

Some Shameless Self Congratulation

NCR Staff | Jun. 1, 2009 NCR Today

The National Catholic Reporter (NCR) was honored with the Catholic Press Association's (CPA) award for "general excellence" May 29. It is the tenth consecutive year NCR has won the CPA's highest award for a national Catholic newspaper.

"Easily the best analysis of the presidential election from a religious and secular point of view of all the publications," said the judges. "Plus there were plenty of features and stories about the good works of Catholics everywhere."

NCR won six first place, three second place, and two third-place awards. Judging for the contest was coordinated by the American Press Institute. The awards were announced during the CPA convention in Anaheim, California.

The editorial "Rome Looks Bad in Bout with Bourgeois" won first place for "Best Editorial" on a national issue with the judges citing an "eminently reasonable but compelling challenge to Rome on its threat to excommunicate an activist priest." Further, the judges said in awarding NCR first place for Best Editorial Page Section, the "breadth, ambition and quality of the National Catholic Reporter's opinion pages rival those of the best major metropolitan newspaper. The combination of thoughtful editorials, columns on hot topics, religious commentary, book and movie reviews, profiles and letters make for a consistently interesting and enjoyable read in an eye-pleasing package."

Michael Humphrey, a frequent NCR contributor, won "Best Feature Writing" for a national newspaper for his June 27 piece on the "Bodies Revealed" exhibit, Columnist Colman McCarthy took first prize for general commentary, and Greg Ruehlmann won first place for "Best Reporting on Teenagers" for his April 4 cover story "Jesus in Your Face: Hammering Kids for Christ." Meanwhile, the judges cited NCR's Pat Marrin "playful drawing style" that "truly captured the concept of the story" for his Oct. 31 illustration accompanying a story on the "Catholic vote."

NCR Senior correspondent John L. Allen Jr. took second place in the "Best Personality Profile" category for his Nov. 21 profile of Catholic historian and journalist Garry Wills. Ruehlmann, meanwhile, won a second for "Best Reporting on Young Adults" for his Aug. 22 piece "Meet the Newest Face of Catholic Music." Freelance contributors Paul Jeffery ("Have we Brought this on Ourselves?") and Jeannette Cooperman ("Should This Man be Defrocked?") won, respectively, second and third-place honors.

NCR staff writer Rich Heffern received a third-place award for his profile of artist Meinrad Craighead, "Weaving Images in the Soul."

Fr. Charles Curran, a former NCR board member, won first place in the CPA history books category for his *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States: A History* (Georgetown University Press). And Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister, an NCR columnist, received second place in the spirituality category for *The Gift of Years: Growing Old Gracefully* (Blue Ridge).

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