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## This is how technological change affects society. In Rieti the Pope's educational challenge on the "new language"

April 29, 2022 in Health

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ROME. The Church has always announced the Gospel through the channels active in a precise historical moment. It is easy to trace the equivalent of current tweets and posts in the history of evangelization. In fact, innovative forms of language are by no means extraneous to the proclamation of the Gospel. They will not be tweets, posts or blogs because the sign of the cross or the sound of bells are obviously much more than a flash mob and a trill. But they precede its form, recall the mystery and still last. After all, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14). Listen with the ear of the heart, then. This is where the theme of the Communication Festival inspired by the message of Pope Francis comes into play. "We can understand a great question that is both cultural and educational because every technological change also produces an anthropological change – underlines the Pope -. We need to clarify the links between the new digital language that supplants analog and the life of our children, adolescents, young people, adults and the elderly ".

### Innovative communication

The Church speaks the current language of social media: in recent history when Benedict XVI inaugurated his presence on Twitter from the screen of an iPad, opening eight accounts in as many languages, to which the one in Latin was added shortly after. The mass media linked that event to the gesture of Pius XI, who in 1931 from the microphones of Vatican Radio launched his first radio message and, even earlier, the blessing impressed by Leo XIII in 1896 on the film of the Lumière brothers. The film of the cinema and the microphone of a radio on one side and an iPad open on a social network on the other, constitute different forms of communication corresponding to almost two eras but, as radio has represented the transmission of information on a wide range, thus Twitter represents connective and shared knowledge, responding to today's active way of communicating.

### Festival

The Communication Festival, hosted from 21 to 29 May by the bishop of Rieti, Domenico Pompili, president of the Episcopal Commission for culture and social communications, will be preceded by a cycle of events all dedicated to children, adolescents and their families. We will talk about how to make proper use of social media, but there will also be events dedicated to children that will leverage physical experience.



#### **(R) digital evolution**

(R) digital evolution: here is the Communication Festival. The presentation of the Communication Festival in Rieti started from the “why”. The national event promoted by the Paulines and the Paulines is organized this year by the diocese of Rieti and it was Bishop Domenico Pompili who explained the reasons in the Auditorium Varrone. To an audience made up of citizens, communication operators and institutional figures, the prelate indicated the prospect of increasing awareness of the media landscape in which we live: a mixed environment, in which everyone is with one foot on-line and one off-line . A situation that “is reshaping our daily lives with disruptive effects in interpersonal relationships, in individual conscience, in economic and social dynamics, in the spiritual experience itself”, said the bishop, evoking the risk of being conditioned by algorithms.

#### **Events**

The events of the Communication Festival intend to involve citizens at various levels and attract communication operators from all over Italy, enhancing the distinctive features of the territory with the aim of promoting knowledge of its beauties and its history, relying on the Franciscan heart of the Valle Santa and the characteristics of its villages and its natural landscape. All this without forgetting to keep a spotlight on the themes of reconstruction following the 2016 earthquake. All events will be free and open to the public without reservations, subject to availability. The dense intervention of Father Paolo Benanti started from the relationship between generations, called to deepen the line drawn by Monsignor Pompili. The Franciscan friar, an expert in digital technologies, artificial intelligence and innovation management, began the speech with a simple observation: “The direction of information has been reversed, once he was the senior teacher who taught young people the profession, today it is the grandchildren who teach grandparents how to use the tablet ». A reversal that questions us and places us in front of enormous choices and challenges with respect to which the Festival can be a stimulus to open up, to transform innovation into development, “putting man at the center”, a bit like what happened in Renaissance.

#### **Human wealth**

Sister Cristina Beffa, who came to Rieti to represent the Paulines and the Paulines, made reference to this human wealth. In telling the story of the Festival, she traced the reasons to the need to focus the lights on the Pope’s message to help people reflect on communication. And this year’s theme, with her invitation to open your heart and listen to others, makes the primary strings of communication and humanity vibrate together. Also entrusted to Sister Cristina the task of explaining the working method of the Festival, with the effort to reach the result through various initiatives and various languages, promoting creativity, encounter, solidarity. Among the figures involved in the Communication Festival, the founder of Libera, Don Luigi Ciotti; the president of Slow Food, Carlo Petrini; the linguist Luca Serianni; the plant neurobiologist Stefano Mancuso; the sociologist Chiara Giaccardi. Among the journalists, Lucia Annunziata (half an hour more, Rai3), Enrico Mentana (director of Tg La7), Giovanni Grasso (director of the press office of the Presidency of the Republic), Paolo Ruffini (prefect of the Dicastery for communication of the Holy See ), David Puente (deputy director of Open.online) and Marco Tarquinio (director of Avvenire).

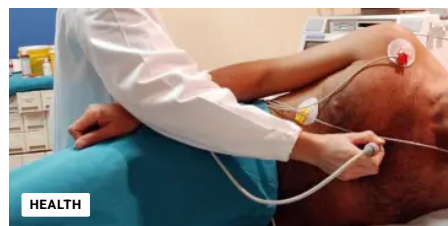
#### **Language**

A Church that knows how to surprise exists: not only lessons with liturgies but also mass media communication and online practices to communicate. The heart is always the Good News, the Gospel. The Announcement runs, it is present, but precisely because of its living and life-giving nature it cannot remain a letter, it must become proximity, encounter, dialogue. In a tag cloud, that kind of graphic cloud where the size of the written words is proportional to their recurrence, these would be

the key words of Francis's pontificate: proximity, encounter, dialogue. At the heart of communication, the people who communicate have a strong relationship with each other. And so while the social attention, strongly favored by technological innovation, has now shifted from the medium to the message, many, too many and often, in Pope Francis the need to always establish a relationship, in any communicative context, remains marked because the message is affirmed with authenticity and effectiveness. It will not be strictly social, but the ability to make a sort of teaching in the air is innovative and clearly visible in Francesco. The reference is to the meeting on the plane with journalists, during his travels abroad, which have become a real exercise of the magisterium, with demanding and rather explicit declarations; but also to the constant references to his ministers, in reviewing the long homilies and the limits of ecclesiastical communication as a whole: if the Son of God, Word of the living God, became flesh, he could not have come to seek and save (involve) what was lost (Lk 19:10).

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