long-lasting. For this reason, they have begun to infuse their new media content with lasting themes so that it will remain applicable for many years in the future. New media content, then, retains ease-of-access and interactive abilities over time, potentially lasting for generations.

Danielle Bean, Editorial Director of *Faith & Family*, followed Walther's presentation by expounding on new media's implications for Catholic families. She focused on four characteristics of new media: instant, portable, customizable, and connective. While she discussed both benefits and disadvantages, I will present the benefits here, and the disadvantages near the end of this document.

New media's instantaneous quality, Bean said, allows family members to connect with each other more quickly than ever before. Their portability also enables this. At the same time, new media allow families as a whole to share their experience of Catholic family living with other families. Bean suggested, for instance, that many converts to the Catholic faith who start families find themselves asking what raising a Catholic family "looks like." New media's instantaneous ability to connect people with one another allows Catholic families to share the experience of being "domestic church" with others.

Family members can also take advantage of new media to learn more about each other. Bean related the experience of a mother who "thanks God every day for her son's Facebook

page, because she sees a part of him there that she can't see anywhere else. He shares things through Facebook that he wouldn't just walk into a room and tell his mom." These kinds of insights can lead to valuable, real-life conversations between family members. Family members over long distances can also learn about one another, whether they originally had a close relationship or not.

Finally, Bean provided insight about new media's customizable features. These features allow families to find others who share their Catholic values and create a support system for one another when there may be no other similar families nearby. Bean shared that her own children, who are being raised in a very Protestant area, enjoyed discovering through new media that there are other Catholic children like them.

Fred Fosnacht, founder of new media content distribution outlet MyCatholicVoice, stressed new media's ability to bring about "the realization that all are participants in the Body of Christ" when he spoke at the CNMC. The fact that today's most trustworthy voice on the Internet is "a person like me," Fosnacht said, makes for an incredible responsibility on the part of every Catholic participating in new media content creation and consumption.

On a 2009 podcast recording, SQPN founder Father Roderick Vonhögen illustrated one of the challenges of using new media. His archbishop, Willem Eijk of Utrecht, Netherlands, launched a Twitter campaign asking new media users to pray for desperately-needed vocations to the priesthood, especially in his archdiocese. While the archbishop received positive feedback from many Twitter users, Vonhögen described the negative feedback as a "tsunami." Anti-Catholic messages were directed at the campaign and the archbishop himself via Twitter messages. Vonhögen said the negative image which many people have of the Church "is largely

influenced by what people know [about] the Catholic Church—not through direct contact or personal experience but through the media" (Vonhögen "Daily"). This is due to today's model of news reporting, which thrives on out-of-the-ordinary instances, he said. One of these examples of out-of-the-ordinary issues, child abuse by Catholic clergy, was reflected in the hateful messages received by the archbishop during his campaign.

For this reason, Father Dankasa Zenom believes the Church should take advantage of new communications media, which could provide "a greater degree of independence from the mainstream media" that often act as the Church's intermediary. Zenom says, "With the way Catholic doctrines are misinterpreted by the media, Catholic media practitioners must be more functional in using alternative media in transmitting and defending the faith." Especially in regions where government prejudice against the Church prevents transmission of Catholic content via traditional media, Zenom suggests the Church interact with Catholics through new media.

There exist a few examples today of Church representatives interacting with more Catholics using new media, but the level of interaction often remains low. Cardinal Seán O'Malley of Boston, for instance, maintains an informal blog. While the blog receives several comments per entry from Catholics—particularly youth—O'Malley makes little to no use of the blog's ability to create a conversation between him and those young people.

On the other hand, Father Jessel Gerard Gonzales belongs to several social networks and maintains a blog ("If"). He spends several hours a day ministering to young people through the Internet. Gonzales views his online activity as an extension of his ministry as chaplain of the University of the Philippines in Quezon City, and theology professor at Ateneo de Manila

University. He believes that while "nothing beats" personal interaction with students, "the next best thing is the Internet." He uses new media to answer catechetical and pastoral questions from young people because he believes the Church should "go to where the people are." To create a well-rounded ministerial experience, Gonzales invites the youth who interact with him via new media to a group meeting after Sunday Mass.

Analysis and Synthesis

In the preceding sources, I have gathered several overarching insights from these three different groups, and established a theological foundation for discussion from Church documents. The documents demonstrate that evangelization should be a personal interaction, through Christian example and proclamation of the gospel. Individuals transformed by the message experience conversion and enter into community, where they go out to continue the work of evangelization. The members of the laity are an essential part of the Church's mission to evangelize. Christ's personal encounters with individuals are models of evangelization.

The Church regards communications media as indispensible tools, valuable in the ways they inspire people to hear the gospel. Technology itself is a response to a desire deep within the human person to develop the gifts God has given him or her. These tools allow community bonds to be strengthened, but traditional media lack the ability to encounter individual persons in a more intimate way. New media, however, have become popular because of the human person's deep desire for communion with others. The Church supports new media efforts, provided that these be shared with and used to represent people who suffer from economic, political, and other disadvantages. New media content should foster respect, dialogue and friendship.

The secular marketing literature demonstrates that new media users' online activity generally reflect their offline activity, but create new ways of interaction. These new ways are the result of users' attempts to interact with other users in highly specialized situations. By using new media to interact, users make an impact on the new media environment which transcends their initial interaction. New media show no signs of passing of away, but rather have demonstrated immense staying power.

New media allow brands to engage in person-to-person or more intimate experiences. Due to consumers' overwhelming resistance to "being marketed to," new media marketing has proven itself effective. Businesses have discovered that the most successful new media interactions have been genuine, personal and participative. Users known for these qualities have experienced increased brand loyalty, improved reputations, client growth, opportunities to grow and partner with other entities, and—in the case of nonprofit groups—increased volunteer support.

Protestant sources demonstrate that new media have created supportive communities for church leaders and laity, improved relationships between leaders and laity, provided opportunities to minister to people worldwide, created fast-growing prayer networks, transformed sermons into conversations, allowed Christians to articulate their beliefs, and engaged youth in ways relevant to them—all for little to no cost.

Finally, Catholic sources demonstrate that new media allow more Catholics to "translate" Catholicism to non-Catholics in ways unique to their personal gifts. New media's accessibility and usability benefit content creators and consumers, encouraging conversation between the two parties and illustrating the reality of the Body of Christ and universality of the Church. New

media content is perhaps most effectively used when applied in the real world. Catholic families can utilize new media to connect with family members and other families, and directly share the experience of being "domestic church." New media's relative independence from mainstream media—which may skew or misreport Catholic issues—provides the Church with new channels for communicating directly with the world. New media are especially helpful in reaching younger generations.

Amid the growing popularity of new media are some "prophetic" voices. One of these, Andrew Keen, authored *The Cult of the Amateur: How Blogs, MySpace, YouTube, and the rest of today's user-generated media are destroying our economy, our culture, and our values*. His position remains that while new and social media are not intrinsically bad, their newness calls for an examination of their weaknesses. Those weaknesses, in turn, should be guarded against. I argue that new media usage should be increased by the Church, but I do not discount voices like Keen's. In fact, I uphold their cautionary nature as crucial to the formation of a strategic approach to new media use. At the same time, there have been too many persons within the Church who have largely ignored new media or who have regarded it with fear, scorn and condemnation, allowing the Church to fall behind the rest of the world in this regard.

Therefore, the Church should no longer hesitate to engage with new media, which, as the presented texts demonstrate, provide a plethora of positive benefits unique to new media use.

Need for Case Studies

To apply these benefits to the many and varied roles within the Church, I now provide case studies. These stories contribute something further to the discussions currently taking place

about the Church and new media by illustrating how new media can benefit different aspects of faith formation within the Church.

CASE STUDIES

Design and Hypothesis

In approaching these case studies, I did not see it necessary to create any particular method. Because these stories are meant to be qualitative rather than quantitative, illustrative rather than scientific, I only required that each party be willing to share his or her story about new media as part of this document. Each party was interviewed separately from the others—two subjects in face-to-face interviews, one by questionnaire, another by online textual interview. My hypothesis for these interviews was that each subject would agree that new media provide unique, cost-effective outlets for community-building and faith formation. Subjects' surnames are absent as a courtesy.

Parish Priest

Father Art, OMI, is pastor of a parish and shrine in San Antonio, Texas. His parishioners are largely lower middle-class Hispanics, with "a contingent of some poor." The area is characterized by excessive school drop-outs, so many parishioners have little formal education. Fr. Art estimated that about 10 to 15 percent of parishioners have college degrees, and some work as teachers. The parish consists of about 1000 families, with a very active youth group and programs for the needy, such as a food pantry.

Meeting New Media

Fr. Art's interest in new media began after the parish computer was stolen. While the church was in the process of making an insurance claim, a member of the youth group suggested the church buy a Macintosh computer. At the time, Fr. Art was unaware that Apple made computers; he was only familiar with the iPod. After conducting some research, the parish decided to make the purchase. Eventually, Fr. Art learned about iTunes, and subscribed to Fr. Roderick Vonhögen's "Daily Breakfast" podcast. Fr. Art said that Fr. Vonhögen "inspired him" to learn more about new media. When the Catholic New Media Celebration came to San Antonio in 2009, Fr. Art attended. There, he got the idea to start a Facebook page for the parish.

Using New Media

He did create one, and within a few months they had nearly 200 Facebook users participating in the page. On it, he posts photos of parish events, asks for and receives prayer requests, introduces page visitors to seminarians of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and posts general information about how else to reach the parish.

Fr. Art said that sees new media as something the Church could use to foster vocations of young people to the priesthood and religious life. Recently, he informed some of his parish youth that The Oblates of Mary Immaculate were active on Twitter. Afterwards, some of those youth approached him after Mass and said, "I'm following your congregation on Twitter." When Fr. Art posts something on the parish Facebook page about his order's seminarians and asks for prayers, he said, "People really respond."

Every day, Fr. Art has direct experience with new media's ease of use. He has recorded videos of parish events using his iPhone, and edited them together with simple software applications. For Respect Life Sunday, Fr. Art incorporated some statistics about Church

teaching on abortion, the death penalty, and other life issues with some of his self-recorded video, and decided to show the compilation during the homily at Sunday Masses. At first, he was nervous and unsure as to how parishioners would react. With the assistance of some parish youth, he set up a laptop, projector and screen in the church in a way that could be moved to the side when not in use so as to not distract mass participants.

He said, "People seemed to connect" with the video and its message especially because it included images of people from the parish community. The older community members, he said, liked the video as well. More importantly, Fr. Art said that parishioners "got the message."

I mentioned Protestants' use of Twitter during church services to allow Fr. Art to comment. He responded by explaining that Twitter was probably more effective and appropriate in Protestant services because of the differences in theology and experience. "Our Protestant brothers and sisters are more word-based," he said, in the sense that their services more heavily focus on songs and words, and discussing the Scripture. "I would love feedback on the homily," Fr. Art said. "Maybe an evaluation: 'How was it? Did it make sense? What it clear?' That's where Twitter might be useful—after the Mass. I could say, 'After Mass, Twitter me and let me know what you thought of the homily.'"

Fr. Art noted that while most new media are not a good fit during Catholic liturgy, "new media does have a place in the church. This is something very effective, very in line with the teachings of the church. We're not going to go to Mass online or Confession online anytime. That personal encounter is part of the sacramentality of the Church. That's not going to change."

He hopes to utilize new media for evangelization in the future. "People who come [to Mass] every Sunday—we've got them already," he said. "What about the people who don't

come, who identify with Catholicism but don't practice? I'd like to reach out to them." He dreams of starting a podcast or a blog, and expressed that he wanted to know about what opportunities new media can provide. "What's out there? What could be useful? That's always on my mind," he said. I asked whether he thought dioceses should provide some resources on new media for parishes and diocesan faithful. Fr. Art expressed great interest in this possibility.

Fr. Art suggested that new media not only "fosters a sense of community," but are "redefining what community is. Usually when I think of community, I think of this parish or a neighborhood," but Fr. Art says he's seeing community as everyone that he has a connection with. Community becomes more than people who are geographically close. New media use "stretches the bounds of community."

Challenges

Despite the low education level and noticeable financial needs in the community, Fr. Art said he has noticed that many community members have access to the Internet. He wondered if access to new media was as inaccessible as he had originally guessed, as some parish organizations "communicate exclusively through email."

Fr. Art expressed some concerns about new media. When asked whether technology is isolating, he responded affirmatively. "My suspicion is social skills are going to drop. We're going to raise a generation that lacks social skills. So is it a real critique? Yes. But that shouldn't prevent us from using new media," he said. Fr. Art believes today's parents need to teach their children about moderation in the use of their time. "Technology should connect us to the real world, not create a false world," he added.

He also found himself concerned with the fact that any new media user can claim to have created "Catholic content." He said, "When you type 'Catholic' into Google, you get so many different results. How do you know what's real, what is in line with Church teaching? What establishes authenticity with new media? There needs to be some kind of 'Electronic Imprimatur.'"

Still, he concluded that the obstacles and challenges to new media should not prohibit Catholics from using them.

Parish Staff Member

Stephanie is the music director at a parish in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her fellow parishioners are mostly middle class, some with a higher or lower economic standing. She describes the majority of parishioners as elderly, but says there are some younger families also present.

Meeting New Media

Three years ago, Stephanie became interested in new media after purchasing an iPod. As she was browsing the iTunes store, she discovered a podcast called "The Secrets of Narnia," produced by SQPN. She quickly began listening to other podcasts and developed an interest in new media. Today, she continues to listen to podcasts, even watching podcast producers record live episodes via an application called U.Stream where hosts and audience members interact within a chat room. She uses Facebook, Twitter and Plurk to keep in touch with family and friends, maintains a blog and interacts with other bloggers.

From these and other interactions, Stephanie believes new media allow people to connect with each other much more easily than by traditional media.

Challenges

Still, her parish environment has kept her from using new media to enrich parish life as much as she wishes she could. She explained, "Most of the congregation is older and are not interested in this kind of technology being used." Stephanie notes that younger families in the parish are "not as visible" and are loosely connected to the parish compared to the older generations. "They are a part of the [parish] school or just come to one Mass," she says.

Despite having successfully created and utilized her new media presentation, Stephanie said that creating the presentation was difficult due to other parishioners' lack of participation. "It feels like I'm the only one in the community that I know of that has any interest in [new media] and I just don't have the time or equipment to do it by myself," she said.

Stephanie believes that her parish could benefit from new media, including her fellow staff members. "I think it would also be beneficial for parish staff to be involved in social media, especially a network like Facebook where they could connect with other parishioners, or FlockNote where they could share information with other parishioners via the internet rather than paper," she said. For this to happen though, Stephanie believes parishioners who want to help their parishes incorporate new media need resources. They need assistance in helping their parish understand the benefits, she says, and in learning how to utilize new media with the resources they have on-hand.

Lay Parishioner

Richard is the Grand Knight for his parish council in San Antonio, Texas, and Assistant Diocese Deputy for the Archdiocese of San Antonio Knights of Columbus. Besides his role in the Knights of Columbus, however, he remains extremely involved in other parish and diocesan ministries. He has been a member of his parish for over nine years.

Meeting New Media

He became interested in new media after Pope John Paul II challenged the Church to use media. "I took it as a challenge and started to find ways to learn more and spread the message," he said. He regularly utilizes social networking applications and listens to podcasts.

Using New Media

Richard's council of Knights utilizes new media in many different ways. "Our entire management system went to online, he said. "This includes all forms and record keeping." Additionally, council members communicate with one another using their website, which allows them to send messages to every member at once. Their Google Calendar—a new media application which allows users to collaboratively update a calendar—informs council members about upcoming events. Richard believes new media allow his council and many other ministries to run group business and communicate efficiently while maintaining a budget. "With postage cost rising, it has been policy that we get away from regular mail to electronic mail," he added.

The Knights also make use of new media applications for purposes other than council business, like keeping an updated list of friends, family and parishioners who are in need of

prayer. Through a new media application called Shutterfly, council members can post pictures of the group's activities, comment on each other's photos, and share them with family and friends.

Challenges

Richard believes his council is "on the right track" when it comes to using new media, but he says, "there is so much more out there" to utilize. His challenges are finding ways to continue learning about and integrating new media into his life.

Lay Ministry

The Pilgrim Center of Hope is a lay apostolate focused on evangelization efforts. Their mission is "to guide individuals, families and neighborhoods toward finding a deeper relationship with Christ through evangelization (living and sharing the faith)."

The ministry's founders are Deacon Tom and his wife, Mary Jane. The apostolate was founded in 1993, and offers conferences, an airport ministry, a women's professional lunch, workshops, and pilgrimages. Additionally, the founders host a weekly Catholic television show which is simulcast on local Catholic radio. Their ministry center, open for retreats and group meetings, is located in San Antonio, Texas.

Meeting New Media

With the help of a young employee, the Pilgrim Center of Hope created a blog, YouTube account, Facebook page and Twitter account in 2009.

I interviewed Mary Jane to understand more about the ministry's goals for new media use, beginning with a series of standard, marketing-based questions. (See Appendix B.)

From her answers, I gathered a better understanding of The Pilgrim Center of Hope's "personality." The staff is deeply devoted to serving the Church and remaining faithful to the Magisterium. They are committed to spreading the gospel and empowering others to do so. They also emphasize trust in God and His Providence, and firmly believe that their ministry exists because God provides for their needs.

Using New Media

The Pilgrim Center's main "new media goal" is to publicize their various ministries to as many people as they can. From that publicity, they hope to get more people involved with the Pilgrim Center of Hope, physically through their ministries, as well as spiritually through prayerful support. Further than that, they have developed another general goal for their new media content: to offer "evangelization moments" to their audience—clips of audio, video or text which share Catholic teaching in some form.

Because the ministry had not kept records about their new media application accounts, I gathered whatever statistics I could to gain a general picture of their involvement. Six months after creating their Twitter account, the ministry had 107 followers. From that point until press time—over three months—their number of followers had increased to 571. Six months after creating their Facebook page, the ministry gained 232 "fans," and at press time had 338. Their blog, which has been viewed by Internet users on five continents, averages approximately 12 visits per day. Mary Jane confirmed that the ministry had received emails, phone calls, and other means of contact from individuals all over the world interested in the Pilgrim Center of Hope since they began using new media, but had no statistics to offer in that regard.

Challenges

From our conversation, I gathered that the Pilgrim Center of Hope was in a position which I surmise many other ministries are in today: they simply begin to minister. They have not stopped to answer questions which most modern businesses cannot afford to ignore: Who is your target market? Who are you reaching now? Are there any audiences you want to reach, but are not?

Mary Jane admitted that the ministry rarely asked marketing-based questions like those I raised. This demonstrated the importance of understanding marketing insights when using new media, even for ministries. New media's ease of use allows ministries to create content without forcing them to examine their ministry or strategy. As history has proven, groups can produce a new media campaign by themselves with little money and few staff members (Pipes). Groups can launch campaigns instantly, without the intense strategic planning that precedes traditional media productions. Thus, while new media create new opportunities for lay ministries, they do so without forcing ministries to pause, examine themselves, and formulate a plan for participating in new media.

Ministries also need to know about the possibilities new media have to offer. Deacon Tom and Mary Jane had both attended the Catholic New Media Celebration in 2009, but still lacked the "big picture." As many businesses do today, ministries know the basic functionalities of new media and are aware that new media can be useful. However, ministries' lack of exposure to and experience with new media impede their creativity. They are, again, using new media without knowing how to use them strategically.

CONCLUSIONS

Case Study Insights

These stories collectively express several benefits of new media. Overall, new media allow parishes, ministries, laity and clergy to create new connections with people as well as cultivate existing connections. Fr. Art's youth were able to connect with a religious order; Stephanie connects with fellow Catholics via live video or blogs; Richard connects with his brother Knights; the Pilgrim Center connects with persons from all over the world who believe in their mission.

New media also engage younger generations into parish or ministry life. In Fr. Art's case, the youth were excited to volunteer their knowledge and interests toward their parish's new media use. Stephanie's parish illustrates a lack of participation by younger families in parish life, where new media might encourage their involvement.

As several of the cases illustrate, new media offer church-related organizations and individuals the opportunity to act as good stewards of their time, talent, and treasure by increasing their efficiency. Internal communications and management clearly benefit from new media use, and these solutions are available to anyone for little to no additional expense.

As Fr. Art noted, Catholics' use of media should become an exercise in moderation. While new media content exists online, users should practically apply that content to their lives away from their computer or smart phone.

New media allow individuals a unique opportunity to incorporate their faith into their everyday activities. By listening to podcasts about Church teaching or interacting with their

parish on a social networking application, Catholics can work toward closing the gap that often

exists between "daily life" and "church life."

How Marketing Insights Become Useful for Church

Many Catholics are afraid to create new media content because it is inherently

"spontaneous, passionate, authentic" and not necessarily as planned or deliberate as traditional

media (Fosnacht). While this is a legitimate concern, as secular marketing professionals have

proven, even in the business world—a world thought of as "cut-throat competitive"—only those

brands that have used new media in genuine, personal, participative ways have earned the most

loyalty among consumers.

The Church needs to adapt new media and effective marketing practices for its own use.

It needs to become, once again, a driving force behind innovation in communication. It needs to

excel in translating God's message for today's individuals, families, and societies. New media

can aid the Church in accomplishing its mission through four unique benefits.

Low-Cost

New media offer the Church low-cost channels and resources for communication.

Whereas traditional media have outside costs attached to them—paper, ink, printing press,

expensive cameras and microphones—new media need not. Using any standard personal

computer with an Internet connection and without necessarily purchasing additional equipment,

the Church can create personal connections with individuals from all over the world, spreading

the gospel "to the ends of the earth" (cf. Acts 1:8).

Community-Building

New media, especially social media applications, are community-building. Their

interactive nature allows users to form and evolve connections. As the Church has taught,

evangelization should be a personally transformative experience that invites the individual into

community. Further, if used properly, new media can translate those community-building

experiences into the real world. "Pastoral planning should consider how to lead people from

cyberspace to true community and how, through teaching and catechesis, the Internet might

subsequently be used to sustain and enrich them in their Christian commitment" (Pontifical 9).

Easy-Access

By their nature, new media are much more available than traditional media. They provide

any person with an Internet connection the ability to express beliefs, interact with others,

exchange insights, and impact the world within "encounter environments" which transcend their

own interests. This empowers the Church to catechize and evangelize like never before. No

oceans or armies stand in the way of the gospel within new media environments.

There remain many regions of the world in which the Internet is not readily accessible to

all individuals. Because of the benefits of new media use established in this document, the

Church should become an advocate for the advancement of new media access in these areas of

the world.

Universal

By definition, still, and as they have proven, new media applications are available in any

part of the world. Individuals in China, South Africa, Spain and Chile can all interact at the same

moment. This truly resonates with the catholicity of the Church. Today, there are efforts to unite members of the Church, and increasing solidarity between different communities all over the world (Gary). The most vulnerable can and should be represented on the Internet, if the Church is willing to adopt new media as its methods of representation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cautions/Guidelines for Church's Use of New Media

This study recognizes that some precautions should be taken when using new media in the name of God and Church. Among them, users must practice moderation in the amount of time they spend with new media. Parents should continue to teach their children about safe practices. Users should not allow new media to "control them," but maintain time for patience, balance, and reflection in their lives.

Need for Theologically-Infused Methodology

In his speech (previously cited), Father Federico Lombardi noted that the Vatican is moving "towards an active internet presence, though for the moment it is a basically one-directional presence, and will be until we understand the best way to establish interactive dialogue with our visitors." This statement echoes the thoughts of many who see the need for a strategy or methodology in the Church's use of new media.

In the creation of such a methodology, the Church should incorporate marketing and ethical principals as well as theological insights. For instance, in approaching new media, lay ministries might not only establish quantitative goals, but also formulate a "prayerful approach"

to new media. What might their prayer be for their new media endeavors that can act as a

mission statement and an accountability standard?

> Still, a perfect communications strategy for new media will never exist:
>
>> "We cannot fool ourselves into thinking that a perfect communications strategy
>>
>> could ever make it possible for us to communicate every message the Church has
>>
>> to offer in a way that avoids contradiction and conflict. Truth be told, success in
>>
>> this sense would be a bad sign – at the very least, it would indicate ambiguity or
>>
>> compromise, rather than authentic communication." (Lombardi)

So, indeed, some methodological approach must be incorporated into the new media

work of ecclesial bodies, and some guidelines might empower individual Catholics to engage in

new media on behalf of their faith. At the same time, what really seems to matter for most

Catholics involved in new media evangelization is that any content released by Catholics be

authentic, honest, and courageously truthful.

Need for Diocesan Resources/Centers

The Pontifical Council for Social Communications wrote in 2002, "Through her schools

and formation programs the Church should provide media education" in the areas of media

consumption and usage techniques. Why, then, do so few of these programs exist? If the Church

means to empower its members to communicate the gospel through media, it must provide them

with resources. Dioceses consider gathering together new media professionals, marketing

professionals, and ministers in an effort to consolidate knowledge and resources about new

media, whether through materials or personnel, to aid in catechesis, evangelization, and other

communications efforts.

The Church is known to move slowly, but in the case of new media, where the technology is constantly changing, leaving the Church further and further behind, the world needs a commitment from the Church to take action.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: New Media Terms

Blog: (n.) Short for "web log." A website containing several posts by one or more authors. The posts may consist of text, images, embedded audio or video media, and links to other websites. To "blog" (v.) refers to the act of maintaining a web log. A person who maintains one or more blogs is called a "blogger."

Digital divide: (n.) term expresses the idea that new media are readily available to and express the values of the upper- and middle-classes while remaining unavailable to and not representative of the poor. The gap between the classes is the "divide."

Facebook: (n.) A social networking application.

FlockNote: (n.) A new media application which allows group leaders to establish contact lists, where contacts can choose to receive news updates from the leader in a variety of forms, including through social networking applications.

Microblogging: (v., adj.) The process of creating a blog with posts containing no more than 140 characters. Microblogging applications often allow users to "follow" other users' microblogs. Users can then view all of the posts belonging to the microblogs they "follow" as they are created (in real-time). An example of a microblogging application is Twitter.

New media: (n.) Refers to any form of Internet-based media that allow easy, person-to-person communication. The term includes social media. Examples include video streaming applications, social networks, blogs, and smart phone applications.

Plurk: (n.) A social networking application.

Podcast: (n). A digital audio file often recorded with content similar to radio shows which can be played using any digital audio playing device or a computer. Podcasts are usually recorded in episodes, each of which is a separate file available for download.

Social media: Media on the Internet which enable users to interact with each other. Examples include social networking applications like Facebook or MySpace, video sharing communities like YouTube, and microblogging applications like Twitter.

Social network: Within a new media context, refers to a website or online application that allows users to directly communicate with other users through text, images, audio, video, or links to websites. Thus, each user is part of a "network." Examples of social networks include Facebook and MySpace.

Twitter: A microblogging application.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. Questions Posed to Lay Ministry

Goal-Setting
- What are your goals for the Pilgrim Center of Hope?
- What audiences are you trying to reach?
        Age
        Faith Level
        Interest Level
        Gender
        Ethnicity
        Local? Regional? National?

- What ministries do you want to highlight?
        Or do you want to promote the Pilgrim Center in general?
        Do you want to create ministries using new media (ie. online retreat idea)?

Purpose for Using New Media

- What is it about new media that you want to utilize? (WHY use new media?)
- What are some concerns/reasons for caution you have as you consider using new media?
- With this and your goals in mind, what can we put forth as your "prayerful approach" toward
using new media? (In other words, what is your prayer for these endeavors, a prayer that will act
as a mission statement and accountability for you throughout this process?)

Map
- Goal Setting (Long-term & immediate)
- Prioritize goals
- What features of new media/websites to use?
- Steps to take:
        What resources do you need?
        Who do you need?
        What do you need to learn in order to meet your goals?
        What measure will you use to determine how successful you are?
        Who will take on what responsibilities? How will they be accountable for these, and to
                whom?
- Timeline/Calendar/Deadlines

Works Cited

Alsdurf, Phyllis. "Are Evangelicals' Blogs a Waste of Time?" *Understanding Evangelical Media: The Changing Face of Christian Communication*. Eds. Schultze, Quentin J. and Robert H. Woods, Jr. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2008. Print.

Bean, Danielle. "New Media and Your Family." Presentation. Second Annual Catholic New Media Celebration. University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas. 26 June 2009.

Blackham, Vince. "10 Ways to be a Great Social Media User." *Search Engine Journal*. 1 Sept. 2009. Web. 1 Sept. 2009. <http://www.searchenginejournal.com/10-ways-to-be-a-great-social-media-user/12879/>.

Boone, Louis E., and David L. Kurtz. *Contemporary Marketing*. 13th ed. South-Western College: Mason, OH, 2009.

"Catholics embrace new media." KENS, San Antonio. 27 June 2009. Web. 28 June 2009. <http://www.kens5.com/video/news-index.html?nvid=375427>.

Colina, Jesus. "Vatican to Prepare New Document on Media." *Zenit*. 16 March 2009. Web. 28 Nov. 2009. <http://www.zenit.org/article-25385?l=english>.

Dwyer, David. "Communicating with the Passion of St. Paul: New Media as Catholic Evangelization." Presentation. Second Annual Catholic New Media Celebration. University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas. 26 June 2009.

"Facebook and MySpace have 'dehumanizing' effects, Archbishop Nichols warns." Catholic News Agency. 4 Aug. 2009. Web. 4 Aug. 2009. <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/facebook_and_myspace_have_dehumanizing_effects_archbishop_nichols_warns/>.

Falls, Jason. "The Problem of Promoting You, Your Cause, Your Business With Social Media." *Social Media Today*. 31 July 2009. Web. 2 Aug. 2009. <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/SMC/113061>.

Fosnacht, Fred. "How New Media and social networking are changing the Church." Presentation. Second Annual Catholic New Media Celebration. University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas. 26 June 2009.

Gary, Heather Grennan. "Beyond video games: Students build empathy online." *National Catholic Reporter*. 4 April 2008: 11. Print.

Green, Amy. "The Gospel According to Twitter." *National Catholic Reporter*. 29 May 2009: 12. Print.

Glatz, Carol. "Looking for bigger role on Web, bishops meet with Google, Facebook reps." Catholic News Service. 13 Nov. 2009. Web. 21 Nov. 2009. <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0905063.htm>.

Griswold, Daniel M. "Beyond the Hype: The Internet and the Church." *Perspectives: A Journal of Reformed Thought.* (Jan. 2003): n. pag. Web. 27 Feb. 2010. <http://www.rca.org/Page.aspx?pid=3159>.

Hart, Ted, James Greenfield and Michael Johnston, Ed. *Nonprofit internet strategies : best practices for marketing, communications, and fundraising success*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2005. Print.

"High-speed Internet gap between rich and poor widening, UN official warns." *UN News Centre*. 12 Nov. 2009. Web. 27 Feb. 2010. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32942>.

"If the youth are online, the Church must go there." *National Catholic Reporter*. 14 Nov. 2009: 20.

Katz, James and Ronald E. Rice. *Social consequences of Internet use: access, involvement, and interaction*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2002. Print.

Katz, James and Ronald E. Rice. "Project Syntopia: Social consequences of Internet use." *IT & Society* 1.1 (2002): 166–179. Web. <http://www.stanford.edu/group/siqss/itandsociety/v01i01/v01i01a11.pdf >.

Keen, Andrew. *The Cult of the Amateur: How Blogs, MySpace, YouTube, and the rest of today's user-generated media are destroying our economy, our culture, and our values.* New York: Doubleday, 2008. Print.

Lombardi, Federico. "'Blessed be the Net?'A Roman Perspective on the Problems of New Communications." Lecture. Catholic Communications Network. Allen Hall, London. 18 May 2009. Web. 26 May 2009. <http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk/ccb/content/download/5175/35567/file/fatherlombardispeech18may.pdf>.

Pipes, Kerry. "How Social is Your Media?: Social Networking Catches Fire as Cost-Effective Marketing Tool." *Franchise Update*. 9 Nov. 2009. Web. 28 Feb. 2010. < http://www.franchise-update.com/article/892/>.

Pontifical Council for Social Communications. "The Church and the Internet." 22 Feb. 2002. Web. 13 Sept. 2009. <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_church-internet_en.html>.

Pope Benedict XVI. "New Technologies, New Relationships. Promoting a Culture of Respect, Dialogue and Friendship." 24 Jan. 2009. Web. 16 June 2009. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/communications/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20090124_43rd-world-communications-day_en.html>.

Pope Benedict XVI. *Caritas in Veritate.* 29 June 2009. Web. 23 Sept. 2009. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html>.

Pope John Paul II. "The Rapid Development." 24 Jan. 2005. Web. 13 Sept. 2009. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20050124_il-rapido-sviluppo_en.html >.

Pope Paul VI. *Apostolicam Actuositatem: Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity.* 18 Nov. 1965. Web. 13 Sept. 2009. < http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html>.

Pope Paul VI. *Evangelii Nuntiandi.* 8 Dec. 1975. Web. 13 Sept. 2009. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html >.

Qualman, Erik. "Social Media Revolution." 30 July 2009. Web. 9 Sept. 2009. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIFYPQjYhv8>.

Sandoval, Luis, Jr. "Social Media Opportunities for Your Brand to Grow: Part I." *MySA Blogs*. 10 Aug. 2009. Web. 8 Nov. 2009. <http://voices.mysanantonio.com/Luis_Sandoval/2009/08/ social-media-opportunities-for.html>.

Sandoval, Luis, Jr. "Social Media Opportunities for Your Brand: Part II." *MySA Blogs*. 18 Aug. 2009. 8 Nov. 2009. Web. <http://voices.mysanantonio.com/Luis_Sandoval/2009/08/ social-media-opportunities-for-1.html>.

Sandoval, Luis, Jr. "Social Media Opportunities for Your Brand: Part III." *MySA Blogs*. 28 Aug. 2009. Web. 8 Nov. 2009. <http://voices.mysanantonio.com/Luis_Sandoval/2009/08/ social-media-opportunities-for-2.html>.

Sandoval, Luis, Jr. "Social Media Opportunities for Your Brand: Part IV." *MySA Blogs*. 3 Sept. 2009. Web. 8 Nov. 2009. <http://voices.mysanantonio.com/Luis_Sandoval/2009/09/ social-media-opportunities-for-3.html>.

Schmoyer, Tim. "5 ways video can enhance your ministry this year." *Life in Student Ministry*. 19 Aug. 2009. Web. 12 Sept. 2009. <http://www.studentministry.org/ 5-ways-video-can-improve-your-youth-ministry/>.

Vonhögen, Roderick. "Daily Breakfast 660 – To Tweet or not to Tweet." *Star Quest Production Network*. 22 June 2009. Web. 23 June 2009. <http://sqpn.com/2009/06/22/ daily-breakfast-660-to-tweet-or-not-to-tweet/>.

Walther, Andrew. "Men as Spiritual Leaders." Presentation. Second Annual Catholic New Media Celebration. University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas. 26 June 2009.

Williams, Scott. "6 reasons pastors should Twitter." *Big is the New Small*. 30 Aug. 2009. Web. 12 Sept. 2009. <http://bigisthenewsmall.com/?p=3001>.

Zenom, Dankasa. "New Media and the Catholic Church: What Effect?" *Dankasazen's Blog*. 20 Feb. 2009. Web. 8 May 2009. <http://dankasazen.wordpress.com/2009/02/20/new-media-and-the-catholic-church-what-effect>.