



Word of CPAL - august 2023

## Communication at the service of the mission

With joy and gratitude, the Province of Brazil, together with the Conference of Provincials of Latin America and the Caribbean (CPAL), hosted and organized the International Day of Communication, August 7-11, at the Father Anchieta Retreat House (CARPA), in Rio de Janeiro (RJ). These were fruitful days in which 60 communicators from the Provinces of Argentina-Uruguay, Bolivia, Central America, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela, as well as from Brazilian Jesuit institutions and services, had the opportunity to reflect on how to make communication ever more effective and at the service of the mission of the Society of Jesus.

The theme chosen for the event was "Disconnecting to Connect", a provocation on how we can use communication and its tools effectively and in connection with the Universal Apostolic Preferences, which are the four points of reference for the work of Jesuits and lay Ignatian worldwide.

Communication, when used strategically and in line with our way of doing things, with our values, becomes an important ally to consolidate and extend the reach of the word of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and also to give visibility to all the work we do in caring for the most vulnerable.

In the current world, as connected as it is chaotic, we can no longer dispense with communication and its tools. Communication is a mission and therefore must be at our service in this relentless pursuit of a more just and fraternal society, giving voice to those who are systematically invisibilized and silenced.

To do this, we need to have in our communications office's professionals, Jesuits and lay people, trained to implement the communication strategies best suited to our objectives. It is also important that we are open to sharing internal and external experiences in order to constantly improve in the art and science of communication. And it was with the purpose of aligning good communication practices with our way of proceeding that the Conference was conceived by its organizers.

Thus, during the first days of the meeting, the heads of the communication offices of the Provinces that make up the CPAL were able to present in an Ignatian way the consolations and desolations they encounter in their daily work. They were also able to share how each one has developed projects and actions based on the Universal Apostolic Preferences, the CPAL Common Apostolic Project (PAC.2) and the Apostolic and Strategic Plans of their Province. This articulation and exchange of experiences is essential to strengthen and expand our work as an Apostolic Body and as a true Ignatian Communication network.

On the 4th, Brazilian communicators joined their counterparts responsible for the provincial communication offices of Latin America and the Caribbean, representing the distinct apostolic fronts at work in the country. This substantial group was introduced to the Discern platform, developed by the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), which aims to connect the Society's Universal Apostolic Fronts with society.

Participants were also able to attend two other talks on the following topics: Communication for Care, which addressed policies, protocols and positioning for effective crisis management; and How to Build a Valuable Brand.

The communicators also had an Ignatian experience, Come and See. In the garden of the CARPA, they were invited to pick four fruits in a space that simulated an orchard. This selection encouraged them to reflect on their personal experiences, intuitions, and knowledge that guided their choice. Each fruit had a picture representing one of the four Universal Apostolic Preferences, which guide the mission of the Society of Jesus and, therefore, also the work of Communication.

The Brazilian communicators also had the opportunity to reflect together on the Apostolic and Strategic Plans of the Brazilian Province and on the role and challenges of Communication based on these guiding documents.

Besides the certainty that Communication is a great ally in the realization of the mission of the Society of Jesus, another feeling that permeated the International Conference was that our differences should bring us closer, because they enrich us and are fundamental for the construction of communication projects and actions that consider the diverse realities of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In this way, I hope that our Ignatian Communication network will strengthen and grow within the Society of Jesus.

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Provincial of Brazil

