

A REPORT: COMMUNICATIONS WEEK (ComWEEK) CELEBRATION IN DIOCESES AND CONGREGATIONS

The following reports were received from some dioceses and congregations:

a. ABEOKUTA DIOCESE

COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 56TH WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY BY THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ABEOKUTA ON SUNDAY MAY 29, 2022

PREAMBLE

The Catholic Diocese of Abeokuta joined the rest of the world on Sunday, May 29, 2022 to celebrate the grand finale of the 56th World Communications Day in a unique manner.

Every year, the Church celebrates the achievements of the communications media and focuses on how she can best use them to promote gospel values. The World Communications Day was established by Pope Paul VI in 1967 as an annual celebration that encourages the Church to reflect on the opportunities and challenges of the modern means of communication on global communion and human development.

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, invited all to reflect on the theme for this year: ‘Listening with the ear of the heart’.

The Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Abeokuta, Most Rev. Dr. Peter Olukayode Odetoyinbo, approved the activities lined up for the celebration of the day by the Directorate of Social Communications of the Diocese.

During the Holy Mass celebrated by Most Rev. Dr. Odetoyinbo at the Cathedral of Ss. Peter and Paul, Adatan, Abeokuta, the Bishop reflected on the theme of the day and called for responsible use of the traditional and the social media to promote mutual understanding. He also inaugurated the Catholic Media Practitioners Association of Nigeria (CAMPAN), Abeokuta Diocese; the Catholic Artists and Entertainers Association of Nigeria (CAEAN), Abeokuta Diocese; and the Diocesan Communications Commission.

Immediately after the Holy Mass, there was a symposium at the Cathedral Hall on the sub-theme: ‘*Journalism of empathy in a troubled nation*’. The event had in attendance Bishop Odetoyinbo, Priests, Journalists, advertising, public relations, marketing, media practitioners, members of the Diocesan Editorial Board, lay faithful and invited guests.

The symposium was chaired by the Honourable Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Ogun State, Honourable Waheed Odusile; while the guest lecturer was the renowned Professor of Political Economy and Management, Prof. Pat Utomi, who is the Founder of the Centre for Value in Leadership. The panel of discussants had the Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Rock City FM, Abeokuta, Dr. Niran Malaolu; Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief, Vanguard Media and Provost of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism, Ogba, Lagos, Mr. Gbenga Adefaye; and Chairman, Lagos Council, Nigeria Union of Journalists, Mr. Adeleye Ajayi, who was represented by Mr. Olaide Awosanya.

In his welcome address, the Director, Social Communications Directorate, Catholic Diocese of Abeokuta, Rev. Fr. Gregory Fadele, explained that the activities of the Directorate were to promote evangelization through the media, adding that this year’s celebration of the World Communications Day was one with a difference as the Church in Nigeria through the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) approved the first Communications Week (ComWEEK), which afforded the opportunity to listen to one another in line with the Synod of Synodality, calling attention to the need

for communion, participation and mission, adding that the Church must rediscover the path of listening through emphatic dialogue for effective pastoral ministry.

REMARKS

In his opening remarks, Bishop Odetoyinbo explained the rationale behind the celebration and said that the Church could not but celebrate journalists and media practitioners as they play important roles in spreading the gospel of Christ. He said their work is a vocation and they are important to God, the Church, society and humanity.

Honourable Waheed Odusile

In his remarks, the Commissioner thanked the Church for inviting him to chair the symposium despite being a Muslim and recalled how the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria in Lagos was a repository of information for him as a practising journalist and advised that the secretariat (now in Abuja) should be more accessible to media practitioners. He advised journalists to seek knowledge and disseminate only the truth as there are consequences for wrong dissemination of information. He also advised journalists to put themselves in the position of those consuming the information they disseminate, and not to use their pens to write Nigeria out of existence.

He said the society was looking up to journalists and they must therefore fulfil their mandate in a responsible way. He faulted the recourse to citizen journalism, adding that since society could not rely on citizen doctors and citizen engineers, it could not rely on untrained and unethical citizens as journalists. He concluded that media practitioners should engage in journalism with responsibility, stay on ethical lines and put the health of Nigeria first.

Prof. Pat Utomi

In his presentation titled, ‘From Babel to Pentecost: Listening with the ear of love’, Prof. Utomi said the world needed peace, but it was sadly lacking. Citing many examples, especially the Russia-Ukrainian war, as an example of how peace could easily elude the world, he noted that the crisis had affected the global economy negatively.

According to him, peace is eluding Nigeria today as the country is the biggest killing field in the world even though it is not officially at war, but is in a situation he termed as “rolling civil war.”

He said the challenges in Nigeria are challenges of the failure of leadership as leaders are completely deaf, adding that the nation needs super journalists to reveal the truth.

Utomi said that many wars have ensued simply by not listening to and understanding each other, adding that the fidelity of communication could be interfered with by poor means of communication, mental issues etc. he said the universal dignity of the human person escapes the nature of communication.

He noted that if journalists were to pay enough attention, society would have been a lot better. He challenged the media professionals to help in rebuilding the culture of the society, which he stated had collapsed in Nigeria. As society now focuses on glorification of money at the expense of values, which has turned the country into a criminal enterprise, warning that if care was not taken, Nigeria would in a few years be run solely by criminals.

The media, according to him, must help to change the culture from self destruction through money influence, by ensuring that Nigerians hear one another. He added that the feedback loop was about listening and that “a great leader hears that which is not spoken” and the media must always remind leaders of this.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Dr. Niran Malaolu: Nigeria has become a classless society that recognises and gives power to hoodlums and those who are unworthy of being trusted with such responsibility. The media has become a whipping boy of societal ills. Journalists don’t manufacture news and most of the times are not present when certain events happen, but rely on eyewitness accounts. We need to hear ourselves.

Mr. Gbenga Adefaye: The media has become the whipping boy because practitioners claim to know when they don’t actually know. Government in Nigeria is an organised crime, granting pardon to

thieves and asking the state to pay them retirement benefits. It is a challenge for journalists to be emotionally detached from the stories they write. The Church must do more like the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria does by holding firm positions on societal issues. Nigeria is a land where the poor are deemed undeserving to live. Media practitioners should arouse the consciousness of the people, work for social justice, fairness and equity. Citizens need to demand what is right and set agenda, which the media can then propagate.

Mr. Olaide Awosanya: Attention to societal issues has reduced. The task of making society better should not be left to journalists alone; citizens can and should help by giving accurate information. The media must be overhauled; quackery must be eliminated; and welfare of journalists must be enhanced. Ownership influence affects what journalists churn out.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the session, the following conclusions and recommendations were made:

- Journalists and the media play important roles in the propagation of the Christian faith and the gospel
- The media mirrors the society and should report events with clear objectivity.
- The Nigerian society is in a state of perpetual warfare and has been turned to a killing field
- The influence of money has taken over our society and many of the social vices we experience today are as a result of this
- There's a need to have a cultural reboot and the media should lead the cultural change
- Society must enthrone new God-fearing leaders who will lead in reorganizing the country
- The media must encourage citizens to listen to one another
- The work of the media and journalists is a vocation and that they are important to God, the Church, society and humanity
- The Catholic Church must take the lead in reforming the society by standing on the truth and allowing the secretariat to provide valuable information to media practitioners
- Media should arouse the consciousness of the people, work for social justice, fairness and equity.
- Citizens need to demand what is right and set agenda, which the media can then propagate

Rev. Fr. Gregory Fadele
Director of Social Communications,
Catholic Diocese of Abeokuta

b. AHIARA DIOCESE

Report on the world communications week held at Mater Ecclesiae Cathedral, Ahiara Mbaise from 22nd to 29th May, 2022.

A general congress was summoned before the event for a successful outing.

In Ahiara Diocese, the priests in Communication led by Rev. Fr. Prof. Innocent Uwah and Rev. Fr. Prof. Walter Ihejirika alongside other priests carried out day-to-day activities with members of the Catholic Media Practitioners' Association of Nigeria (CAMPAN) of the Diocese.

On 29th May, 2022, which was the grand finale, the activities started with a Holy Mass by 8.00 clock at the Mater Ecclesiae Cathedral, Ahiara Diocese.

Later, after the homily, the Pope's message, with theme: "Listening with the Ear of The Heart" was read out in the Church. Also read in the church was the message by the Apostolic Administrator of Ahiara Diocese and the Archbishop-elect of Owerri Ecclesiastical Province, His Grace, Most Rev. Lucius Ugorji.

Shortly after the Mass which was officiated by the President of SIGNIS AFRICA, Rev. Fr. Prof. Walter Ihejirika and preached by the Director of Communications in the Diocese, Rev. Fr. Professor Innocent Uwah with other priests as concelebrants, all of Christ's faithful in attendance were told to cultivate the culture of communication in their lives by giving very good attention to listening with compassion as well as passing messages firmly and convincingly.

A reception was held at the Diocesan Secretariat hall after the Mass wherein a lecture on the Pope's message was delivered by Rev. Fr. Jude Osondu. It was well digested and accepted as being timely in a season when everybody in Nigeria needs to be listened to because the society is laden with different stories of pain and anguish. With Rev. Fr. Dr. David Iheanacho as Chairman of the occasion, a lot of questions, suggestions and concerns were raised regarding the Pope's message as it was discussed. Many felt that the message is for everyone both in Church and in secular society. For example, in the course of the discussion, a pertinent question from a Diocesan CAMPAN member, was asked if Rome in all its goodwill is no longer listening to Ahiara Diocese on her quest for a substantive bishop.

In his own remarks, the Diocesan President of CAMPAN, Ben Osuagwu who read his address to all present, frankly called on stakeholders in the Church to hasten efforts and grant Ahiara Diocese a substantive Bishop like they have done in other dioceses across Nigeria.

Mr. Osuagwu decried the fact that for twelve years, Christ's faithful in Ahiara Diocese have no Bishop after the demise of their pioneer indigenous bishop, Most Rev. Dr. V. A. Chikwe and said it is a thing of worry that no one is listening to Ahiara hence she is being ignominiously ignored. He asked if the Church which mother is doing what the Pope in his 2022 World Communication Day message has recommended to all faithful by listening to Ahiara in her quest and prayers.

Following matters arising from the message, a committee was set up to write a communiqué which was issued to the public afterwards.

The Board of Management of the Guide newspaper in collaboration with CAMPAN, Ahiara Diocese, provided entertainment to all present at the occasion. It was a fun-filled day and very exciting to have a good number of people from all walks of life attend the event at the Cathedral ground. Among those present were veterans from both Church and state media houses, government officials and ecclesiastical personae. These include Monsignor Theophilus Nwalor, one of the foundation

members of the Leader newspaper in Owerri and erstwhile manager of programme in NTA channel 6 Aba, Abia State. Others are: Rev. Fr David Iheanacho, one of the pioneer editors of the Ahiara Diocesan newspaper, The GUIDE; Rev. Fr. Prof. Walter Ihejirika, a professor of Development communication and Dean, Faculty of Communication and Multimedia Studies; Rev Fr. Jude Osondu, the lead paper presenter; Rev. Fr. Protase Anyanwu who is the editor of the GUIDE newspaper, Rev. Fr. Innocent Uwah, professor of Film Studies and Head, Department of Theatre and Film Studies, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State and a host of others. The day's ceremony was participated in by family members, friends and media practitioners from within and outside Mbaise including members of the Catholic Artistes and Entertainers Association (CAEAN) who came in their numbers and brought along their work tools and audiovisual instruments with which they showcased a film clip to entertain people at the occasion. Their performance centred on the way forward for the church and society in Nigeria and among Christ's faithful specifically.

To crown it all, God granted a clement weather on that day that made the entire celebration awesome.

The occasion featured group photographs and exchange of pleasantries afterwards. It was adjudged the best so far in recent times in the Diocese.

Signed: Onwumere Florence NK(Mrs).
Secretary, CAMPAN, Ahiara Mbaise Diocese.

AHIARA

Message of the Apostolic Administrator of Ahiara Diocese, Most Rev. Dr, Lucius I. Ugorji, on the Celebration of the 56th World Communications Day.

The celebration of the annual World Communications highlights the importance of communication in the life of the Church and society. This year, the Holy Father, invites us to reflect on the importance of listening in the process of communication between us and our God and between us and our fellow human beings. Like all human activities, we are enjoined to learn effective listening skills which can enhance dialogue and promote communal harmony.

The Catholic Bishops of Nigeria have gone a step further by constituting a whole week for communication, tagged ComWEEK. I am happy that our diocese keyed into all the activities proposed by the National Directorate of Communication. The initiative by the Board of *The Guide Newspaper* to constitute Parish Communication Teams is laudable and will make the communication apostolate to get to the grassroots.

Our diocese right from her creation has placed a lot of premium on communication. Our beloved late Bishop Victor Chikwe was very active in communication activities and once chaired the Episcopal Commission for social communication of the CBCN. *The Guide Newspaper* is one of the pioneer diocesan newspapers in our Province. Some of our priests have attained great heights as professors of communication in tertiary institutions and also hold prominent positions in Communication Associations like SIGNIS. The Mater Media Village is gradually taking shape with the new building ready to host the printing press of the Diocese. The presence of our diocese on various social media platforms has been restored and soon the new diocesan website will be activated.

There is no doubt that God has blessed Ahiara diocese immensely not only with vocation but also in the communication apostolate. As we celebrate the World Communications Day, I exhort you all to make sure that Ahiara diocese retains her pride of place in the field of communication. I encourage all Christ's faithful to constantly do their best in promoting the work of God through proper communication which in a way is the main conduit for evangelization.

I call on God to bless you for the good work you do. May Mary, Mother of the Church, intercede for you

Most Rev. Dr. L. I. Ugorji
Archbishop-elect, Owerri Archdiocese
Apostolic Administrator of Ahiara Diocese
President, Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria

Given:

Mater Ecclesiae Cathedral, 29th May, 2022

Cc:

Chairman & Board of Social Communication,
Director of Communication & his team,
Staff & Management of The Guide newspaper,
President of SIGNIS & members,
Members of Catholic Media Practitioners Association (CAMPAN),
Members of Catholic Artistes & Entertainers Association (CAEAN),
Members of the Press

c. NSUKKA DIOCESE

The just concluded COMWEEK was a success in the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka. The celebration which started on 22nd May 2022 was successfully brought to an end on Sunday 29th May 2022.

Unlike in the past, this year's celebration to mark World Day of Communication, was extended to a full one week celebration. In the Catholic diocese of Nsukka, the Communication's Week was organised at the parish level. Thus, all the parishes celebrated theirs in their own parishes, following the guidelines given to them through their parish priest (that is the softcopy of the material given by the National Secretariat). The parish priests were to study the material and teach his parishioners.

On the material: We thank the organisers from the National Secretariat for providing us with such rich and well explained material. It is detailed in every topic for each day. We did not have to rack brain to come up with a topic because each day's topic was not only given but also explained. The major work we did in parishes was to tailor it down, thus relating it with what is happening in our locality for easier understanding.

The materials were sent to all the priests in the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka via priests group WhatsApp. We requested for some copies from the national Secretariat but we were encouraged to print in our diocese. We requested parishes to indicate the number of copies they would be needing but due to poor response to this, we relied on only softcopy which some priests later printed out and photocopied for easier teaching.

Well, the COMWEEK coincided with May devotion and so the pattern in so many parishes was to start with Rosary, followed by the teaching for the COMWEEK and then Benediction. People responded very well.

To promote the celebration the office of diocesan communication circulated e-flyers from time to time.

The office also was engaged with the task of summarising each day's topic and recording it. We were sending such out on our official website to help parishes to do this well.

BELOW ARE SOME SUMMARIES AND THEIR RECORDS:

Patient Listening and Witnessing

In our world today full of stress, hate and all sorts of hardship; communication is of utmost importance; yet experience has shown that we seem to devote less time in listening to one another. Patient listening has become a rare gift. Patient listening and witnessing help build breaches, resolve misunderstanding and conflicts, give sense of belonging and build love.

Welcome to day 5 of Communication's Week

Acts 1:1-11. It is what you have heard me speak about John, baptized with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Listening patiently without judging the other person or mentally criticizing the things he/she tells you, is the first step to understanding the person. It is very difficult for one to witness or practice what one does not understand. You can never know what the other feels unless he/she tells you.

Remember when the person communicating uses language as a medium to represent the thoughts and feelings he/she have; rapt attention is demanded to encourage the person to communicate effectively. It is of no use interrupting the person. When you don't understand something, of course you should ask the person to explain it to you. But rather than interrupt, wait until the speaker pauses or finishes. Just listen without jumping to conclusions. Allow your mind to create a mental model of the information being communicated. Be empathetic, put yourself in the other person's place and allow yourself to feel what the person is feeling at the moment. In all, listening without putting into practice is of no good use.

Coming to our parish, we continue to seek ways of improving communication in our parishes;

Cleanliness: A dirty church cannot communicate God; thus check the church compound, inside the church, the vestment of all the liturgical actors, sacred linens etc, for they speak volume of our faith.

Practice cannot be over emphasized; train and retrain liturgical ministers, like lectors. Nobody should participate without practice. How would people understand and be able to witness to the Word if it is not read coherently? The church warden or ushers should not allow movement of any kind during homily and should also take their seat so as not to distract others.

We are in the age of sight and sound so projectors are also recommended in the church.

Every parish should make effort to have communication team to pilot the communication affairs of the parish.

Faith is knowing that God is real and that you can trust in God's promises. You cannot trust someone who isn't there, nor can you rely on someone whose promises are not reliable. This is why faith is talked about as the substance of things hoped for and as the evidence of things not seen. St Paul made it clear that faith comes from hearing. The ear receives the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, faith begins in the hearer.

Welcome to day 6 of the communication's week

Listening Builds Confidence in Faith

"Do not be afraid to speak out nor allow yourself to be silenced: I am with you" (Acts 18:9-18)

The opposite of faith is fear. And it cripples faith when it is not well handled. Fear's greatest strength is its ability to amplify negative possibilities within the mind; conjuring up potential problems, fear casts a shadow of doubt over exciting opportunities.

The problem is that just as one can build faith through listening, one can also be glued to the apron of fear through listening.

The question remains what do you listen to? Take control of your life and build faith-filled personality by deciding the kind of message you take in; it's a matter of choice.

Remember that what we hear over and over again, may gradually sink into our subconscious and if care is not taken may begin to manifest as our worldview. This is why repetition of negative messages is very dangerous. We should therefore arm ourselves with the consciousness that our God is with us.

We should also be mindful of the kind of things we tell others especially in this age of social media. So many information are flying around but we should endeavour not be agent of fear but rather build faith by every utterance we make.

As Christians we are charged with the task of listening to one another, it is the most precious life-giving gift we can offer one another.

Listening in an Unwelcoming Culture

Welcome to day 4 of the Communication's week

That you have the message does not imply that the audience must listen or accept your message. What happens when you do not get feedback or even when you get a negative feedback? What's your reaction when people seemingly throw your ideas or message into the trash?

In the first reading of today, Acts 17:15, 22-18:1, it says "At this mention of rising from the dead, some of them burst out laughing; others said, 'We would like to hear you talk about this again.'"

With the rejection of his message, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

Brothers and sisters, that communication can breakdown is a fact. And this could be necessitated by different factors such as:

Difference in perception: The same event can be perceived differently by different individuals. Thus, any message that goes against individual's values may not be accepted by such individual.

Inattention: It is obvious people don't listen; they only hear. Most of the time, they want you to rather listen to them. They often interrupt and even try to advise you from their own personal

experience. Your message is likely to be rejected when the other person is not paying attention to you.

Distraction and Noise: Communication is also greatly affected by noise and distractions. Your posture, your tune, your appearance etc, could disrupt communication.

Any remedy to these conditions of communication breakdown?

Yes, there are ways through which we can improve on communications, especially in the parishes, to enhance evangelization.

1. Be mindful of your SIGN BOARDS, NOTICE BOARDS & BANNERS Art works are silent but eloquent communicators. Be concerned with the nature and positioning of their location. It is the only contact most people will have about the parish. Regularly replace old and deplorable ones and watch out for wrong spellings.

2. GET AN OFFICIAL PHONE LINE FOR THE PARISH OR YOUR INSTITUTION. Don't rely on personal lines for office use. The official line should be available to the secretary even in the absence of the priest

3. SOUND SYSTEM: No church architectural design is complete without consideration for the sound system. Help the people to hear the word of God and understand it/ It is the word of God that builds the people into a community of God's children.

4. Every person in the parish, especially office workers, should be as welcoming as possible. Know it that BAD ATTITUDE IS BAD COMMUNICATION

Choir, parish website etc, should be taken care of.

Finally, communication is not monologue, and it is not an argument which you are struggling to win. The Holy Spirit is still at work in the church. Do the much you can and allow God to do the rest.

Assessment: COMWEEK is a nice idea and it gives people opportunity to assess the communication strengths of their parish and advance more on media literacy.

On the number, we cannot say with certain whether the May devotion contributed in the encouraging attendance or the people just came for the of COMWEEK, but generally, the number was very encouraging. We believe it would even be better in subsequent years.

Thanks for giving us this opportunity.

Fr. Emmanuel Asadu
Catholic Diocese of Nsukka

d. OSOGBO DIOCESE

REPORT OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE ComWEEK 2022 IN OSOGBO DIOCESE

The World Communications week (ComWEEK) in the Catholic Diocese of Osogbo started on Sunday May 22nd 2022 with awareness in various parishes and quasi parishes in the diocese while the official flag off took place at St. Benedict's Catholic Cathedral, Popo, Osogbo, Osun State by the Director of Social Communications Commission of the diocese, Rev. Fr Anthony Omodunbi.

On Monday 23rd May, the Commission organized a Bishop's Forum which took place at St. Peters Catholic Church Esa-Oke, where multitude of Catholic faithful, Communicators in the diocese, members of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and priests were present to interact with the Bishop on issues that have to do with faith, morals and state of the nation.

The Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Osogbo, Most Rev. John Akinkunmi Oyejola, while responding to burning issues, reiterated the need for every eligible voter to get their Permanent Voters Card (PVC) and vote for a candidate that will better the society and the country at large.

On Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th, the Directorate of Communications visited all media houses in Osun State to familiarize and discuss the message of the Holy Father with them, prayed with them as the Church encouraged the media to always propagate Christ in their news delivery.

The CEO of Rave FM Osogbo, Dr. Femi Adefila, Station manager Orisun FM in Ile-Ife, Mrs Funmi Kalejaye and the General Manager of Fresh FM Mr. Akinkunmi Alabi in their separate words commended the Catholic Church for being a development partner in the society, saying the Catholic Church has the most organized structure. They applauded the Catholic mission for being impactful in the education and health sector. They also noted that the Catholic Mission is the only church that embraces the media in the world.

The Osun State NUJ Council Chairman, Comrade Wasiu Ajadosu and the Osun NUJ Newspaper correspondents Chapel Chairman Shina Abubakar commended the church's commitment to anything that can bring about social development saying the church also serves as an impetus for those in government.

All media houses in the state, both print and electronic, published and broadcast the message that was delivered to them through the Director of Social Communications Commission of the diocese and his entourage during the official visit.

On Friday 27th May, the communications apostolate in collaboration with the diocesan Education Commission organized a day seminar for all Catholic Secondary Schools in the diocese where not less than 300 participants (students and their teachers) were present for a day seminar at St Benedicts Cathedral Hall. The theme of the seminar was, "*The rewarding use of the social media: A life outside of school walls*". The guest speakers were Mr Jide Durowoju and Rev. Fr. Matthew Olawuni.

Mr. Durowoju, in his presentation, described the social media as a tool for sharing information, networking and entertainment. He advised the students to use the social media - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp etc - responsibly, to develop and tend to their real life relationships and experiences and to take an honest self-assessment of their use of the media.

He encouraged them to make good use of the media to improve their skills through the usage of applications like Pinterest, HubSpot Google Digital Garage, etc. They might search for groups that

share values that interest them or search for opportunities; internship, trainings, bootcamp or they might even self-publish an e-book and sell online.

Mr. Durowoju however admonished the students against doing anything illegal on the media. He warned them to refrain from comprising anyone's safety to make money or slack on their studies in favour of making money on the social media. He then urged them not to be carried away with the fake lifestyles they see online.

In conclusion, he charged the students to set improvement goals for themselves, and develop proactive strategies to have a rewarding use of the social media.

Fr. Olawuni, in his presentation on "Rewarding use of social media: coping with mental health issues" said the social media can be both beneficial and harmful to children and youth's mental health. The use of social media is more prevalent among young people as 91% of young people are addicted to social media today. However, the use of the media could result in developing conditions likely connected to anxiety, stress, depression and poor mental health.

The priest said that indiscipline and failure to use talent well on social media could damage one's image and life plan. This could lead to neurological disorders. He cautioned them against keeping sleepless nights on the media. "Sleep is most important at adolescent age. Lack of sleep leads to exhaustion, poor academic performance and bad behaviours. Moreover, you feel less of whom you are when you are too much addicted to social media".

He said cyber-bullying is a significant problem which includes the posting of harmful comments, harassment and intimidation online. Some people have been threatened or intimidated that their pictures or videos that would cause them pain would be shared on the digital space. Sometimes, because of shame and fear, this has led some people to commit suicide. It is quite different from physical bullying and therefore more painful.

Fr Olawuni counselled the students that the social media is a tool for networking and knowledge through talent, skill and self-discipline but one needs to be properly guided on its use so as not to misuse it or get addicted to it.

Similarly, Saturday 28th May witnessed a day seminar for members of the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON), Osogbo diocese themed; *The Effects of Social Media on Youths: Towards Social Media becoming God's gift to young people*. The Guest speakers were Mr Alex Olagunju, Mr Tony Adejuwon and Mr Foluso Adedigba.

Mr Alex Olagunju is a researcher of the School of Media and Communication Studies, PAN Atlantic University, Lagos. Mr Tony Adejuwon, the team leader of Urban Alert, an NGO that sees to the wellbeing of the society titled his paper; *Facts about our planets with Special focus on Osun River*.

A veteran in the broadcast industry, Mr Foluso Adedigba who is also a Member of the Catholic Media practitioners in the diocese all submitted that, social media could be used for either good or bad, as they encouraged youths and Catholic communicators to always use any medium available to them positively.

They impel the youths to seek knowledge, pay attention and strategically use the social media constructively in a way that will propagate the good news of Christ. Hundreds of participants drew from the speakers' wealth of knowledge.

The grand finale which started with a thanksgiving Mass took place at Saints Peter and Paul Pro-Cathedral, Lagere, Ile- Ife. In his homily during the Mass, the Director of Social Communications

Commission, Rev. Fr. Anthony Omodunbi said the media must be instruments of unity, peace and development as the fourth estate of the realm and be effective in setting positive agenda.

Elucidating the Holy Father's message in his homily, Fr. Omodunbi said it is only by paying attention that one can grow in the art of Communication. He said if there is no listening, there can't be effective communication, so God is challenging everyone to pay attention and be instruments of unity so as to have peace in our homes, society, country and the world at large.

The Director then called on every individual and the media who are agenda setters to listen with their ear of the heart before reporting.

At the reception, the theme of the year was extensively discussed by communicators, media practitioners, Directors of media Stations in the State, CAMPAN Members and veterans present at the occasion where the representative of the Bishop of the diocese, the Vicar General, Rev. Fr Thaddeus Ajayi, was in attendance.

The Professionals charged everyone especially those using the media space to be factual and balance in their reportage and such can only be achieved through the healthy process of listening without being stereotype.

The Director then summarised the whole conversation:

1. Be patience enough for the speaker to finish.
2. Be humble enough to accept that the speaker can impact knowledge.
3. Be willing to change your stand (Flexible) .

He said everyone must reach this level before a perfect listening and decoding can be achieved which will make conversation to be dialogue and not monologue.

Meanwhile, the guideline provided by the National Directorate of Social Communications was used at parishes in the diocese, as they discussed topics for each day of the week.

By Kunmilola Adegoke.
Communications Officer, Catholic Diocese of Osogbo.

e. **OGOJA DIOCESE**

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OGOJA
Directorate of Social Communications, Catholic Diocese of Ogoja
Report of the Communications Week

This is the first of its kind, the maiden edition of the Communications Week. It was organized by the Communications Department to last for a week only, beginning from the 22nd – 29th of May 2022. It was a collective activity that involved all four corners of the Catholic Christian community in Nigeria, and those responsible for its organisation have done a great deal to make it more interactive and rewarding to the general public especially the youths on media usage and evangelisation just as Christ instructed “go into the whole world and proclaim the good news” (Mark 16:15).

Communication is the vital aspect of the human life. It is the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs (American College Dictionary). It has in many ramifications process interactions of ideas, beliefs and attitudes of each other through the exchange of information in form of words, gestures, signs, symbols, and expressions. In an organisation like ours (the church) it is a continuous process of giving and receiving information to build not only a social relationship but also a religious relationship with God. Catherine Pulsifer expressed “Communication as one of the most important skills you require for a successful life” ipso facto the Catholic Diocese of Ogoja join the Nigeria Church to participate in the Communication Week and thanksgiving.

PUBLICITY

The awareness towards the ComWEEK was viral, and more persons in the rural area of the diocese got it and were fully prepared for the week. It followed a well-organized procedure from the announcement in all parishes across the diocese to the general notification and making public the rundown of activities to the world and members of the diocese on our Facebook page “THE MESSAGE”- this page has helped us for easy communication to the general audience in the diocese and globally.

VENUE OF EVENT

The Venue for the event began at the Cathedral and other sections were held in various parishes in the diocese and at the same time in the programme circulated earlier all around the diocese.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Opening Mass for the Communications Week was said by His Lordship Most Rev. Donatus Edet Akpan, Bishop on the 22nd of May at St. Benedict’s Cathedral, Ogoja, where he opined that modern tools of Communications are also tools for evangelization, if deployed appropriately according to the mind of the Church. He called on youths to be more attentive to the voice of God speaking through His Church. The bishop reiterated the need for listening as a core instrument for synodality. His Lordship enjoined Christ’s faithful to participate actively in the one week programme of the Communication week.

The Programme of events is shown below:

OPENING: Sunday May 22nd, 2022

TOPIC: Opening Ceremonies

VENUE: St. Benedict's Cathedral Ogoja

THEME: **LISTENING TOGETHER FOR SPIRIT GUIDED DECISIONS**

TIME: 10:00 am

Day One: Tuesday May 24th, 2022

THEME: **LISTENING TO GOD IN TIMES OF SUFFERING AND SORROW**

VENUE: All Parishes in the Diocese

TIME: 4:30 pm.

Day Two: Thursday May 26th, 2022

THEME: **PATIENT LISTENING AND WITNESSING**

VENUE: All Parishes in the Diocese

TIME: 4:30 pm.

Day Three: Saturday May 28th, 2022

THEME: **EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON YOUTH IN NIGERIA**

VENUE: All Parishes in the Diocese

TIME: 10: 00 am

CLOSING: Sunday May 29th, 2022

THEME: **LISTENING BRINGS UNITY**

VENUE: St. Benedict's Cathedral, Ogoja

TIME: 10:00 am. Mass

EVALUTION AND SUGGESTIONS

This is a wonderful step that has been taken by the Church in Nigeria. It should be sustained. The Bishop' called for collaboration among variously apostolate with communication as a melting point.

The Climax of the Communication week witnessed myriads of activities eg. Mass, blessings of Communications equipment (by His Lordship), talks, lectures and media exhibitions by the youths.

f. AUCHI DIOCESE

A REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MAIDEN COMMUNICATIONS WEEK (ComWEEK) AS CELEBRATED IN THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCHI UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS, AUCHI DIOCESE.

The Catholic Diocese of Auchi, in keeping with the decision of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) that this year's celebration of the World Communications Day will be a week programme for the purpose of better enriching the people with the importance of communications in our modern world, organized the ComWEEK programme that spanned through Sunday 22nd to Sunday 29th May, 2022 as follows.

SUNDAY 22ND MAY, 2022

On this day marking the beginning of the ComWEEK, there was the creation of awareness in all Parishes and Mass Centers in the Diocese.

MONDAY 23RD MAY, 2022

This day featured discussions at Parish levels on the topic, "**Communication Ministry in the Life of the Parish**". Each Parish/Mass Centre in the diocese was made to organize a one-day seminar on the above topic and reports from this activity as organized by the communications committee in each Parish were sent to our office by the committee.

TUESDAY 24TH MAY, 2022

On this day, we organized a debate for all Catholic Secondary Schools in the diocese and the topic was, "**Role of Social Media and Its Implications for Students**". Here, students from the Senior Secondary School section were required to participate in the debate which was held at St. Philip-Neri Church Event Centre, Jattu.

The programmed started at 12 noon and had eight schools as participants. Also present at the event were school teachers and principals of the various schools as well as members of our Communications Board of Directors and staff.

According to directives, the event was an open debate geared towards impacting knowledge on participants as such there were no winners and losers as this was not the purpose for the debate. At the end, each participant was given a cash gift for participating.

THURSDAY 26TH MAY, 2022

This day featured a workshop on Media and the Church at N.T.A premises, Uzairue. The programme was organized for members of the Catholic Media Practitioners Association of Nigeria (CAMPAN), Auchi Chapter and all Media workers within the diocese.

The event which started by 12 noon, featured a lecture on the Pope's Message for the 56th World Communications Day, "**Listening with the ears of the heart**," delivered by the Director of Social Communications, Auchi Diocese, Rev. Fr. Dr. Peter Egielewa, after which there was the question and answer section.

FRIDAY 27TH MAY, 2022

Celebrating the importance of communication on this day, our Media crew moved to one of the most populated and popular Secondary Schools in Edo North, Sacred Heart College, Agenebode for a **Media Literacy Sensitization Programme.**

The programme started by 12 noon with a lecture on the use of Social media anchored by the Director, Rev. Fr. Peter Egielewa after which the students were shared into five (5) groups; each group having a Communications Staff as a tutor, for further enlightenment on some important Social Media registers (terms). All the Students actively participated in the programme and were also given the opportunity to express their views on what they learnt from their group discussions.

SUNDAY 29TH MAY, 2022

This day marked the grand finale of the maiden celebration of ComWEEK and as such, featured a Thanksgiving Mass to mark the end of the ComWEEK and the World Communications Day proper. The celebration was twofold, namely, the Thanksgiving Mass and Bishop's Press Briefing.

The Mass was celebrated at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Auchi, by the Chief Shepherd of the diocese, Most Rev. Dr. Gabriel G. Dunia at 9:00am, assisted by the Director of Social Communications and his Assistant, Rev. Frs. Dr. Peter Egielewa and Timothy Etsenamhe respectively. Also present at the Mass were members of the Catholic Media Practitioners Association of Nigeria, Auchi Chapter and other invited Media Practitioners within the Diocese.

Special activities held at the Mass were; Blessing of work tools for all media practitioners by the Bishop, a thanksgiving procession to the Altar by all Media practitioners led by the Director of Communications and his Assistant, and Reading of the Pope's Message for the 56th World Communications Day.

After the Mass, there was a Press briefing by the Bishop where all the Media practitioners raised many questions for the Bishop's clarification. The event also included a lecture delivered by Assistant Director of Communications, Rev. Fr. Timothy Etsenamhe; An Overview of the Pope's Message for World Communications Day.

APPRECIATION/CONCLUSION

We are grateful to God Almighty for His mercies throughout the week and especially thank the Nigerian Bishops for this initiative. We also thank our Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. G.G. Dunia for approving this programme in our diocese and for his support towards its success.

In the same light, we are grateful to the National Directorate of Social Communications for the wonderful direction for the week celebration and we sincerely appreciate all those who helped our own Directorate organized a successful ComWEEK 2022.

g. OYO DIOCESE

56TH WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY 2022 CELEBRATION*

LISTENING WITH THE POPE OF PASTORAL SENSIBILITIES

By Most Rev. Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo_

Bishop of Oyo Diocese, Nigeria_

Engaging the Apostolate of the Ear

“The most important task in pastoral activity is the ‘apostolate of the ear’ – to listen before speaking”. So declared Pope Francis in his message for the 56th World Communications Day (WDC) scheduled for Sunday, 29th May 2022. To my mind, this is the over-arching proposition in the message for the Church, pastoral agents and all who want a better world to embrace. The Pope’s message, entitled: “Listening with the ear of the heart” is replete with insights about the importance of the art of listening to the self, the voice within, to others and to God and is packed with very dense, spiritual and scriptural exhortations in every paragraph about the art of listening. In fact, “Hear, O Israel”, the Pope recalls, are the opening words of the first commandment of the Torah.

A Lingering and Compelling Call

The WDC message assumes even a larger profile when we consider it as continuation of the ongoing relational process of Synodality, initiated by the Holy Father himself, which is meant to optimize the entire listening strategy of the Church and enhance the participation and collaboration of all who may feel left behind. Pope Francis, by this message, seems to me to covet a reputation as “an apostle of the listening Church”. One could be easily forgiven for that assumption, because even in his 2020 encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* (FT) on Fraternity and Social Friendship, the Pope, in proposing concrete solutions to enable all peoples close ranks and recreate world family where all have a place and are made to feel welcome, carved out a role for “the apostolate of the ear”. He wrote: “The ability to sit down and listen to others, typical of interpersonal encounters, is paradigmatic of the welcoming attitude shown by those who transcend narcissism and accept others, caring for them and welcoming them into their lives. Yet, ‘today’s world is largely a deaf world... At times the frantic pace of the modern world prevents us from listening attentively to what another person is saying. Halfway through, we interrupt him and want to contradict what he has not even finished saying. We must not lose our ability to listen’” (FT. 48).

Listening As An act of Love

“Listening with the ear of the heart” in order to receive words not just through the ears but spiritually in our hearts, as proposed by Saint Augustine, is the Pope’s recommendation to combat exclusion, discrimination, marginalization and oppression which have become an albatross in the way of achieving a global human family today.

Pope Francis affirms that listening is decisive in the grammar of communication and a condition for genuine dialogue where “duologue” (a mere monologue in two voices) is not allowed to replace genuine dialogue. He proposes it as an antidote to aggression, deriving from the frustration of isolation, exclusion and bias. For him, listening is fundamentally, a dimension of love.

Listening As Christian Vocation and Therapy for Humanity

In recommending more listening as the ideal attitude to the self, to others, in the journalism profession and even in public life. The Pope does not exclude the Church. He wrote: “It is sad

when, even in the Church, ideological alignments are formed and listening disappears, leaving sterile opposition in its wake". He teaches that Christians should never forget that they have been committed to the ministry of listening by God himself who is the great listener and whose work Christians are called to share. Following after the World Communications Day message of the previous year which focused on two other essential human activities, "Come and See", it is clear that this "Pope of subtle, pastoral and current sensibilities" seeks with his message in an uncanny way to lead humanity, whole and entire back to its pristine state of being. In fact, his teaching addresses very current and worrying global realities as he contrasts the human attitude with God who, unlike humans, always inclines his ear to listen to human beings. "On the contrary, human beings tend to flee the relationship, to turn their back and 'close their ears' so they do not have to listen. The refusal to listen often ends up turning into aggression towards the other, as happened to those listening to the deacon Stephen who, covering their ears, all turned on him at once (Acts 7:57). How so true it is that most ongoing violence and conflict in the world today derive from that unwillingness to listen and understand the other! Would that we allow the clarion of Pope Francis to listen more to one another bring back the joy of human fraternity so as to reduce tension and hate in the family and the world! Many wounds could be healed and many relationships restored as well. Such is the power of this gift of listening!

h. UMUAHIA DIOCESE

UMUAHIA DIOCESAN CAMPAN CONCLUDES 2022 WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY IN GRAND STYLE. BY EMMANUEL EJIOGU

All roads led to Mater Dei Cathedral Umuahia to observe this year's World Communications Day anchored by the Catholic Media Practitioners Umuahia Diocese. The week-long activities that spiced up the celebration in the Diocese of Umuahia included: Courtesy calls to all the radio stations in Umuahia, visit to the retired priests at the Pastor Bonus villa, Road walk/cock tail culmination in thanksgiving Mass and paper presentation on the Pope's message. It is an annual event initiated by the Holy Father. However, this year's celebration has a new dimension which was embraced with pomp and pageantry. From this year onwards, it will be a week-long event unlike previous years. This annual event encourages us to reflect on the opportunities and challenges that modern means of social communications (the press, radio, television and the internet) present to the church in her bid to communicate the gospel message.

The grand finale of the Communication Week started with the Eucharistic celebration presided over by the Vicar general II, Very Rev. Fr. Gabriel Kalu and flanked by the Director of Communications, Rev. Fr. Dr. Leo Ehiemere and the Editor of Lumen Press/ Asst Director of Communications, Rev. Fr. Alex Mario Okonta.

In his homily, Very Rev. Fr. Gabriel Kalu who stood in for both the Archbishop and the Auxiliary Bishop, Most Rev. Michael Ukpong, referenced the first reading in Acts 7:55-60, where St. Stephen was stoned on account of his faith and conscience in the propagation of the gospel of God but with his belief God saved and delivered him from bondage. The Vicar General of the Diocese therefore advised the congregation to always have faith in God and listen well to the word of God with their inner most ear of their hearts and live it out.

Going further, the prelate urged Christians to become agents of unity as that will go a long way to add force to our Christian proclamation.

Going down the memory lane on World Communications Day, Fr. Kalu made some important points.

“It was a post Second Vatican Council initiative and was introduced by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on May 7, 1967. It is being celebrated on the Sunday preceding the Pentecost annually.

However, with this year's theme “Listening with the Ear of the Heart”, it is expected among other things that the Communication week initiative will call greater awareness to the importance of media in the Church for discipline.

“Further, it will equip the people with the required skills for the ongoing Synodality process, it will also enlighten people the more on the teachings of the church regarding media and communications and thereby, help build stronger communities based on dialogue, mutual respect, collaboration among individuals and church organs; and empower the people thereby creating room for democratic citizenship”.

High point of the event during the Mass was the blessing of the equipment of the Catholic Media Practitioners in Umuahia diocese, as directed by the Diocesan Director of Social Communications, Rev. Fr. Dr. Leonard Ehiemere. Other side attractions were the unveiling of the Mater Dei Logo in respect of the upcoming Silver Jubilee of the Cathedral parish.

Thereafter, the lecture at the banquet hall of Bishop Anthony Nwedo Pastoral Centre, (BANPC), was delivered by a seasoned and erudite scholar from the Mass Communication Department of Abia State University (ABSU), Dr. Innocent Paschal Ihechu. The paper presenter said that listening with the ear of the heart means that we must show compassion to the problems of others by understanding the roles that Christ expects us to play in every situation.

Thereafter discussants like Fr. Tobias Uke, Education Secretary of the Diocese, Prof. D. Asawalam and Prof. Paul Mbakwe took their turn to make their contributions. There was questions and answers session involving all participants which had to buttress and elucidate the lecturer's teachings on the theme, "Listening with the Ears of the Heart".

In attendance were the Diocesan Social Communications Director, the CAMPAN Chairman, The Director Gen. of BCA, ably represented by Director News and Current Affairs, Comrade Hyacinth Okoli, including the NUJ Chairman Abia State Council, Comrade Victor Ndukwe among others?

Rev. Fr. Alex Okonta, Editor/Md. of Lumen Press was also in attendance. This year's 2022 World Communications Day coincided with the annual celebration of Children in the Mater Dei Cathedral Parish, thereby giving glamour and succor to the grand finale of the celebration, to God's glory.

The St. Theresa girl's Secondary School Olokoro thrilled the participants with the fascinating display, centered on the ComWEEK jingles.

Comrade Hyacinth Okoli in his closing remarks asked God for a resounding event of this magnitude in subsequent years.

i. LOKOJA DIOCESE

2022 WORLD COMMUNICATIONS WEEK CELEBRATION

The 2022 World Communications Week celebration titled “Listening with the ear of the heart” was scheduled for Sunday, May 22-29, 2022. However, due to circumstances beyond our control, Lokoja Diocese celebrated hers from Sunday, June 12 to Sunday June 19, 2022. Here is a summary report of the activities that took place in Parishes and Chaplaincies of the Diocese.

The Pope’s message was read in all parishes, where the Holy Father emphasized the need to listen to one another as “it is the first act of charity”. The Parish Priest of St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Okengwe, Rev. Fr. Daniel Obibine explained thoroughly the Pope’s message to the congregation on Sunday to kick-start the ComWEEK celebrations.

At St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Chaplaincy, F. C. E., Okene, the Chaplaincy of the Director of Communications, Lokoja Diocese, topics were treated daily throughout the week. Thus, on the second day, Monday, 13 June, 2022 the talk given at the said Chaplaincy was centered on the topic “Listening together for a Spirit-Guided Decision.” Here, the speaker stressed that the phrase “listening together for spirit-guided decision” implies paying attention to the various ways the spirit speaks to us so as to enable us make godly decisions. The speaker further explained that spirit-guided decision has to do with allowing our actions to be guided by the Holy Spirit, acting according to the dictates of the Holy Spirit rather than on our own feeling. The speaker concluded that the ways of listening to the spirit to guide our decisions are through prayer and the word of God, among others, as evident in act 1:20-24.

Catechist Augustine Aniki, who gave the same talk in Okengwe Parish emphasized that Christians should allow their thoughts, words and actions to be guided by the Holy Spirit. If they do so, it is highly unlikely that their decisions will be wrong. In other words, guided by the Holy Spirit, their decisions will always be right.

On the third day, a talk was presented on the topic “dangers inherent in fake news circulation.” The speaker defined fake news as false narratives that are published and promoted as if they were true. They could either be misinformation, when they are spread without the intent to cause harm, disinformation, when they are spread to manipulate people, and mal-information, when the information that may be true is taken out of context.

The speaker further stressed that fake news circulation could be dangerous as it is created to change people’s beliefs and perceptions and also fake news articles could pose cyber security concerns as well as an entry point for hackers attempting to steal information.

On the fourth day, the presenter focused on the topic: Building faith through listening. The speaker defined faith as “substance of thing hoped for, the evidence of thing not seen” (Heb.11:1). The speaker also stressed that, too often we are slow to listen but quick to speak and quick to anger. She admonished everyone according to the words of St. James, “let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger” (James 1:19), adding that faith comes through listening (Romans 10:17).

The CYON Representative of St. Clement’s Catholic Chaplaincy, Lokoja, who spoke on the same topic emphasized that for faith to build and grow, one must first listen to a preacher. He identified that the preacher who is the messenger, the message, the means or method used in passing the message and the receiver of the message must all be in a very good condition before the aim of faith building can be achieved. Catechist Elizabeth Henry who spoke on the same topic in Okengwe Parish emphasized that without listening our faith cannot grow.

In St. Clement’s Chaplaincy, Lokoja, a CMO representative spoke on “Listening in Unwelcoming Culture.” He identified some unwelcoming culture in the Church like unbelievers in the faith. According to him, we are to dialogue or discuss and not to quarrel or argue with people who do not believe in Christ. We are to emphasize on dialogue in order to pass the message of salvation. The following 5 ways to improve on communication in the Chaplaincy were discussed, like having good

signpost, notice board and banner, Parish phone line, effective sound system, trustworthy office staff, and Parish bulletin/magazine. The above must be properly put in place to ensure effective communication in the parish.

On the fifth day, the Drama Troupe of the Chaplaincy presented a drama play portraying that effective communication in the family could be achieved through patient listening, particularly between husband and wife. The drama was didactic as it taught that listening to one another in the family would help to resolve numerous family problems.

A representative from All Saints Igala Society from St. Clement's Chaplaincy, Lokoja, spoke on patient listening and witnessing, where he illustrated how Jesus' disciples received his messages as difficult and how they had to patiently wait for the promised Holy Spirit.

The sixth day's topic was "Listening to God in times of suffering and sorrow." The speaker held that God allows suffering and sorrow in order to call us back to Him. Whenever we listen to him in times of difficulties, God always gives us the ability to overcome and tells us the way forward. The speaker concluded by admonishing everyone to always look up to God for solutions to their problems. This is also the view upheld by the CWO Representative of St. Clement's Catholic Chaplaincy, Lokoja, who spoke on the same topic.

She gave the following points as reasons why we should listen to God in times of suffering and sorrow: we listen in order to do his will. James 1:22; we listen to find the knowledge of God. Proverb 2:5; we listen to God in order for our faith to increase Romans 10:17; to gain wisdom on how to handle ugly situations Proverb 19:20 and for our relationship to be strong in God

The following bible references spell out the benefits of listening to God in times of suffering and sorrow: Proverb 12:15 and Matthew 7:25 say that listening to God makes one to be wise; Deuteronomy 28:2: Listening to God makes one to experience showers of blessing from God; Proverb 10:17: Listening to God gives life to our bodies; Isaiah 55:2-3: Listening to God gives life to our souls; Proverb 1:5: Listening to God increases one's knowledge of God; Listening to God makes us to be counted among his own.

The speaker concluded by enumerating the following as dangers of not listening to God, especially in times of suffering and sorrow: Malachi 2:2: It attracts God's curse; Hebrew 2:1: It leads one astray; Proverbs 10:17: It makes one to lead others astray; Proverbs 28:14: It leads one to great dangers and to wrong directions.

On this same day, a member of Ss. Joachim and Ann Society, St. Clement's Chaplaincy, Lokoja, gave a talk on "Listening Builds Confidence in Faith," where the speaker explained how Jesus' disciples were told not to be afraid to speak out. We build confidence in our faith when we listen. God is always with us.

The soundbites on the Pope's message for world communications day were read and discussed.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Nigeria (CCRN), through its representative, gave a talk on "Listening for Encouragement (**Insightful Listening**). The speaker explained how Paul spoke to Priscilla and Aquila with boldness and they became interested. They accepted the Gospel and equally proclaimed it through their lifestyle. There was a brief review of all the previous topics.

On the final day, Day 8, the St. Clement Chaplaincy Pastoral Council Secretary, Lokoja, gave a talk titled "Effects of Social Media on Youths in Nigeria." The speaker explained the meaning of social media and the different platforms used in communication. He also enumerated the following positive effects of social media to include easy communication, education and research, medium between buyers and sellers, health counseling etc. Some negative effects he highlighted include spread of fake news, low productivity among youths, platform for criminal activities, lack of personal privacy.

On the same day, the Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Casimir Okonkwo, presented a talk on how "Listening Brings Unity". He explained that the Church is the mystical body of Christ.

By mystical means that the Church is not completely divine and not completely human. In the Church, all members are United by the Communion/sharing, being in the same faith and practices. We are members of the same Ecclesial community through baptism. Participating in the same communion brings about spiritual connection, bond, togetherness and unity.

Each day, the prayer for world communications day was said at the end of the talk.

The following recommendations were made during the programme, namely, that

1. Ministers should prepare well before Liturgical celebration.
2. Ministers should ensure that their vestments are in good condition and always neat.
3. The Church environment should always be kept clean.
4. There should be training and seminars to acquire skills for effective communication.
5. Church members should avoid making noise during Liturgical celebration and during announcement.
6. The Church should make use of social media to transmit information properly.
7. Members should always make effort to communicate with the Priest whenever they are in doubt of any information.

The grand finale of the Communications Week celebrations took place at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Cathedral, Lokoja. Immediately after the Mass, which was presided over by the Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. Martin Olorunmolu, the second phase of the celebration took place in Bishop Ajomo Hall within the Cathedral Premises. The Diocesan Director of Social Communications, Lokoja Diocese, gave a talk titled “Effective Communication between Husband and Wife with Emphasis on Listening” to some Catholic Media Practitioners and some youths who participated.

Fr. Ajiga spoke elaborately on two main models of Communications, namely the Linear Model or one-way model proposed by Harold Lasswell and the Participatory or Convergence or Two-Way Model by Wilbur Schramm and C. E. Osgood. Explaining Lasswell’s, he said that the linear model holds that our communication is one-way. In other words, it consists of messages which flow from the sender to the receiver along particular channels, without any feedback. Here, the sender only sends messages to the receiver, or the encoder to the decoder, who is expected to remain passive, and not to make any response. He quoted from Schramm and Osgood to explain the Participatory Model thus:

Distinguishing between source and transmitter on the one hand and receiver and destination on the other, they went to assert that these functions are fulfilled at both ends. In other words, the acting parties are equals as they perform identical functions, namely encoding, decoding and interpretation. This position marked a clear break with the linear, one-way picture of communication. The model is quite useful in describing interpersonal communication (McQuail, 1981, pp. 14-15).

This model is a two-way process of dialogue whose purpose is to achieve mutual understanding and agreement between two or more individuals or groups. In this regard, Prof. Robert Whyte explains that communication is no longer understood merely as the transportation of an idea, or information or message from one person to another, but “an interaction process that creates some new, third meaning somewhat unlike the meanings that the parties originally held. This conception places an emphasis on meaning (culture) and the creative, participatory process of communication” (Article by Robert Whyte, 252).

Schramm’s convergence model of communication also allows for the process of interpreting the message. This process is influenced by the presence of both physical noise, e.g. phone call, television, siren; and semantic noise like distractions, age, attitudes, etc. He believed that all of these elements were important functions of communication in society. He felt that people in society, especially family members, need information on their environment and suitable methods of communicating in order to make decisions. It is because of the above intricacies that the convergence duo-directional model is preferred to the linear model. Indeed, in contrast to the linear model, the

convergence model of communication is a horizontal kind of communication between the participants, and not a one-way, hierarchical, vertical or superior-to-inferior kind of communication. This participatory or convergence model is very suitable for married couples, and it is here recommended to them straightaway. Thus, the more the participants (in this case, husband and wife) converge, the more mutual understanding is arrived at and, therefore, the more communication takes place.

For effective communication to take place between two persons, especially husband and wife, the following elements must be present, namely, listening, feedback and interpersonal communication, with all its qualities and elements.

Listening

The theme of the Pope's message for the 56th World Communications Day is "Listening with the Ear of the Heart." This paper discusses Effective Communication between Husband and Wife, with emphasis on Listening". Thus, it is not out of place to say a word or two in this direction. Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Listening is key to effective communication. Without the ability to listen attentively, messages are easily misunderstood.

Scripture tells us that "Let every person be quick to hear (listen), slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19). Oftentimes, we do the opposite: we are slow to hear, quick to speak and quick to anger. Therefore, learning to listen well demands conscious efforts at disciplining oneself. To be able to listen well, the following elements should be noted and practised, namely, **good listening requires patience**; while good listening promotes the dignity of the speaker, poor listening diminishes him. In his message for the 56th World Day of Communications, Pope Francis refers to a great diplomat of the Holy See, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, who used to speak of the "martyrdom of patience" needed to listen and be heard in negotiations with the most difficult parties, in order to obtain the greatest possible good in conditions of limited freedom. He continues, "...even in less difficult situations, listening always requires the virtue of patience, together with the ability to allow oneself to be surprised by the truth, even if only a fragment of truth, in the person you are listening to. Only amazement enables knowledge. I think of the infinite curiosity of the child who looks at the world around them with wide-open eyes. Listening with this frame of mind — the wonder of the child in the awareness of an adult — is always enriching because there will always be something, however small, that I can learn from the other person and allow to bear fruit in my own life. **Good listening is an act of love**, because it embraces people, whereas poor listening rejects them. This is supported by Phil. 2:3-5, which emphasizes the humble mindset of Christ. In other words, good listening requires humility. Good listening asks perceptive questions. Good listening asks perceptive, open-ended questions that do not admit just yes and no answers, but gently peel the onion and probe beneath the surface. It watches carefully for non-verbal cues, but does not interrogate or pry into details the speaker does not want to share, but gradually draw them out and helps point the speaker to fresh perspectives through careful, but genuine questions. Proverbs 18:2 says, it is the fool who "takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinions" and therefore "gives an answer before he hears" (Proverbs 18:13). "The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out" (Proverbs 20:5). Good listening is a ministry. At times, listening can be a greater service than speaking. Sometimes, God simply wants to use us as a channel of his affirming love as we listen with compassion and understanding to a person's story. Good listening prepares us to speak well. Good listening can prepare a person to minister words of grace to precisely the place where the other person is in need. In this case, one should listen with the ear of God, the ear of the heart, so that such may speak the word of God. Whereas the fool "gives an answer before he hears" (Proverbs 18:13), the wise person tries to listen from a non-judgmental stance, training himself not to formulate responses until the entire story has been heard. **Good listening reflects our relationship with God**. Whoever cannot listen to his brothers or sisters will soon not be able to listen to God. The latter is the beginning of the death of the spiritual life. Whoever thinks that his time is too valuable to spend keeping quiet will eventually have no time for God and his brother, but only

for himself and for his own follies. Good listening is a great means of grace in the dynamics of true Christian fellowship. Not only is it a channel through which God continues to pour out His grace into our lives, but it is also his way of using us as his means of grace in the lives of others.

Feedback: According to our Director, communication is incomplete without feedback. Thus, feedback is the response produced by the receiver and perceived by the source. The receiver responds and reacts to the message. This is called feedback. Feedback, whether verbal or non-verbal, helps the speaker or sender to become more aware of himself and of his action. Below is an excerpt from his lecture on “Effective Communication between Husband and Wife...” on how interpersonal communication with all its elements can promote effective communication.

Interpersonal Communication

This takes place between at least two persons (source and receiver) who have interdependent relationship between them. In *Human Communication: An Interpersonal Perspective*, S. L. Tubbs (1974) maintains that for any form of interpersonal communication to occur, the following conditions must be present:

- All parties in the communication event must be in close proximity;
- All parties must send and receive messages;
- These messages must include both verbal and non-verbal stimuli

Principles of Interpersonal Communication

- Interpersonal communication is a package of signals: In this case, verbal and non-verbal messages reinforce and consolidate each other. When there is disagreement between the verbalized words and non-verbal cues, one begins to question the credibility of the speaker.
- Interpersonal Communication involves content and relationship messages: Oftentimes, this occurs between the employer and the employee.
- Interpersonal communication is a process of adjustment/accommodation: It involves learning the other person’s signals, how they are used and what they mean in order to share a common communication system.
- Interpersonal communication is inevitable, irreversible and unrepeatable: It is inevitable because you cannot (not) communicate since you communicate even without knowing. It is irreversible because you cannot withdraw the message you have conveyed. It is unrepeatable because everything and everyone is constantly changing.

Interpersonal Competence

This refers to the ability to know that in certain contexts and with certain listeners, one topic is appropriate and another is not. It also includes understanding the rules of non-verbal communication such as touch, physical closeness, etc. Interpersonal competence entails the following:

- Develop interpersonal skills: these will be greatly promoted through self-assessment.
- Competence in listening: Usually, poor listeners don’t make good communicators. Listening requires action by the listener and not a passive process that simply happens when the listeners opens his or her ears.
- Competence in critical thinking: It entails clear and unprejudiced way of reasoning. Without this, there can be no competent exchange of ideas, which is communication *par excellence*.
- Competence in culture: This involves everything about a people which is transmitted through communication and learning. Competence is very important here, because communication that is effective in one culture may not be in another culture.
- Competence in ethics: the decisions you make regarding communication are guided not only by what you consider effective but also by what you consider right.

Some Hints on Interpersonal Relationship: What a Good Listener Should Do

Good listening is the secret of a successful interpersonal communication. Good listening is difficult and requires intense training. To engage in good interpersonal communication, one must do the following:

- Become still: You must allow another's words to pass through without resistance.
- Pay attention: You must pay attention so as to receive the words and their meaning from the speaker.
- Stop every other activity: Indeed, exclude all else when the speaker is speaking. Good communication cannot take place when you the listener are distracted.
- Regard the Speaker: Good communication requires true human regard for the speaker, at all levels. Observe his behaviour—is he calm or upset, urgent or casual? What is the tone of the voice?
- Don't Interrupt: Effective conversation requires that you do not interrupt unless you need a clarification to understand what the speaker is saying. Generally, interrupting implies that the listener is formulating a response before the communication is complete.
- Practise silence: To be a good communicator, interior and exterior silence is very important.
- Be Comfortable: Be comfortable with yourself, without cutting in, out of self-defence.
- Don't use bad words: Your participation in the communication process should always be characterized by the kind of simplicity that allows for entering the meaning of another. W. Martin as quoted in J. Maurus (p. 49) notes that "Bad language is designed to heighten and exaggerate the differences among men, instead of finding and surveying the common ground of agreement."

For effective communication to take place between two persons (husband and wife), there must be the "principle of inter-subjectivity". This principle holds that the two parties in interpersonal communication must treat each other as subjects or equals, and not as objects. Inter-subjectivity admits of exchange of roles between the two parties in interpersonal communication, whereby each party performs the role of source and receiver at different intervals. Fr. Ajiga explains this with this simple slogan, "I speak, you listen; you speak, I listen".

Effective interpersonal relationship can be sustained only when husband and wife treat each other as subjects or equals in the communication process, and not as objects. In this connection, Gary D'Angelo argues that, "In our day-to-day communication, you and I tend to treat others primarily as objects or primarily as persons. We rarely treat them as exclusively one way or the other, but when we are treating them primarily as objects, we are not allowing interpersonal communication to happen, and when we are treating them primarily as humans, we are" (J. Maurus, p. 42).

CONCLUSION:

ComWEEK Celebration has come and gone. In Lokoja Diocese, it was delayed due to some circumstances beyond our control, which were made known to the Diocesan Bishop, with the exception of St. Clement's Chaplaincy, Lokoja, that began their own on schedule. The kidnap of one of our priests, Fr. Christopher Onotu, Parish Priest of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Parish, Obangede, actually caused a great disservice to the ComWEEK Celebration in the Diocese. Indeed, till date, Fr. Onotu is still in captivity for twenty one full days as at the time of writing this report. This made Parishes not to take the ComWEEK Celebrations seriously. The report given here is the true celebration carried out by the parishes mentioned above. Other Parishes merely read the Pope's message, recited the Communications Day Prayer and took the collection. Indeed, there were no reports from them to the Director, despite the great emphasis and wide publicity given to the celebration,

Lokoja Diocese acknowledges the efforts made by the National Directorate of Social Communications, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Abuja, to compile the 52-page Booklet for this celebration. However, the Diocese is suggesting to the National Body that in subsequent celebrations, the daily topics for the ComWEEK Celebrations in Parishes should be made into a much

smaller booklet, where each of the topics will have been treated by an expert in that field, much like what is done at Catechetical Week or Bible Week or Laity Week. Let Communications Week booklet adopt that method. If this suggestion is taken, one would not expect to see more than a 20-page booklet in subsequent celebrations.

Finally, the National Director of Social Communications, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Mike Umoh, at one of his lectures during the ComWEEK Celebrations, proposed that our simple or penny Catechism and other doctrines of the Church should be put in a cartoon form for our children or catechumens to understand. This is an idea that most Catholics would embrace, including myself. However, the question is “Who will put it in a cartoon form?” Lokoja Diocese is humbly requesting the Directorate of Social Communications to do that for the Nigerian Church, as soon as possible, hopefully by the year 2023 or 2024. Otherwise, it will remain a theory that will never see the light of the day! If that is done, it will ease the burden that trained catechists and catechists-in-training are bearing academically in order to work in the Lord’s vineyard. They are subjected to serious academic work, sometimes much harder than the one given to seminarians; indeed, some of them find themselves in so very complex academic situation that they find extremely difficult to overcome. Thus, with the arrival of the Catechism of Catholic Doctrines in Cartoon, hopefully by next year, such catechists will certainly be happy. I say “Kudos” to our officials at the Directorate of Social Communications, CSN, Abuja, for the job well done!



Rev. Fr. Mark Ajiga
Director, Social Communications Department,
Catholic Diocese of Lokoja.

j. ISSELE UKU

2022 World Communication Day: Imperatives Of Listening

By Chukwudi Asoya

World Communications Day is a day set aside by the Catholic faithful to recognise and honour those in Catholicism in the Media front (Catholic Media Workers).

According to Sir Austin Mawah and Princes Mike Oputa, some of the founders of the Issele-uku Diocese Catholic Media and practitioners, the day was special during which messages of the Pope were read and prayers offered for media workers in the Catholic faith.

The 2022 message from His Holiness, Pope Francis, titled, "Listening with the ear of the heart", draws attention to the word "listen" which is decisive in the grammar of communication and a condition for genuine dialogue.

His Holiness Pope Francis noted that media workers were losing the ability to listen to those before them in the normal course of everyday relationship and when debating the most important issues of civil life.

He wrote that at the same time, listening was undergoing important new development in the field of communication and information through the various podcast audio messages available that served to confirm that listening was still essential in human communications.

Pope Francis in his message wrote that "the boundless desire to be heard often remains hidden, but that challenges anyone who is called upon to be an educator or format, or who otherwise performs a communicative role, parents and teachers, pastors and pastoral workers, communication professionals and others who carry out social or political services.

From the pages of the scripture, we learn that listening means not only the perception of sound, but is essentially linked to the dialogical relationship between God and humanity. "

Faith comes through listening" Rom. 10:17. The initiative, fact is God who speaks to us all and to whom we respond by listening to him, in the end, even the listening comes from his grace as with the case of a newborn child who responds to the gaze and the voice of his or her parents, either mother or father.

Among the five senses, the one favoured by God seems to be the hearing, because it is less invasive, more discreet than sight, and therefore leaves the human being more free.

Pope Francis noted that listening corresponds to the humble style of God. It is the action that allows God to reveal himself as the one who, by speaking, creates man and woman in his own image, and by listening recognises them as his partners in dialogue. God loves humanity, that's why he addresses his words to them and he inclines his ear to listen to them.

He added that God always reveals himself by communicating freely with human and man and woman are asked to tune in and be willing to listen.

Fundamental, listening is a dimension of love.

There are types of hearing that are not listening, but it's opposite, eavesdropping, and spying, exploiting others for our own gains and interest is an ever-present temptation that nowadays seems to have become acute in the age of social networks.

Good communication does not try to impress the public with a soundbite with the aim of ridiculing the other person, but pays attention to the reason of the other person and tries to grasp the complexity of reality.

k. WARRI

REPORT OF THE 2022 COMMUNICATIONS WEEK CELEBRATION, HELD FROM SUNDAY 22ND-SUNDAY 29TH MAY 2022

The 2022 communications week was marked in the Catholic Diocese of Warri from Sunday 22nd – Sunday 29th May 2022.

The weeklong activity was held with lecture/talks taking place at the parish level across the Diocese.

On Wednesday 25th may 2022 took another dimension as it was not just celebrated at the parish level. On this date, the Directorate of social communications played host to all Catechists, Marriage instructors and counselors within the Diocese at St. Jude Catholic Church G.R.A Effurun. At that event, two interesting lectures were delivered. While the Diocesan Chaplain of the Family and Human Life Unit gave a lecture on the topic “Abuses in Marriage; Causes, Effects and Solutions’, Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Anamali delivered a lecture on the topic “Marital Crises, Divorce and Separation: the position of the Catholic Church.

The Grand Finale of the Communications week cum celebration of the Silver jubilee of the print Media in the Catholic Diocese of Warri was held on Saturday 28th may 2022 at St. Jude Catholic Church G.R.A Effurun beginning with the sacrifice of the Holy Mass.

Part of activities for that day was a special thanksgiving for a successful weeklong celebration, the inauguration of the Diocesan body of Catholic Entertainers Association of Nigeria (CAEAN), and Diocesan Body of SIGNIS NIGERIA, and the launching of a book written by the Director Rev. Fr. Thaddeus Okpowodu, titled “Use of social media in the evangelization efforts of the Catholic Diocese of Warri”

The celebration of the 2022 communication week ended with thanksgiving Masses and a special collection held at parish levels on Sunday 29th May 2022.

Rev. Fr. Thaddeus Okpowodu

Director

L. HOLY GHOST COLLEGE, SANKERA

Report on the celebration of the maiden Communications Week at Holy Ghost College, Sankera, Benue State, Nigeria.

By: Fr. Kuha INDYER, CSSp

Introduction

Holy Ghost College, Sankera, is a boarding secondary school for boys, located in Katsina-Ala Diocese. The school belongs to the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, also known as the Spiritans. It was established in the year 2006. The school has a chapel in which Mass is said in on a daily basis. Some members of the host community join the school community for Mass on Sundays. The celebration of the ComWEEK was carried out for the whole week and all the 86 students of the school participated actively. Two seminarians, two Spiritan aspirants and the two priests running the school participated fully in the week. Some days we had two or three persons joining us from the host community.

Content of the Celebration

We followed the booklet published by the National Directorate of Social Communications for the celebration of the week from cover to cover. We took particular note of the following from the well packaged guideline:

- People find it easier to believe in us if we witness to our faith even in trying moments. Even when our blood is shed for Christ, more people are attracted to the religion as it is said that the blood of Christians is the seed of Christianity. In our contemporary society, the case of Deborah Yakubu, who was killed by fanatic Muslims in Sokoto made even some Muslims to convert to Christianity in Nigeria and in other countries around the world.
- The world needs witnesses more than teachers.
- In parishes, we face difficulties such as:
 - Death of members, Persecutions by antichrists,
 - Refusal of priests to bury certain individuals (it is discouraging when someone who attends Mass and contributes his quota to the development of the church is denied burial rites for one reason or the other).
- Lack of commitment by members of a community
- Divisions in the parish community among the clergy (it is discouraging when priests in a parish cannot live in peace, and they form factions - a faction could be for the parish priest, and the other for the curate) as well as divisions among the laity.
- Using a projector at Mass to project the priest's preaching could be distractive.
- Some sanctuaries become a distraction in some of our churches. We recommended that what should be conspicuous on the sanctuary should be the Cross/Crucifix. Some churches jam-pack images, for instance, the picture of the Last Supper, the Cross, Paintings or pictures of Saints, devotional altars on the sanctuary, decorations with clothes as if it is Christmas dressing. If there is anything to go with the Cross/Crucifix, it should be the painting or stature

of Mary and John the Beloved, as Jesus told Mary, her mother, Mother, behold thy Son, and to John, Son, behold thy Mother.

- The need for the education of the youth in media literacy is critical in our time because:
 - Social media has made the youth to become lazy in terms of scholarly work.
 - Social media addiction has caused a lot of problems for the youth.
 - The use of social media should be promoted in our schools because e-learning is gaining ground in many countries around the world, if our children are not taught in this regard, they will be lagging behind. To do this, the use of phones in schools should be permitted as most Catholic schools do not permit its use at the moment.
 - Media ethics should be given priority in this regard as lack of its knowledge can lead to a lot of chaos in the society.

(Fr. Kuha INDYER, CSSp is the founding Prinicipal of Holy Ghost College, Sankera.)

I. DOMINICAN SISTERS OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

REPORT ON COMMUNICATION WEEK (ComWEEK) CELEBRATION. DOMINICAN SISTERS OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA, OUR LADY SEAT OF WISDOM, DELEGATION OF NIGERIA.

Communications Week (ComWEEK) programme, as an extension of the World Communication Day, was celebrated by the Dominican Sisters following the directives of the National Directorate of Social Communications, Catholic Secretariat Nigeria. The celebration hinged on two folds, creating awareness of the ComWEEK and media literacy at all levels.

The congregation participated in the celebration at Delegation level, community level and the apostolate.

DELEGATION LEVEL

At Delegation level, we began with media literacy lecture for all the perpetual vow sisters of the delegation-Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Our Lady seat of wisdom Delegation of Nigeria. A webinar was held on 23rd April, 2022. This was our way of beginning to educate the sisters on the use of media tools for evangelisation and administration. The resource person, Very Rev. Fr. Mike Umoh, the National Director for Social Communication in Nigeria led the sisters to reflect on ‘Digital Media an Indispensable Tool for the Mission today’. In the same vein, the medium was used to create awareness of the ComWEEK programme coming up from 22nd – 29th May, 2022.

COMMUNITY LEVEL

A week before ComWEEK we created video clips from the community and apostolate in order to create awareness of the communications week programme in the society.

The programme for ComWEEK was downloaded for each community from the e-copy made available by the National office and the website provided, to ease participation. Among the events that took place were:

- Enthronement of the Word of God (both in the communities and apostolate, the Word of God was ceremoniously enthroned),
- Different reflections read at vesper from the ComWEEK materials provided,
- Parish level - In Shendam community our sisters took turns to teach the parishioners on the different themes allotted for each day,
- Scripture Reading,
- Prayer moment for Communication.

APOSTOLATE LEVEL

A day celebration cum workshop was held in the Dominican Sisters’ College Abatete. The children were told about the origin of ComWEEK. It was an avenue to educate them on Pope Francis teaching on Listening. Particularly a theme (Listening as an aid to education) was coined to suite educational purpose.

The children were divided into groups to discuss and find out what helps and hinders listening in the school community. At the end an action slogan “**listening promotes conducive environment,**

conducive environment promotes active listening” was arrived at to help the children live listening in the school.

Sr. Jacqueline Anurukem O.P
Directress of communication

m. NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR

Communication Office of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Nigeria ComWEEK Activities Report

The Communication office of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur started promoting the ComWEEK activities right after the Seminar for Directors of Communications for Diocese and Religious Congregations in May 2022 by the National Directorate of Social Communication at the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Abuja.

Sr. Priscilla the Director of the Communications, sensitized the sisters in her community and also spoke to the large gathering of the Sisters of Notre Dame at their annual Assembly in April about the planned activities of ComWEEK. She distributed the ComWEEK posters to the Heads of Schools and encouraged them to actively participate in their various dioceses during the ComWEEK.

The office produced a short video promo on ComWEEK for our YouTube channel. On Tuesday of the ComWEEK, 24th May 2022, Sr. Priscilla had a two-hour PowerPoint presentation to the Seminarians at Saints Simon and Jude Minor Seminary, Kuje. The Rector, Rev Fr. Michael Iroh, CM, the Auxiliaries, Senior Seminarians and the entire students were all in attendance.

The Seminar emphasized the central message of the ComWEEK which is “growing Media Literacy at the grassroots -parishes/Institutions...” the message of Pope Francis for this year’s World Communication Day centering on “Listening with the ear of the Heart,” and the relationship between the church and the media/Communication. There was an interactive session on the question. “how is the act of listening shaping the life of young people?”

Sr. Priscilla also conducted the same seminar with the students at Notre Dame Girls’ Academy on Thursday 26th of May and lastly with the youth group from St. Anthony’s Catholic Church, Bamishi. There were different approaches to the interactive sessions. While Notre Dame Girls’ focused on “how the media literacy input will help them make better decisions about what they see on the media,” the youths had discussions on the effect of social media in the life of young people.

Support Documents

I shall attach to this report a copy of our **ComWEEK promo** from our Communication office, **two part videos** on the Seminar at Saints Simon & Jude Seminary, **a photo slide** of the three activities and a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. Later on, I shall send a short video from Notre Dame Girls’ Academy, Kuje.

Director: Sister Priscilla Aliu, SND
YouTube Channel: Notre Dame Catholic Media
June 1, 2022.

n. **CAMPAN AHIARIA**

“Promoting Harmony Through Effective Listening and Dialogue”

A Communiqué issued by Catholic Media Practitioners Association of Nigeria, (CAMPAN), Ahiara Diocese, at the end of the celebration of the 56th Annual World Communications Day, held at the Maria Mater Ecclesiae Cathedral, Ahiara Mbaise, Imo State, May 29, 2022.

Preamble

We, the Catholic communication professionals, under the aegis of Catholic Media Practitioners Association of Nigeria (CAMPAN) and Catholic Artistes and Entertainers Association of Nigeria (CAEAN), Ahiara diocese, gathered at Maria Mater Ecclesiae Cathedral, Ahiara, Mbaise, on May 29, 2022, for the celebration of the 56th World Communications Day.

During the ceremony, the message of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for the year’s celebration titled *“LISTENING WITH THE EAR OF THE HEART”* was elaborately discussed and digested. After the occasion and having prayerfully deliberated on matters of importance to the Catholic Church in Ahiara diocese and our country, Nigeria, we hereby issue the following Communique:

1. World Communications Day

We applaud the establishment of the World Communications Day, by the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI on Sunday, May 7, 1967, which became a watershed in life of the Church. The establishment of the celebration came in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, which realized it must engage fully with the modern world, by encouraging deep reflection on the opportunities and challenges that modern means of social communication afford the Church to communicate the gospel.

The Pontiff and his successors have consistently recognised the positive opportunities the communications media afford for enriching human lives with the values of truth, beauty and goodness, but also the possible negative effects of spreading less noble values and pressurising minds and consciences with a multiplicity of contradictory appeals.

2. The 2022 Celebration

After digesting the Pope’s message, in which he underscores that listening involves more than simply the sense of hearing, we register our total agreement with his further thought that “true listening is a foundation of genuine relationships, and is foundational to the relationship between God and humanity.” In fact, he remarked, “listening corresponds to the humble style of God,” who reveals Himself by speaking, and by listening to men and women recognises them as His partners in dialogue.

We join the pontiff in deploring “the lack of listening, which we experience so often in daily life, where, instead of listening to each other, we often “talk past one another”. We assert that good communication does not try to impress the public with a soundbite, with the aim of ridiculing the other person. Instead, it pays attention to the reasons of the other person and tries to grasp the complexity of reality. In the midst of affairs in the society, we stand with the pope to assert that “it is sad when, even in the Church, ideological alignments are formed and listening disappears, leaving sterile opposition in its wake.”

We express immense delight with the theme chosen by the Holy Father for this year's celebration, viz: *“LISTENING WITH THE EAR OF THE HEART”* and observe that it is appropriate given the happenings in the society today, especially in Nigeria and the Ahiara Diocese in particular.

We equally received with joy, the message of the Apostolic Administrator of Ahiara diocese, Most Rev. Lucius Iwejuru Ugorji on this year’s celebration. He used the opportunity to “encourage all

Christ's faithful to constantly do their best in promoting the work of God through proper communication which in a way, is the main conduit for evangelization.”

3. The CBCN and Introduction of ComWEEK

We are equally delighted that in Nigeria, the 2022 World Communications Day has taken a new dimension, with the introduction of the Communication Week (ComWEEK) by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN). We commend this unique initiative which was flagged-off in dioceses across the country on Sunday, May 22, and ended on Sunday, May 29, 2022. In our diocese we did our best to participate in the activities

While affirming that “the [media](#) in themselves are gifts from [God](#) for the good of society,” on the flip side, the Nigerian bishops noted that “the [media](#) are sometimes manipulative and destructive.” We therefore commend the seminal effort of our dear bishops in establishing the ComWEEK and its programme which are aimed at promoting media literacy at the grassroots in parishes.

We praise the efforts of the priests in charge of social communication in Ahiara diocese towards the successful organizing of the celebration in the diocese. We urge them to keep up the good work in the Lord's vineyard.

4. Events in the Church

We are grateful to the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for the appointment of our Apostolic Administrator, Most Rev. Lucius Iwejuru Ugorji, as the new Archbishop of Owerri Archdiocese, and the Metropolitan of Owerri Ecclesiastical province. We pray for his successful installation ceremony which comes up on June 23, 2022 at the Maria Assumpta Cathedral Owerri.

Similarly, we received with great joy the news of the election of our Apostolic Administrator as the new President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria. We pray God to continue to sustain him as he shoulders these huge responsibilities.

5. The State Of Our Nation

We observed with dismay, the sad state of affairs in our country's socio-political landscape, which is literally a deep source of worry for all well-meaning citizens. While some schools of thought see the country as one tottering on the brink of collapse, others have concluded, rather definitively, that the country is irredeemably a failed state.

In the face of this scenario, we enjoin the hierarchy and various leadership organs of the Church not to relent in their prophetic mission. By prophetic here, is meant not merely the prediction of the future, but the mission and task of reinterpreting the past, explaining the will of God for the present, and accordingly, showing the right path to the future. The wonderful efforts of Bishops Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto diocese and Godfrey Igwebuike Onah of Nsukka diocese are highly commendable. We pray for more strong voices in standing up against injustice and bad governance in the country.

6. Our Deep Concerns – Is the Church not listening to our diocese?

Members therefore, appealed to the Pope to apply what he has taught the world in the 2022 World Communications Day in solving this problem, by listening to the people of Ahiara diocese, and appoint a substantive bishop for the place.

The inability of the Holy See to appoint a substantive bishop for Ahiara diocese after nearly twelve years of the demise of her pioneer bishop, was presented as a case of deep concern. This frustrating scenario prompted the question as whether the Pope has not been listening to the cries and prayers of the clergy and laity of Ahiara diocese. Members made passionate filial appeals to the Pope to apply

the Message of the 2022 World Communications Day in solving the problem, by lending a paternal ear to the prayers of the people of Ahiara and appoint a substantive bishop for the Diocese.

7. Conclusion

As we conclude this Communiqué, we state that as members of CAMPAN and CAEAN, we will continue to play our vital role in promoting the work of the Church as well as in projecting a good image of Ahiara Diocese.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mater Ecclesiae, and the Patroness of our diocese, may we experience a new springtime: an era of truth, justice and peace in the church and nation. Amen.

Signed

Mr. Ben. Osuagwu

President, CAMPAN, Ahiara Diocese

Mrs. Vivian Iwu

Secretary, CAMPAN, Ahiara Diocese

Mr. Chrisogonus Nwachukwu

President, CAEAN, Ahiara Diocese

Ms. Esther Obasi

Secretary, CAEAN, Ahiara Diocese