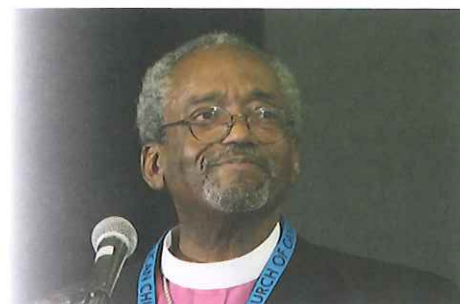


SUNDAY PLUS

Communicate love

A Year of the Word

Transmit “the power of love”



by Margaret Doherty

You may remember Bishop Michael Curry, the preacher at the Royal Wedding who made Prince Harry exclaim, “Wow!” I recently heard him speak, via video message, to a group of international journalists. He had won the Sandford St Martin Trustees Award “in recognition of the global impact his sermon had at the marriage of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle” in May 2018.

In his video message, rather than turn the attention towards himself, he thanked the international media for all that they had done to transmit “the power of love” to over 1.9 billion people across the globe.

He also told some funny stories of how, en route back home to the US via Heathrow airport, he was stopped at check-in by the airport staff requesting a selfie and then when he stepped inside the plane, the cabin crew and pilot wanted a selfie too. He was invisible when

he landed in London but all this changed because of the power of the media and because of the electricity of his sermon.

I mention Bishop Curry because today is World Communications Day – a day when we are asked to pray for those who work in the media and the Bishop Michael story highlights the power of the media’s work.

And let’s not forget that we all have a role in being sharers of the message of the transformative power of God’s love. In today’s Gospel, Jesus is still with his

disciples and the long prayer, sometimes called the High Priestly prayer of Jesus, can be seen in three parts: Jesus prays for his mission; he prays for his disciples and he prays for all those who will become his disciples. In becoming his disciples, our every word and our every action, as Bishop Michael said in his sermon, “can make of this old world, a new world.”

Margaret Doherty is the Deputy Director of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales Communications Office and Director of the Art of Dying Well project based at St Mary’s University.

Image/ Michael Curry.
Art Babych/ Shutterstock.com

Born to live

by Eileen Cole

Jesus has brought us to know God as our loving Father, not a cruel tyrant. We are God’s beloved children.

Good parents want the best for their children. It’s not enough just to bring them into the world: they depend on us for their upbringing. Yet we are not alone in this important task. God, who has given us the mission of guiding our youngsters towards heaven, also gives us the help we need to fulfil it.

A parent’s vocation brings with it the need to pray for their children. We want so much to see them “fully alive” in the world into which we gave them birth. We need to talk to God about them, their virtues and their defects, asking how we can help and support them, asking for God’s grace for them and patience for ourselves.

Abandoning the results of our efforts into God’s hands gives us, as parents, a peace that spreads to others.

Eileen Cole is a Media Officer with the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

Compassion is everything!

by Phil Ferguson

Good communications don’t depend on the media. We communicate in word and deed.

In 2018, a little boy, Emanuele, broke down sobbing in a Q&A session with Pope Francis. He’d wanted to ask if his recently-dead father, an atheist, might be in heaven but couldn’t speak for crying. Francis called the child over and held him whilst he wept on the Pope’s shoulder.

On another occasion, during a General Audience, Francis laughed when a young autistic boy and his younger sister climbed onto the stage and started playing, completely distracting the large audience from whatever it was that the Pope had been saying. He allowed the children to continue their game.

Francis revealed more about God on those two occasions than he could have said in thousands of carefully prepared words.

It’s so easy to come out with pious platitudes whilst our hearts are seething with negativity. All God asks of us is to be human in a human situation. Compassion is everything!

Phil Ferguson is a former teacher.

“This is the network we want, a network created not to entrap, but to liberate, to protect a communion of people who are free. The Church herself is a network woven together by Eucharistic communion, where unity is based not on ‘likes’, but on the truth, on the ‘Amen’, by which each one clings to the Body of Christ, and welcomes others.”

Pope Francis

Lord, we’re communicating all the time. We take it for granted. Life can be so busy and noisy that I sometimes long for a moment of peace and quiet. Help me to make my communications valuable, taking you to the people around me. Yet, Lord, let me also listen to the “still small voice” in my heart. Let me make space for you. 🙏 Amen.

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| Today: Acts 1:12-14 1 Peter 4:13-16 John 17:1-11 | Monday: Acts 19:1-8 John 16:29-33 | Tuesday: Acts 20:17-27 John 17:1-11 | Wednesday: Acts 20:28-38 John 17:11-19 | Wednesday (E): St Augustine of Canterbury (Feast): 1 Thessalonians 2:2-8; Luke 10:1-9 | Thursday: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11 John 17:20-26 | Friday: Acts 25:13-21 John 21:15-19 | Saturday: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31 John 21:20-25 | Next Sunday: Acts 2:1-11 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13 John 20:19-23 |
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