



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Bishops Commission for Evangelisation

50th World Communications Day
Media release
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Communicating the Power of Mercy

Celebrating the 50th World Communications Day, the Australian Catholic Media Council is launching a grassroots initiative by inviting each diocese to share local stories about '*Communication and Mercy*'.

This year, Pope Francis has chosen the theme '*Communication and Mercy*' and invites us all to reflect on this relationship.

Launching the initiative ahead of World Communications Day, celebrated on Sunday 8 May 2016, Bishop Peter Comensoli, Bishops Delegate for Media, said, 'The stories will celebrate the local heroes in our parishes – the agents of mercy and compassion in our midst – and encourage further local engagement and inspiration by using the hashtag #Thepowerofmercy'.

The initiative will run from World Communications Day, Sunday 8 May 2016, until the conclusion of the Year of Mercy on Sunday 20 November 2016. The stories will be told in print, broadcast or digital media platforms and will be published on the Bishops Conference website: catholic.org.au/WCD2016

In his message for the 50th World Communications Day, Pope Francis said, 'I would like to invite all people of good will to rediscover the power of mercy to heal wounded relationships and to restore peace and harmony to families and communities.'

Focusing on the Holy Father's words that 'communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance', Bishop Comensoli said, the stories may show how 'communication has the power to build bridges, to enable encounter and inclusion, and thus to enrich society'.

Bishop Comensoli explained that 'we have learnt from the hearings of the Royal Commission how empowering it is for those who have suffered to tell their stories and for those stories to be heard and believed. Perhaps the stories shared will relate to some of the pressing concerns of the community of the Church in Australia such as: listening attentively to survivors of sexual abuse; learning from those who have experienced family violence; awakening to the richness of marriage and family life; facing political challenges; or communicating as a young Catholic in this Year of Mercy'.

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