Communications Week Programme

(4th Edition in Nigeria)

SUNDAY MAY 25 - SUNDAY 1 JUNE 2025

THEME:

Share with gentleness the hope that is in your hearts

(cf. 1 Pet 3:15-16)

25 MAY TO 1 JUNE 2025

COMWEEK

... growing media literacy for discipleship

Daily Manual

Towards the celebration of the World Communications Day

National Directorate of Social Communications, CSN, Abuja

His Holiness

Pope Francis

Most Rev. Lucius Iwejuru Ugorji

(Archbishop of Owerri **&** CBCN President)

Most Rev. Emmanuel Badejo

Bishop of Oyo Diocese/President, CEPACS

Most Rev. David Ajang

Bishop of Lafia Diocese &
Bishop Chairman for Social Communications

Rev. Fr. Michael Ayanleke Banjo

Secretary General, CSN

Rev. Fr. Michael Nsikak Umoh

National Director, Social Communications

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FOREWORD

In an age where digital communication has become an integral part of our daily lives, the 2025 Communications Week (ComWEEK) celebration, an initiative of our visionary bishops, offers a timely opportunity for a structured reflection on this new revolution. Inspired by Pope Francis' message for this year' World Communications Day (WCD), "Share with gentleness the Hope that is in your hearts," 2025 ComWEEK celebration challenges us in a special way to reexamine the manner we engage with others online, and to consider how best we can turn our digital interactions to avenues of hope and inspiration for those around us.

With this in mind, this ComWEEK Daily Manual has been painstakingly produced, to guide us in our reflections every day of the whole week from Sunday 25 May to Sunday 1 June, 2025. Bringing together an assembly of media experts, we have curated for you a series of reflections that break down the main theme into thought-provoking topics and actionable points. Therefore, whether as a parish, family, group or as an individual, you are invited to savour this well-articulated basic media literacy programme that is simultaneously pastorally and spiritually enriching. This programme aims at forming discerning and responsible netizens, which will translate to the citizens of the physical community.

From exploring the gentle witness of sharing our faith and hope online, to creating safe online spaces, using media with gentleness, and promoting digital discipleship, all these are targeted towards making us literate and responsible in our daily interaction in the digital space. More specifically, each day's reflection offers a unique perspective on how we can share the hope that is in our hearts with gentleness.

As we chat our course in the ever-changing digital space, with the numerous opportunities provided by the digital technology, it is easy to get caught up in the noise and distractions of online communication. Yet, as Pope Francis reminds us, the digital continent is a place where we can encounter one another, share

our stories, our faith and hopes, and build relationships that transcend borders and boundaries.

Dear friends, join us in this week-long celebration, be a media disciple by making this programme an educable moment for family and friends whom you share this opportunity with. Let us together, consider the ways in which our digital interactions can be a source of healing and hope in our families, communities and the world we live in.
We look forward to your feedback on the programmes. (csnmedia@csn.ng or 09060006198 by WhatsApp)

May this ComWEEK celebration lead us to becoming more thoughtful and intentional in our digital interactions, and may our online presence be a source of hope and inspiration for all those who encounter us. Amen. I remain yours in the Lord's service,

Rev. Fr. Michael Nsikak Umoh
National Director of Social Communications
Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN)

2025 COMWEEK: Bearing hope in seemingly hopeless moment

By Most Rev. Lucius Iwejuru Ugorji

The President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we celebrate the 4th edition of Communications Week (ComWEEK) in Nigeria, we align with the theme chosen by the Holy Father for the 2025 World Communication Day: "Share with Gentleness the Hope that is in your Heart." In a world plagued by aggression, division, and despair, the Pope reminds us that authentic communication transcends information transmission, focusing on sharing hope, kindness, and compassion.

In Nigeria, where we face numerous challenges, including poverty, inequality, and social injustice, we are called to be bearers of hope. As Catholics, we can respond to the Pope's message by consciously spreading Christ's gentleness in the digital sphere through informed and mature interactions. Let's multiply hope and kindness online.

Forming the skill for a mature digital presence informed our decision as a Conference to initiate the annual Communications Week (ComWEEK) programme. Our goal is to empower Catholics and all Christians with the skills and values necessary for effective and responsible communication. We share the Holy Father's vision that fostering media literacy and promoting gentle communication can build bridges of understanding, promote peace, and inspire hope.

As we celebrate this year's ComWEEK, I encourage priests, heads of ecclesiastical institutions, leaders of sodality groups, families, and individuals to participate fully. Let us explore what it means to share hope with gentleness, learn from each other, support one another, and become agents of hope.

We appreciate our National Director of Social Communications and his team for their hard work in making this programme possible. May ComWEEK be a blessing to us all, renewing our hearts, minds, and spirits to share hope with gentleness and love.
May God bless you all.

2025 COMWEEK: Gentle Witnesses in a Revolving Digital World

By Most Rev. David Ajang

The CBCN Chairman for Social Communications

As we embark on the 2025 Communications Week (ComWEEK) celebration, I am delighted to invite you to join us in reflecting on the importance of sharing our faith and hope with gentleness in the digital age. The theme chosen by the Holy Father, Pope Francis, "Share with gentleness the Hope that is in your hearts," is a timely reminder of the need for kindness, empathy, and respect in our online interactions.

As Pope Francis notes, "The digital continent is a place where we can encounter one another, share our stories and hopes, and build relationships that transcend borders and boundaries." This insight highlights the vast potential of digital media to bring people together and to share the message of hope and love that is at the heart of our faith.

We thank our dynamic national communication office for producing this ComWEEK daily manual with a rich variety of teachings on this theme, guiding us through eight days of reflection on topics such as gentle witness, safe online spaces, media with gentleness, digital discipleship, conflict resolution, media and mercy, and gentle correction. Each day's reflection is designed to help us deepen our understanding of the role of digital media in our lives and to aid us to use these powerful tools to share the love and mercy of Christ with all those around us.

As we journey through this important celebration, I pray that we will be truly stimulated to become more thoughtful and intentional in our digital interactions, and that our online presence will be a source of hope and encouragement for all those who encounter us. May this 4th edition of our ComWEEK celebration be a moment of digital renewal and growth for us, and may we emerge as narrators of hope in a distressed nation, sharing the love and mercy of Christ with all those around us.

DAY ONE
Sunday 25 May, 2025

(Children's Day/Jubilee for Children)

Topic: **Share with Gentleness the Hope that is in Your Hearts**

Scripture Reference:

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. (Colossians 4:6)

A. Reflection (Sermon for today)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

1. Today, we begin the COMMUNICATIONS WEEK (ComWEEK) in Nigeria as directed by all our Catholic bishops. This will last the whole week, culminating in the WORLD COMMUNICATION DAY (WCD) next Sunday. We have a whole lot of reflections lined up to help us understand the important message of Pope Francis for the 2025 World Communications Day: "Share with gentleness the hope that is in your hearts." This will hold in all parishes in Nigeria, as much as possible, throughout the week, preferably during the evening Masses. We strongly urge everyone of us to try participate in the programme because knowledge of the media in our world today is no longer an optional matter, but compulsory. In our world today, no one can be considered to be truly literate, irrespective of academic qualification, if he lacks media literacy. Everyone needs media literacy to navigate today's world either as sodality groups, or as a family at home, on online platforms, or, at worst, individually.

2. In line with the theme for this year, our Christian faith is not just a personal matter, but a message of hope that we are called to share with others. This is because, as Christians, we are ambassadors of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20), called to spread the Good News of salvation to all nations (Matthew 28:19). However, we are not just called to share the message of Christ; we are also

called to share it with gentleness.

3. What does it mean to share with gentleness? It means to share our faith with kindness, compassion, and respect for others. It means to listen actively to others, to understand their perspectives, and to respond in a way that is thoughtful and considerate. In our world today, we are often surrounded by noise, anger, and division. We are constantly bombarded with messages that seek to divide us, to make us angry, and to turn us against each other. But as Christians, we are called to be different. We are called to be messengers of hope, of love, and of gentleness (Romans 15:13).

4. So, how can we share our faith with gentleness in our daily lives? We can start by being more mindful of our words and actions generally in our physical interactions and online. We can seek to listen more and to speak less. James 1:19-20 says: "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." This verse underscores the importance of listening and controlling our speech, especially in situations where we may feel angry or frustrated. In our online interactions, it means to be slow to kick the Proverbs 10:19 which says: "When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent." This self-discipline is the foundation for striving to understand others' perspectives, even when we disagree with them.

5. We can also share our faith with gentleness by being more present or available to others. We can put away our phones and other devices, and simply be with others; especially our kids and the vulnerable. We must teach them to do the same. As a family and individually, we need to learn to have media fast and media diets. We need to have can look at one another in the eye, and show that we care.

6. Finally, we can share our faith with gentleness by praying for others and sharing soul-lifting messages online. We can pray for those who are struggling, for those who are hurting, and for those who are searching for hope. We can do this by sharing prayer points or positive thoughts through

our phones, while shunning unwholesome messages. We must strive to avoid sharing negative messages.

7. As we reflect on the message of Pope Francis throughout this week of Communications Week, let us remember that our Christian faith is a message of hope that we are called to share with others. Let us strive to share this message with gentleness, with kindness, and with respect for others. Our Lord Jesus Christ charges us thus: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

8. May we be inspired by the words of St. Francis of Assisi, who said, "Preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words." May we preach the Gospel with our lives, and may we share the hope that is in our hearts with gentleness in our online presence and participation. Amen.
Wishing you all a Happy and refreshing Communications Week to you all.

B. Practical Actions:

As an Individual:

1. Practice media fast and check your media diets to reduce distractions and increase quality time with family and friends.
2. Share prayer points or positive thoughts through social media, while avoiding unwholesome messages.
3. Reflect on your own words and actions, seeking to be more mindful and gentler in your interactions with others.

As a Family:

1. Designate media-free moments, such as during meals or family game nights.
2. Engage in activities that promote quality time together, such as going for walks or having family discussions.
3. Teach children the importance of gentleness and respect in their online and offline interactions.

4. Pray together as a family, sharing prayer points or positive thoughts.

As a Parish Community:

1. Ensure active participation in the Communication Week programme following the laid down guideline in the manual. www.comweeknigeria.com
2. Encourage parishioners to share their stories and experiences of hope and faith.
3. Create a social media campaign that promotes positive and uplifting messages, using hashtags to track and share the content.

FINAL THOUGHT:

Be the gentle whisper of hope in a world screaming with hate! Share the hope that is in your heart, and change the narrative of our world, starting now!

DAY TWO
Monday 26 May, 2025

Topic: **The Gentle Witness: Sharing Our Faith and Hope Online**

Scripture Reference:

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person (Colossians 4:6).

A. Reflection

1. Introduction

As Christians, we are called to be witnesses of our faith and hope in the world. In today's digital age, this means being present online and sharing our faith and hope with others in a way that is authentic, respectful, and compelling. We need to be online because, "The internet is a gift of God, but it is also a responsibility" (Pope Benedict XVI).

2. The Importance of Gentleness

In his message for the 2025 World Communications Day, Pope Francis emphasises the importance of gentleness in our online interactions. He reminds us that "the digital world is not a separate reality, but an integral part of our daily lives" and that "our online presence can be a reflection of our Christian witness." Therefore, as Christians, we are called to be gentle in our online interactions, just as we are called to be gentle in our face-to-face interactions. This means being respectful, kind, and compassionate in our online communication.

3. Authenticity, Respect, and Compelling Witness

So, how can we share our faith and hope online in a way that is authentic, respectful, and compelling?

a. Be Authentic: Be true to yourself and your faith. Don't pretend to be someone you are not or try to present a false image of yourself or your faith.

b. Be Respectful: Treat others with respect and kindness, even if you disagree with them. Avoid using inflammatory language or personal attacks.
c. Be Compelling: Share your faith and hope in a way that is engaging and compelling. Use stories, images, and videos to illustrate your points and make your message more relatable.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussion

Step 1: Reflect on Your Online Presence

Reflect on your online presence, including your social media profiles, status and online interactions. Ask yourself:

a. How do I currently share my faith and hope online?
b. Are there areas where I can improve or be more intentional?
c. How can I use my online presence to be a more effective witness of my faith?

Step 2: Create a Compelling Online Witness

Consider creating a social media post or video that shares your faith and hope with others. Be authentic, respectful, and compelling in your message. Ask yourself: What story can I share about how my faith has impacted my life?

a. How can I use images, videos, or other multimedia to make my message more engaging?
b. What call to action can I include to encourage others to engage with my message?

Step 3: Engage Respectfully with Others Online

Look for opportunities to engage with others online in a respectful and compassionate manner. Ask yourself:

a. How can I respond to others' posts or comments in a way that is respectful and thoughtful?
b. Are there any online communities or forums where I can engage with others who share similar interests or passions?
c. How can I use my online interactions to build bridges and foster greater understanding and respect?

FINAL THOUGHT:

As Christians in the digital age, our challenge is not to shout louder, but to whisper truth, kindness, and compassion into the online spaces we inhabit.

DAY THREE
Tuesday 27 May, 2025

Topic: Creating a Safe Online Space: Fostering a Culture of Respect, Empathy, and Kindness in Our Digital Interactions?

Scripture Reference:

Colossians 3:12-14: *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."*

A. Reflection

1. Introduction

In his message for the 2025 World Communications Day, Pope Francis reminds us that as Christians, we are called to create a safe and welcoming online space where people can feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. How can we foster a culture of respect, empathy, and kindness in our digital interactions?

2. The Importance of Respect

Respect is a fundamental aspect of any healthy relationship, including our online interactions. When we respect others, we create a safe space for them to share their thoughts and feelings. We can show respect online by:

a. Listening actively and responding thoughtfully
b. Avoiding judgmental or critical language
c. Being conscious of the human person, not just focused on the argument

3. The Power of Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. When we empathize with others online, we create a sense of connection and community. We can show empathy online by:

a. Asking open-ended questions to encourage sharing (Eg. "How has your

faith helped you go through a difficult challenge or experience?"This question is open-ended because it can't be answered with a simple "yes" or "no". It encourages the person to share his/her thoughts, feelings, and experiences. And it shows that you are interested in their story and willing to listen.

b. Sharing personal experiences to indicate how God manifested His power in your life in very miraculous ways.

c. Offering words and prayers of encouragement and support to those we encounter; especially the weak, suffering and the vulnerable.

4. The Transforming Power of Kindness

Kindness has the power to transform our online interactions and create a positive, uplifting environment. When we show kindness online, we reflect the love and compassion of Christ. We can show kindness online by:

a. Offering words of affirmation and appreciation; even with emoticons
b. Sharing inspiring stories and uplifting content
c. Being patient and understanding in our interactions

5. Practical Tips for Creating a Safe Online Space

a. Set clear boundaries and guidelines: Establish clear rules for online engagement to ensure a safe and respectful environment.
b. Use respectful language: Avoid using language that is judgmental, critical, or hurtful.
c. Listen actively: Take the time to read and respond thoughtfully to online comments and messages.
d. Show empathy and kindness: Look for opportunities to show understanding, compassion, and kindness in your online interactions.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussion

Here are three practical questions for group discussion:

a. Think of a recent online interaction where you felt disrespected or unheard. How could you have responded in a way that showed respect and empathy? What can you learn from the experience?

b. How can you intentionally show kindness and compassion in your online interactions this week? Share one specific action step you can take, such as sharing an uplifting post or offering words of encouragement.

c. What are some ways you can create a safe and welcoming online space for others? Discuss specific strategies, such as setting clear boundaries, using respectful language, and listening actively.Consider setting clear boundaries and guidelines for online engagement to ensure a safe and respectful environment.

FINAL THOUGHT:

As you click, share, and post, remember that your online interactions have the power to heal, to hurt, or to bring hope

DAY FOUR
Wednesday 28 May, 2025

Topic: Media with Gentleness: A Path to Being Narrators of Hope in a Distressed Nation

Scripture Reference:

Matthew 5:14-16: *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

A. Reflection:

1. Introduction

As media practitioners, including journalists and content creators, we have a critical role to play in shaping the narrative of our society. How can we use our media skills and platforms to promote hope and gentleness in a distressed nation?

2. The Power of Media in Shaping Society

Media has the power to shape our perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours, for good and for bad. As media practitioners, we have a responsibility to use our media skill and platforms to promote hope, positivity, and gentleness. We can do this by:

a. Sharing stories of hope and resilience. Those positive stories that show virtues of true love, kindness, patience, honesty, respect, dedication to duty, etc,
b. Highlighting positive role models and initiatives
c. Providing accurate and balanced information
d. Avoiding sensationalism and negativity

3. The Duty of Journalists, Media Practitioners and all media users

As journalists, media practitioners and media users, we have a duty to be narrators of hope in our media productions and critical consumers of media texts. This means:

a. Seeking out and sharing stories of hope and positivity, highlighting the good news and progress in our society; rather than concentrating on negative news, scandals and unhealthy news.
b. Providing context and balance in our reporting, and avoiding sensationalism and negativity.
c. Avoiding harm to individuals and communities; being mindful of the language we use, avoiding hurtful or divisive language, and stereotypes.
d. Being transparent and accountable in our reporting; no falsehood and no exaggeration. Engaging with our audiences in a respectful and constructive manner, seeking to understand their perspectives and concerns.

4. Content Creators as Narrators of Hope

Content creators, including social media influencers and bloggers, also have a critical role to play in promoting hope and gentleness. We can do this by:

a. Creating and sharing positive and uplifting content
b. Using our platforms to promote social justice and advocacy especially in favour of the voiceless, marginalised and the vulnerable in the society
c. Engaging with our audiences in a respectful and constructive manner by not producing contents that debase the human person
d. Being mindful of the impact of our content on our audiences (On their psyche, mental health, etc.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussion

a. Reflecting on Our Media Productions: How can we promote hope and gentleness in our own reporting or content creation? And, what specific changes can we make to achieve this goal?

- We can promote hope and gentleness by sharing positive stories and avoiding sensationalism.
- What else?

b. Sharing Stories of Hope: What are some ways we can seek out and share stories of hope and positivity in our media productions, and how can we balance these stories with more challenging or difficult news?

- We can share stories of hope by highlighting good news, progress, and inspiring stories.
- Write one story about an incident in your life that made you believe that God is alive. Send by WhatsApp to 09060006198, or by email to csnmedia@csn.ng

c. Engaging with Audiences: How can we create opportunities to engage with our audiences in a respectful and constructive manner, and what strategies can we use to ensure that we are truly hearing and understanding their perspectives and concerns?

- We can engage with audiences by responding to comments, asking questions, and listening to feedback.

FINAL THOUGHT:

- ***The power to shape the narrative of our society lies in your hands. Choose to wield it wisely, promoting hope, positivity, and gentleness in all you do***

DAY FIVE
Thursday 29 May, 2025

Topic: Digital Discipleship: Using Social Media to Share the Gospel Message and Invite Others to Follow Christ

Scripture Reference:

(Matthew 28:18-20) *"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.*

A. Reflection

1. Introduction

As Christians, we are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ and to share the Gospel message with others (Mark 16:15). Pope Francis stressed that missionary discipleship is not just a task or a duty, but a vocation that flows from one's baptismal identity (Evangelii Gaudium, #121). He also highlighted the importance of witness in missionary discipleship, stating that "the Gospel is not merely a communication of facts, but a testimony of love" (EG 127). How can we use social media to fulfill this calling and invite others to follow Christ?

2. The Power of Digital Discipleship

Digital discipleship is a powerful way to share the Gospel message and invite others to follow Christ because the Social media platforms provide a unique opportunity to reach a wider audience and share our faith with others. When we use social media for digital discipleship, we can:

a. Share the Gospel message with others
b. Invite others to follow Christ
c. Provide encouragement and support to fellow believers
d. Engage in meaningful conversations and discussions
e. Sanctify the cyber space

3. Principles for Digital Discipleship

a. Be Authentic: Share your real-life experiences and struggles, and how your faith has helped you to overcome them. Authenticity is key to building trust and credibility with your audience.

b. Use Social Media Platforms Wisely: Consider the strengths and weaknesses of different social media platforms, and use them to share the Gospel message in a way that is engaging and inspiring.

c. Focus on the Person of Jesus Christ: Share the Gospel message by focusing on the person of Jesus Christ and the power of His love and redemption.

d. Engage in Meaningful Conversations: Engage in meaningful conversations and discussions with others, listening to their concerns and questions, and sharing your faith in a way that is gentle and respectful.

e. Pray for Guidance and Wisdom: Before sharing the Gospel message on social media, take a moment to pray for guidance and wisdom. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words to say and the tone to use.

4. Practical Tips for Digital Discipleship

a. Start with a Clear Message: Start with a clear message that shares the Gospel and invites others to follow Christ.

b. Use Visuals and Multimedia: Use visuals and multimedia to bring your message to life and make it more engaging.

c. Engage with Others: Engage with others by responding to comments and messages, and by using hashtags to join larger conversations.

d. Be Consistent and Patient: Be consistent and patient in your digital discipleship efforts, recognizing that sharing the Gospel message and inviting others to follow Christ is a long-term process.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussion

C. Reflect on your own digital discipleship efforts. How can you use social media to share the Gospel message and invite others to follow Christ?

D. Consider creating a content calendar to help you plan and organize your digital discipleship efforts. (Content calendar means a form of a time table to guide what you wish to produce, and when you are to produce it).

E. What opportunities can you explore to positively engage with others on social media?

FINAL THOUGHT:

To be a Christian is to be a missionary; and to be a successful missionary today is to be digitally literate. Digital discipleship is not an option, it's an imperative. Embrace social media today to fulfill the Great Commission and bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth!

DAY SIX
Friday 30 May, 2025

Topic: Gentleness in Conflict Resolution: A Media Perspective

Scripture Reference:

"Be kind and compassionate to one another." (Ephesians 4:32)

A. Reflection

1. Introduction

In the digital age, media has become a powerful tool for shaping narratives, influencing opinions, and fostering connections. Yet, it is also a platform where conflicts can escalate and divisions deepen. Pope Francis, in his message for the 2025 World Communications Day (WCD) celebration, calls us to "Share Hope through Digital Media," emphasizing the need for dialogue, understanding, and gentleness in communication. His words serve as a timely reminder that media can be a force for peace and reconciliation if approached with caution and an understanding.

2. The Role of Gentleness in Media Communication

Gentleness, often perceived as a virtue of the meek, is a profound strength in conflict resolution. It involves approaching disagreements with a calm demeanor, listening actively, and responding thoughtfully rather than reactively. In the context of media, gentleness calls for the promotion of respectful dialogue and the rejection of inflammatory words. It requires content creators, journalists, and everyday social media users to prioritize truth, empathy, and the dignity of all individuals involved in a conflict.

3. Increasing Conflicts in Digital Spaces

The digital media landscape is often characterized by its immediacy and reach. While these attributes have many benefits, they also contribute to the rapid increase of conflicts. Misinformation, sensationalism, and the anonymity of

online interactions can fuel misunderstandings and hostility. As Pope Francis highlights, sharing hope requires countering these tendencies by fostering spaces where differences are acknowledged and addressed constructively.

4. Media as a Platform for Reconciliation

Gentleness in media is not about avoiding difficult topics but about addressing them in ways that build bridges rather than walls. This involves:

a. Promoting Constructive Dialogue: Media outlets and platforms should create opportunities for diverse voices to engage in meaningful discussions. Moderated forums, balanced reporting, and thoughtful editorial policies can set the tone for respectful exchanges.

b. Fact-Checking and Accountability: The spread of misinformation fuels conflicts. Media organizations and all users of media have a responsibility to ensure accuracy in their reporting and to correct errors promptly.

c. Human-angle Stories: Stories that emphasize shared humanity and common goals can help de-reduce tensions. By focusing on the human impact of conflicts, media can inspire compassion and understanding.

d. Training in Ethical Communication: Journalists and content creators should receive training in conflict-sensitive reporting and the ethical use of digital tools. This equips them to handle sensitive issues with care and responsibility.

5. Living Out the Message of Hope

As individuals, we are also called to practice gentleness in our digital interactions. This means pausing before responding to provocative posts, seeking to understand opposing viewpoints, and using our platforms to share messages of hope and reconciliation. Pope Francis reminds us that "communication is a gift" and that our words, whether spoken or written, have the power to heal or harm. By choosing gentleness, we can contribute to a culture of peace, even in the most polarized environments.

6. Conclusion

Gentleness is not a sign of weakness but a mark of discipline, courage and conviction. In a world where conflicts are often amplified by the very tools meant to connect us, the call to "Share Hope through Digital Media" challenges us to be

instruments of peace. By embracing gentleness in our communication, we can transform media into a space for healing, understanding, and the restoration of hope. In doing so, we not only align with the vision of Pope Francis but also affirm the dignity and worth of every individual, even amidst disagreement.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussion

Here are three practical questions for group discussions:

a. How can you apply the virtue of gentleness in your online interactions, especially when faced with disagreements or conflicts? Share one specific strategy or habit you can adopt.

b. Think of a recent online conversation or post that sparked tension or conflict. How could you have approached the situation differently, using gentleness and constructive dialogue? What can you learn from the experience?

c. What are some ways you can use your social media platforms to "share hope" and promote reconciliation, as encouraged by Pope Francis? Share one idea or initiative you can undertake to contribute to a more positive and compassionate online environment.

FINAL THOUGHT:

Since the digital media is a double-edged sword, better to wield it with gentleness, compassion, and hope, so as to create a digital culture that uplifts, inspires, and unites.

DAY SEVEN
Saturday 31 May, 2025

Topic: Media and Mercy: Using Digital Media to Promote Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Healing Online & Offline

Scriptural Reference:

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.(Matthew 6:14-15)

A. Reflection

1. Introduction

As Christians, we are called to be instruments of God's mercy and to promote forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing in the society whether we are offline or in our online interactions. How can we use digital media to promote mercy and to create a more compassionate and forgiving online community?

2. The Importance of Mercy

Mercy is a fundamental aspect of our Christian faith. When we show mercy to others, we reflect the very character of God, who is merciful and compassionate (Luke 6:36). In our online interactions, we can show mercy by:

a. Forgiving others for their mistakes and hurtful comments
b. Reconciling with others and seeking to understand their perspectives
c. Being peacemakers and promoting healing and restoration in our online communities

3. Using Digital Media to Promote Mercy

Digital media provides a unique opportunity to promote mercy and to create a more compassionate and forgiving online community. Here are some ways we can use digital media to promote mercy:

a. Share Stories of Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Share personal stories or testimonies that illustrate the power of forgiveness and reconciliation.
b. Use Social Media to Promote Healing and Restoration: Use social media to

promote healing and restoration in our online communities, and to provide resources and support for those who are hurting.

c. Engage in Online Conversations with Empathy and Compassion: Engage in online conversations with empathy and compassion, seeking to understand others' perspectives and to promote forgiveness and reconciliation.
d. Create Online Communities that Foster Mercy and Compassion: Create online communities that foster mercy and compassion, and that provide a safe space for people to share their stories and struggles.

4. Conclusion

Promoting mercy and forgiveness in our online interactions is a vital aspect of our Christian witness. By using digital media to promote forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing, we can create a more compassionate and forgiving online community. May we be inspired to be instruments of God's mercy in our online interactions, and to reflect the very character of God, who is merciful and compassionate.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussion

Here are three practical questions for group discussions:

a. How can you use your social media platforms to promote forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing this week? Share one specific idea or action step you can take.
b. Think of a recent online interaction where you felt hurt or offended. How could you have responded in a more merciful and forgiving way? What can you do differently in similar situations moving forward?
c. What are some ways you can create a safe and compassionate online space for others to share their stories and struggles? How can you use your online presence to foster mercy and compassion?

FINAL THOUGHT

Be a missionary of mercy; turn your online interactions into a sanctuary of mercy, where forgiveness flows, and healing happens, reflecting the very heart of our merciful God.

DAY EIGHT
Sunday 1 June, 2025

Topic: Gentle Correction: Addressing Online Misinformation and Error in a Way That Is Constructive and Respectful

Scripture Reference:

Ephesians 4:29: *"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."*

A. Reflection

1. Introduction

In his message for the 2025 World Communications Day, Pope Francis reminds us that sharing our faith and hope with others requires a gentle approach. Thus, as Christians, we are called to speak the truth in love, even when faced with online misinformation and error. How can we address these issues in a way that is constructive and respectful?

2. The Importance of Gentle Correction

Gentle correction is essential when addressing online misinformation and error. When we correct others in a gentle and respectful manner, we create a safe space for them to learn and grow. We can show gentle correction online by:

a. Avoiding aggressive or confrontational language
b. Focusing on the issue, not the person
c. Providing accurate and reliable information to support our correction

3. Principles for Gentle Correction

a. Pause Before You Post: Before addressing online misinformation or error, take a moment to pray for guidance and wisdom; weigh what you want to say. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words to say and the tone to use.
b. Consider using the "I" Statements: Instead of making accusatory statements, use "I" statements to express your concerns and corrections.

c. Focus on the Issue, Not the Person: Avoid personal attacks or insults, and focus on the specific issue or error.
d. Provide Accurate and Reliable Information: Support your correction with accurate and reliable information, and provide sources when possible.
e. Listen and Learn: Be open to feedback and correction from others, and be willing to learn from their perspectives.

4. Practical Tips for Gentle Correction

a. Take a Deep Breath: Before responding to online misinformation or error, pause and count to ten.
b. Use Respectful Language: Avoid using language that is aggressive, confrontational, or hurtful.
c. Provide Constructive Feedback: Focus on providing constructive feedback that is specific, timely, and actionable.
d. Avoid Getting Defensive: When confronted with opposition or criticism, avoid getting defensive and instead focus on listening and learning.

5. Conclusion

Gentle correction is a vital aspect of online engagement, especially when addressing misinformation and error. By following these principles and practical tips, we can address online issues in a way that is constructive and respectful. May we be inspired to share the hope that is within us in a way that reflects the gentle approach of Pope Francis' message for the 2025 World Communications Day.

B. Practical Questions for Group Discussions

Here are 3 practical questions for group discussion:

a. Can you recall a situation where you encountered online misinformation or error? How did you respond? What would you do differently next time using the principles of gentle correction?
b. How can we balance being truthful and respectful when addressing online misinformation or error? What are some specific strategies we can use to ensure our tone is constructive and not confrontational?
c. In what ways can we create a safe space for others to learn and grow from gentle correction online? How can we use "I" statements, respectful

language, and constructive feedback to promote a culture of respectful dialogue?

FINAL THOUGHT:

In your online life, be the salt that seasons, the light that shines, and the gentle corrector who brings hope and clarity to a world in dire need

THEMES FOR WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY
FROM 1967 – 2024

The Holy Father's message for World Communications Day is traditionally published in conjunction with the Memorial of St. Francis de Sales, patron of writers (January 24).

World Communications Day, the *only* worldwide celebration called for by the Second Vatican Council (INTER MIRIFICA, 1963), is celebrated in most countries on the Sunday before Pentecost.

Click on any link below to review a document.

YEAR	THEME OF MESSAGE	POPE
1967	Church and Social Communication: First World Communication Day	Paul VI, 7 May 1967
1968	Social Communications and the Development of Nations	Paul VI, 26 March 1968
1969	Social Communications and the Family	Paul VI, 7 April 1969
1970	Social Communications and Youth	Paul VI, 6 April 1970
1971	The role of Communications Media in promoting unity among men	Paul VI, 25 March 1971
1972	The Media of Social Communications at the Service of Truth	Paul VI, 21 April 1972
1973	The Mass Media and the Affirmation and Promotion of Spiritual Values	Paul VI, 1 May 1973
1974	Social Communications and Evangelization in Today's World	Paul VI, 16 May 1974
1975	The Mass Media and Reconciliation	Paul VI, 19 April 1975
1976	Social Communications and the Fundamental Rights and Duties of Man	Paul VI, 11 April 1976
1977	Advertising in the Mass Media: Benefits, Dangers, Responsibilities	Paul VI, 12 May 1977
1978	The receiver in Social Communications: his expectations, his rights and...	Paul VI, 28 April 1978
1979	Social Communications: Protecting the Child and promoting his best int...	John Paul II, 23 May 1979
1980	Social Communications and Family	John Paul II, 1 May 1980
1981	Social Communications and Responsible Human Freedom	John Paul II, 10 May 1981
1982	Social Communications and the Problems of the Elderly	John Paul II, 10 May 1982
1983	Social Communications and the Promotion of Peace	John Paul II, 15 May 1983
1984	Social Communication: Instruments of Encounter Between Faith and Culture	John Paul II, 3 June 1984

1985	Social Communications for a Christian Promotion of Youth	John Paul II, 19 May 1985
1986	Social Communications and the Christian Formation of Public Opinion	John Paul II, 11 May 1986
1987	Social Communications at the Service of Justice and Peace	John Paul II, 31 May 1987
1988	Social Communications and the Promotion of Solidarity and Fraternity...	John Paul II, 15 May 1988
1989	Religion in the Mass Media	John Paul II, 7 May 1989
1990	The Christian message in a computer culture	John Paul II, 27 May 1990
1991	The Communications media and the unity and progress of the human family	John Paul II, 12 May 1991
1992	The proclamation of Christ's Message in the Communications Media	John Paul II, 31 May 1992
1993	Videocassettes and audiocassettes in the formation of culture and	John Paul II, 23 May 1993
1994	Television and family: guidelines for good viewing	John Paul II, 15 May 1994
1995	Cinema: communicator of culture and of values	John Paul II, 28 May 1995
1996	The Media: Modern Forum for Promoting the Role of Women in Society	John Paul II, 19 May 1996
1997	Communicating Jesus: The Way, the Truth and the Life	John Paul II, 11 May 1997
1998	Sustained by the Spirit, communicate hope	John Paul II, 24 May 1998
1999	Mass media: a friendly companion for those in search of the Father	John Paul II, 16 May 1999
2000	Proclaiming Christ in the Media at the Dawn of the New Millennium	John Paul II, 4 June 2000
2001	Preach from the housetops: The Gospel in the Age of Global Communication	John Paul II, 27 May 2001
2002	Internet: A New Forum for Proclaiming the Gospel	John Paul II, 12 May 2002
2003	The Communications Media at the Service of	John Paul II, 1 June 2003

	Authentic Peace in the,,,	
2004	The Media and the family: A Risk and a Richness	John Paul II, 23 May 2004
2005	The Communications Media: At the Service of Understanding...	John Paul II, 8 May 2005
2006	The Media: A Network for Communication, Communion and Cooperation	**Benedict XVI**, 28 May 2006
2007	Children and the Media: A Challenge for Education	**Benedict XVI**, 20 May 2007
2008	The Media: At the Crossroads between Self-Promotion and Service...	**Benedict XVI**, 4 May 2008
2009	New Technologies, New Relationships, Promoting a Culture of...	**Benedict XVI**, 24 May 2009
2010	The Priest and Pastoral Ministry in a Digital World: New Media at...	**Benedict XVI**, 16 May 2010
2011	Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity of Life in the Digital Age	**Benedict XVI**, 5 June 2011
2012	Silence and Word: Path of Evangelization	**Benedict XVI**, 20 May 2012
2013	Social Networks: Portals of Truth & Faith; New Spaces for Evangelization	**Benedict XVI**, 12 May 2013
2014	Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter	**Benedict XVI**, 1 June 2014
2015	Communicating the Family: A Privileged Place of Encounter …	**Francis,** 17 May 2015
2016	Communication and mercy: a fruitful encounter	**Francis**, 8 May 2016
2017	Fear not, for I am with you: Communicating Hope and Trust …	**Francis**, 28 May 2017
2018	The truth will set you free: Fake news and journalism for peace	**Francis**, 13 May 2018
2019	We are members one of another: From social network communities to …	**Francis**, 2 June 2019
2020	That you may tell your children and	**Francis**, 24 May 2020

	grandchildren: Life becomes history	
2021	Come and See: Communicating by Encountering People Where and as …	**Francis**, 16 May 2021
2022	Listening with the ear of the heart	**Francis**, 29 May, 2022
2023	Speaking with the heart 'The truth in love' (Eph. 4:15)	**Francis**, 24 January, 2023
2024	Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart: Towards a Fully Human Communication	**Francis**, 24 January, 2024
2025	Share with gentleness the hope that is in your hearts	**Francis**, 24 January, 2025

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