



## 50TH WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

TO BE READ/PUBLISHED/DISTRIBUTED AT ALL MASSES ON  
7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER

7/8 MAY 2016

My Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

This year's Communications Sunday message is addressed to us during the Holy Year of Mercy and in his theme, Pope Francis invites us to reflect on the relationship between communication and mercy.

At first sight, that may seem an odd request, we may think of communications as purely functional; the means by which we impart or convey information to one another. It may be difficult to see how the transmission of ideas or information can be merciful or otherwise.

If we think for a moment, however, it is clear that mercy is very much a part of all that we do and importantly, of what we say. As the Pope's puts it: "What we say and how we say it, our every word and gesture, ought to express God's compassion, tenderness and forgiveness for all. Love, by its nature, is communication; it leads to openness and sharing. If our hearts and actions are inspired by charity, by divine love, then our communication will be touched by God's own power."

The need to speak with care and compassion is especially important in the digital world of social media. As Christians we must always build bridges and open doors to dialogue and understanding. The immediacy and instantaneousness of social media can sometimes tempt us towards angry exchanges and aggressive language. Hurling insults and abuse will simply entrench misunderstanding and close hearts and minds.

As Pope Francis reminds us, when communicating digitally, we may not see the person we are engaging with, but the dignity and respect we bring to our actual encounters should always be present in our digital ones.

On this Communications Sunday I ask you to consider if you always communicate with mercy and if not, to pay attention to the needs of those we communicate with, always remembering their innate human dignity.

I also ask you to give your support to those employed by the Church to communicate her message to a wider audience. They need your prayers and rely on your generosity to fulfil the responsibilities placed upon them.