

# ‘God is my assistant editor’



“More reach than you realize.”

That was one of the slogans the Catholic Review used a few years back as a way of getting people thinking about how the newspaper connects with the wider community.

During a recent talk for a Theology on Tap group at the Greene Turtle in Fells Point, Christopher Gunty, editor/associate publisher of the Catholic Review, told a story that seemed tailor-made for that old slogan.

Recalling his time working as an editor for a Catholic newspaper in another diocese, Gunty recounted how a divorced woman noticed his newspaper sitting on her mother’s coffee table. While waiting for her mother to prepare for a dinner outing, the woman flipped through the issue and came across an article about annulments. It was the second of a three-part series on divorced Catholics.

The woman asked for a copy of the previous week’s issue – taking time to read more about the church’s outreach to the divorced. She had been away from the church for a long time because she was convinced that a divorced person could not receive the sacraments.

The following week, the daughter started her annulment process. She found the kind of healing she needed, Gunty said.

“Einstein’s been quoted as saying that coincidence is God’s way of staying anonymous,” Gunty said. “If it’s just coincidence that we published that when the woman needed to read it most, then God is my assistant editor or vice versa.”

Those who work in the Catholic press never know if what they write is going to touch someone, Gunty said, but experiences like that of the divorced woman “happen all the time.”

These days, one of the slogans of the Catholic Review is, “Wherever your faith takes you.” In an age of Facebook, Twitter, blogs and an endlessly evolving social media landscape, the newspaper is striving to have a presence wherever Catholics may be.

In his talk, Gunty said it is important for Catholic media outlets to build community. That can be a challenge – especially when the English-language edition of the official Vatican newspaper has 85,000 followers on Twitter while Ashton Kutcher has more than 10 million, he said. Yet, it is absolutely necessary.

“Who’s got the more relevant message?” Gunty wondered. “Whose message do people need to hear?”

With a brand-new website, a revamped print product, accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube and several other new initiatives, the Catholic Review is working to be everywhere it can to inform, inspire and engage.

*Check out Gunty’s full Theology on Tap talk below. He addresses the emergence of social media, Church statements on communications and new initiatives at the Catholic Review. He also fields some interesting questions at the end.*