



INTERNATIONAL UNION
SUPERIORS GENERAL



Sr. Patricia Murray ibvm, UISG Executive Secretary

We know that the digital world “has changed the way we conceive of reality and consequently relate to ourselves, one another, our surroundings and even to God.”

This is opening sentence of section 17 of the Synthesis Report from the Synod document titled “A synodal Church in Mission.” The whole section speaks of the digital culture as a crucial dimension of the Church’s witness in contemporary culture and the importance of being present in all places where people seek meaning and love – on the phone and internet, on social media, Instagram, Facebook, tik tok and all the emerging other places. During the Synod there was much sharing on this new missionary frontier. It is calling for the same generosity, daring and creatively which we saw in the missionaries who travelled with Christ to new geographical frontiers. Young people in particular – inhabit this digital universe – among them are younger religious and consecrated men and women. Different generations based on age – from baby boomers to generations X, Z and Alpha – use technology in different ways. However a new Generation has emerged called “Generation C” include people from a very young age to 100+ who inhabit the digital space constantly and with ease.

A good communicator, Pope Francis, has mentioned many times is someone who “builds bridges between persons and communications without exclusion” because “the essence of real communication is love.” While it is important to have high professional standards and to learn all the skills and techniques needed it is important not to lose sight of the purpose communication and the role of the communicator. The communicator needs to reflect on how God’s word and God’s love can guide us as we communicate with others.

The digital world can be an environment rich in humanity; a network not of wires but of people. Networks are new ways of creating community of both the like-minded and more importantly with those who are diverse in many different ways. In Pope Francis we see a person who communicates by his words, gestures, images, stories and by his silence. During these synodal times we

are learning the importance of silence and reflection before we speak or before we respond to another. We have also heard how important it is to listen deeply with the heart, not only with the ears. When we do that we reach a much deeper level of communication.

Images, photos, stories, cartoons, articles, video and audio files can all carry profound messages. There is a particular challenge in today's world of war and conflict, of environmental destruction and of harsh, brutal words and images to focus on the beauty of the world and the beauty of human relationships which transcend division and hatred. During a conference last week we saw a video clip of Women Wage Peace - where Israeli and Palestinian mothers cry out for peace for their children. Their voices and their faces still stay with me.

During this difficult time in the world you as communicators need to help humanity to build a culture of encounter, of closeness, of mercy and of tenderness. As communicators you can be an important presence and witness in the digital world, committed to building a society which promotes human dignity, justice and care for our common home.

May I wish you every blessing for the week ahead?