

MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE 56th WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

2022

*Listening
with the ear
of the heart*



The greatest need of human beings is the boundless desire to be heard.



Educators, formators, parents, teachers, pastors and pastoral workers who perform communicative roles are called to respond to this need.

There is a dialogical relationship between God and humanity. “*Shema*’ *Israel* - Hear, O Israel”
(*Dt* 6:4),

“Faith comes through listening” (*Rom* 10:17).

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

God “inclines his ear” to listen to the people.

But we tend not to listen like those listening to Stephen who, covering their ears, all turned on him at once (cf. *Acts* 7:57).

Jesus calls his disciples to evaluate the quality of their listening.

“Take heed then *how you hear*” (*Lk* 8:18)

- ❑ The true seat of listening is the heart.
- ❑ Though young, King Solomon proved himself wise because he asked the Lord to grant him a “listening heart” (cf. 1 *Kings* 3:9).
- ❑ Saint Augustine urges to listen with the heart (*corde audire*), to receive words not outwardly through the ears, but spiritually in our hearts: “Do not have your heart in your ears, but your ears in your heart”.
- ❑ Saint Francis of Assisi exhorted his brothers to “incline the ear of the heart”.

Abraham Kaplan:

If we do not listen, our dialogue is a duologue: a monologue in two voices.

In the Church there is a great need to listen to and to hear one another.

We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the word of God.

The first service we owe to others in communion consists in listening to them.

Whoever does not know how to listen to his brother or sister will soon no longer be able to listen to God either. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

An important pastoral activity is the “apostolate of the ear”, to listen before speaking.

Apostle James exhorts: “Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak” (James 1:19). Freely giving some of our own time to listen to people is the first act of charity.



❖ There is an interior deafness worse than the physical one.

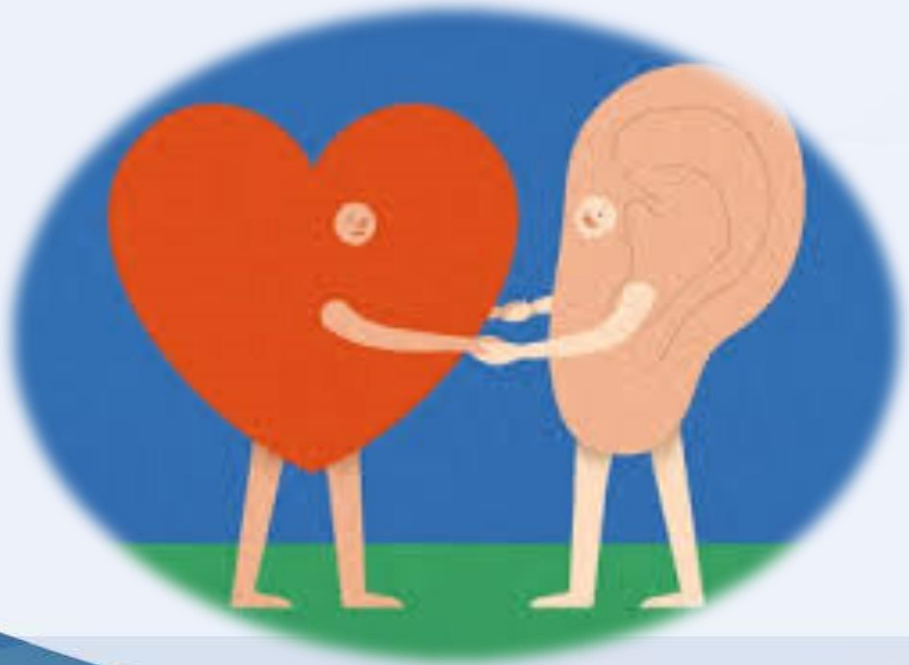
❖ Indeed, listening concerns the whole person, not just the sense of hearing.

❖ What specifically makes communication good and fully human is listening to the person in front of us, face to face.



Listening is a great skill.

**It builds trust and encourages
problem-solving but it takes practice.**



- **We listen at 125-250 wpm, think at 1000-3000 wpm**
- **75% of the time we are distracted, preoccupied or forgetful**
- **20% of the time we remember what we hear**
- **More than 35% of businesses think listening is a top skill for success**
- **Less than 2% of people have had formal education with listening**



Percentage of Communication

Mode of Communication

Formal Years of Training & Percentage of Time Used

Writing	12 years	9%
Reading	6-8 years	16 %
Speaking	1-2 years	30%
Listening	0-few hours	45%



- **Listening is the most powerful form of acknowledgment, a way of saying, “You are important.”**
- **Listening builds stronger relationships**
- **Listening promotes being heard “Seek first to understand, then be understood.” (Stephen Covey)**
- **Listening creates acceptance and openness**
- **Listening reduces stress and tension**
- **Listening is CRITICAL in conflict resolution**



We are losing the ability to listen to those in front of us, both in the normal course of everyday relationships.

At the same time, listening is undergoing important new developments in the field of communication through the various podcasts and audio messages (WCD)



Let Us Listen With The Ear Of Heart



World Communication Day 2022



Prepared by :

**Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences Office of Social Communication
(FABC OSC)**