

Why is the Catholic Herald so important?

It is our religious community newspaper. It belongs to the people of our local church. For some it may be the only spiritual and theological nourishment they get.

It keeps readers abreast of moral issues, church doctrine as well as threats against it, and other projects and programs that enrich the lives of the faithful.

It is the best instrument available to keep the line of communication open among all of us. Stories and events from parishes and members of the faithful are featured from every part of the diocese, nation and world.

We read about the lives of our local and present day saints ... the contributions of ordinary men and women in our midst who are real heroes of the faith, and whose lives we would never hear about if not for the Catholic Herald.

Submitting Press Releases

A press release tells the editor in detail about a news event that will occur in the near future, or about one that has just taken place. The press release is more detailed than a simple note advising us about an event. It should give full names of individuals, including titles (Father, Doctor, etc.). Include the names of religious orders (Jesuit, Franciscan, etc.). And always include the surnames of clergy and religious.

It should give full names of organizations and not simply initials or other abbreviations, (St. John's Parish Council, not SJPC) and should include all relevant dates, times and address of the event and the full name, address and telephone number of the person sending it. We may have questions to ask in the course of developing the story, or perhaps in arranging for photographic coverage.

Most press releases should reach us two weeks in advance of the publication date. We publish on Thursdays, so we must have your press release on the Wednesday one week prior to the intended publication date. Sometimes that is not possible. If you plan to send a release about an event that will occur on a Monday or Tuesday, for example, it is a good idea to telephone or fax in advance to let us know what is coming.

Submitting Story Ideas

Ask the following questions when determining a newsworthy story:

1. How many people in my community does this affect? How many people in the greater diocese does this affect?
2. What will the spreading of this message accomplish? What is your goal for communicating this story?
3. Who can the Catholic Herald staff contact for more information?
4. Who should the Catholic Herald staff contact for interviews?
5. Does this story tie into what Catholics are talking about today? How can this happening enrich these discussions?
6. Will this story allow your organization and the Catholic Herald to reach an audience otherwise overlooked? If so, who should we contact to include them in the story?
7. How is this story unique? What makes this festival/bazaar/fundraiser different than the rest? How can the reporters at the Catholic Herald approach this from a new angle?

Submitting photos for publication

When preparing photos for submission to the Catholic Herald keep the following in mind:

Because of staff limitations, we are not able to cover every event, and rely, in many instances, on the photographic efforts of people participating in local activities.

If you have an idea for a news or feature story that might be accompanied by a photograph, let us know about it as far in advance as possible. If we can't be there because of other assignments, we will give you tips about taking the picture or talk over other alternatives. Think creatively. When in doubt, please call.

Aim for action in the picture. There should always be something about that picture that will draw the attention of many readers. For example, instead of a photograph of the committee organizing a fundraiser, send a picture that shows what the event will benefit.

We welcome the pictures you send us for consideration. Sometimes they are excellent, with good subject matter, good composition and good reproduction. If you include a return address envelope, we will try to return them as soon as possible. But it is a good idea to keep a copy of the photo yourself in the event the copy you send us gets lost or damaged.

Better than hard copies, however, are photos sent via e-mail. Please send one photo per email and save the image no smaller than 300 dpi. Reproduction quality below this can not be guaranteed.

If nothing else...remember these words:
"Fill the frame and keep it simple."

Here are some very basic guidelines for taking photos:

8. Get close to the subject
9. Have plenty of light
10. Focus carefully
11. Try to capture your subjects doing something
12. The more simple the background, the better

Look for photos that explore the relationships between people. Look for emotional moments between people. People are interested in people.



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Deadlines for the Catholic Herald

Items that are being submitted for publication in the Catholic Herald must be in the Catholic Herald's office Wednesday, one week before the issue it will be printed in.

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