Culture



by Dennis Coday

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I am pleased to report to you the results of the Catholic Press Association media awards, which were announced June 15 in Green Bay, Wisconsin, site of the association's 2018 convention.

NCR received 36 awards: 17 first places, nine second places, three third places and seven honorable mentions. The awards reflect what we see as our mission: to apply the tools of journalism to the life of the church. The awards are for work done in 2017. I've sketched out some of the highlights for you below. I've provided links to the honored stories. In a few places where one entry honors more than one article, I've linked to a list of those articles.

Best News Writing on a National Event: First Place for Brian Roewe's reporting of the **World Meeting of Popular Movements in Modesto, California** (The judges said, "these well-written and crafted articles tell a powerful story."); Second Place for Heidi Schlumpf's reporting in the wake of the **white supremacists rally in Charlottesville, Virgina**, and an Honorable Mention for NCR staff special reports marking **the first year of President Donald Trump's administration**.

Best News Writing on an International Event: First Place for Joshua J. McElwee's **coverage of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors** (The judges called McElwee's reporting "bold in approach ... told with precision.") and Second Place for coverage by Joshua J. McElwee, Heidi Schlumpf, James Dearie, and Sarah Mac Donald of **"Magnum Principium"** the papal document that restored to national bishops' conferences the power to approve translations of liturgical texts. This is the fourth year in a row NCR has taken first in this category.

First Place for Best Investigative News Writing went to coverage by Tom Roberts, NCR's recently retired editor at large, of **money and the Catholic Church**, which included reports on the charitable giving of the Knights of Columbus and the business school at the Catholic University of America. This is the eighth year in a row NCR has taken first place in this category.

In the Best Analysis News Writing category, also known as the Gerald E. Sherry Award, Heidi Schlumpf took First Place for her story **on women telling their stories of abuse by men in the Catholic church**. The judges praised Schlumpf for allowing "victims of sexual violence to speak for themselves." Dan Morris-Young, one of our Field Hospital correspondents, took third place in this category for reporting **on the reform of the annulment process**.

NCR editorials got three citations: First Place for "**Now is the time for action on guns**," ("Bravo for pointed and vivid language," the judges said.) Second Place for "**Default must be to trust the victim**" ("The editorial appeals to the mind as well as the heart," the judges said.) and an Honorable Mention for "**Time for dialogue on sexual ethics**." The judges said NCR's Opinion & Arts section "is characterized by creativity as well as breadth and depth of coverage" and gave us a First Place for Best Editorial Section.

The "Soul Seeing" column, which Michael Leach edits, won first place in Best Spirituality column for the sixth year in a row for columns written by **Leach**, **Tom**

Smith and **Heidi Russell**.

Our **Young Voices** columnists — Nicole Sotelo, Jocelyn A. Sideco, Julia Walsh, Allison Walter, Mike Jordan Laskey, Brian Harper, Christian Mocek, Jennifer Mertens, Clare Coffey, Mark Piper, Susan Rose Francois, Christin Tomy, Jennifer Wilson, Tracy Kemme, Tracey Horan, Colleen Gibson — took First Place in its category for the second consecutive year. Young Voices includes **Global Sisters Report's Horizons columnists**.

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A couple years ago, the Catholic Press Association established special categories to honor reporting on social justice issues. I am very pleased that NCR took First Places in three of these categories: Pro-Life for Kristen Whitney Daniels' **reporting on death penalty issues**, Dignity and Rights of Workers for Menachem Wecker's **reporting on efforts to unionize adjunct professors** in Catholic colleges and universities and Solidarity for Melanie Lidman's **reporting from Rwanda for Global Sisters Report**.

A new category this year was "Best Podcast" and I am happy to report that our podcast team of Brittany Wilmes, Stephanie Yeagle and Toni-Ann Ortiz took First Place for **NCR In Conversation**. A big thank you goes to George Goss, an intern who got us into podcasting.

I could go on. In total, some 40 NCR writers and contributors received recognition from the Catholic Press Association, which underscores for me that this enterprise is truly a team effort. A full list of the awards and NCR honorees **is available here**. Thanks to all of you for the work you have done.

Let me end with this: First Place for Best Newspaper Website. The judges said, "The National Catholic Reporter has highly impressive content that includes investigative and enterprise reporting that is relevant for a diverse Catholic audience. This site delivers on its mission."

And one last thank you: to our **subscribers**, **members** and **advertisers**. Without your financial support, we could not do what we do. Bravo to you!