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A communication full of values

Meeting of the bishops responsible for social communications and spokespersons of the Catholic Bishops' Conferences in Europe

Glasgow, Scotland, 16-19 November 2016



All communications are always a transmission of values. Even unwarily, when two people engage in dialogue, their speeches always contain the values that testify to their beliefs. The pluralism, also as far as values are concerned, that distinguishes our European societies is a challenge and an opportunity for communication by the Church. It is about the ability to build relationships, beginning from listening to the other person, it is about the witness of our beliefs rather than a proclamation of principles, as well as about our believing in the Truth, which is

Christ, that true Church communication is at stake.

In Glasgow, bishops and experts of communication of the Church in Europe gathered to discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with a communication that is to be also "rich" of values. In times marked by an intense individualism, where persons, with their desires and emotions, become the measure of all decisions and communications, a personal and consistent witness of one's convictions is seemingly the most important and effective means to say who are and what we believe in. In Church communication, testimony is, in fact, the first value by which the Church can and must communicate.

Through the contribution of two experts, the philosopher **Mikolaj Slawkowski-Rode** (University of Warsaw) and Dr. **Mary Neal** (University of Strathclyde-Glasgow), participants analyzed the role of values in current society, their formation, their importance, and the way media use them. Later on, bishops and communication experts discussed about some examples of how values are used in the areas of marketing, politics, and cinema.

Being aware that communication always needs to be educated, the meeting also included an insight on the communication of values by Prof. **Bruno Mastroiani** (Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, Rome) and an introduction to the protocol for the use of social media in the dioceses and parishes of Scotland by **Annie McGuiree**, a BBC social media expert. The meeting was also enriched by a visit to the headquarters of BBC Scotland in Glasgow and the Kelvingrove Art Gallery which houses the famous "Christ of St John of the Cross" by Salvator Dali.

This event was preceded by the annual meeting of press officers and spokespersons of the Catholic Bishops' Conferences in Europe, during which the communication operators of the Church in Europe discussed on a number of current issues: communication about the topic of migration, the World Meeting of the Families in Dublin (2018), the World Youth Day in Krakow (July 2016), the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Fatima. The Prefect of the Secretariat for Communication of the Holy See, **Mgr. Dario Edoardo Viganò**, described the communication reform plan of the Holy See and its implementation. Together with the spokespersons and the press officers, some areas of collaboration have been identified to develop the internal communication of the Church, specifically between the Church in Europe and the Holy See.

The annual meeting of the spokespersons and press officers ended with a session on Europe, from the point of view of institutions and the papal Magisterium, animated by the Secretaries General of COMECE and CCEE.

The work, presided over by the Vice-President of CCEE, **Mgr. Stanislav Gadecki**, and by the President of the CCEE Commission for Social Communications, **H. Ex. Mgr. José Ignacio Munilla Aguirre**, took place in Glasgow at the invitation of the local Archbishop, **H. Ex. Mgr. Philip Tartaglia**, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland.

The **2017 Meeting** of the spokespersons and press officers will take place in **Sofia**, Bulgaria, on June 7-10, 2017.