

Tips on Writing Effective "Letters to the Editor" in response to news items on the Catholic Church

- Use the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as your inspiration.
- Write to convert, not confront. In other words, write charitably. Avoid a "slap-back" approach.
- Identify yourself as a Catholic.
- Submit letters promptly, more or less depending on the medium. For daily newspapers, e-mail or fax your response the same day or early the next to increase its chance of publication.
- Brief is usually best.
- Generally, make chief points first. Letters are typically cut from the bottom.
- Remember to write letters commending *positive* coverage on occasion—not just letters criticizing the negative.

When writing letters in response to offensive content on television or radio: Write not only to the station manager but to the **program sponsor**. For the latter, direct your letter to the president of the company, not to customer relations or PR. (Find an Internet-savvy friend to help you find the company address and president's name.)

Such letters get attention. A single letter is believed to represent the opinions of many in the viewing audience who didn't bother to write.