



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

*Consistory Hall
Friday, 1 October 1993*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome to the Vatican *the President and Board of Directors of the Associated Press*. Your presence brings to mind the extremely important service to individuals and to the community which you and your colleagues provide in giving open and timely information about events, big and small.

The diffusion of information plays an ever increasing role in the lives of millions of human beings. To a great extent people's views of the world around them are formed by what they receive from the media. This implies enormous responsibilities for journalism. If it is to remain a noble art and benefit society, the good of the human person – in effect the good of the readership or audience – must be the overriding aim which guides the complex and highpressure activity of gathering and reporting the news (Cf. *Inter Mirifica*, 5). To acknowledge journalism's high purpose is to be willing to measure one's efforts by positive criteria such as, upholding the dignity and rights of every individual, absolute respect for the truth, and an objectivity which ensures that the news is not presented with pre-conceived bias.

As in all significant human endeavours, the discharge of your responsibilities can entail a temptation to use the power of the media for its own sake. I express the hope that you will always be guided by a deep commitment to the liberating power of the truth (Cf. Jn. 8: 31-32), and a concern for the demands of justice and the objective requirements of the common good. I also wish to pay tribute today to those fine journalists who have – sometimes even at great risk to themselves – contributed to improving the human community through the right exercise of their

profession by exposing evil or publicizing the good.

In offering you my cordial good wishes for your meeting in Rome, I add a word of appreciation for the contribution which the members of your association made to the recent celebration of the "World Youth Day" in Denver through their coverage of that event.

With these sentiments I cordially invoke upon you and your families abundant divine blessings.

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