



The Challenge of Living Online

14/02/2011



Today we plunged even deeper into the theme of our Interchapter Meeting thanks to the talk of Bishop Domenico Pompili, Director of the National Office for Social Communications of the Italian Bishops Conference, and one of the promoters of the Congress held in April 2010 on the subject, *Digital Witnesses: Faces and Languages in the Cross-Media Age*.

Bishop Pompili started with an analysis of the word “abitare” (to inhabit) in reference to the digital world. “Inhabit” indicates a way of being present in a specific environment, of shaping it in a responsible way by means of our relationships. It does not concern merely “filling up” a space but “molding” it—a typically feminine attitude comparable to Mary’s “yes” at the Annunciation. In fact, her affirmative reply to the angel transformed her womb into a dwelling place for the Word.

In the Gospel, woman (Mary, the Canaanite woman, Mary Magdalene, etc.) is the receptive “place” in which meetings can take place. This is in perfect harmony with the communications revolution brought about by the Internet: a transition from unilateral communications to interactive horizontal ones. The Internet takes advantage of the feminine characteristics of hospitality, listening and the desire to *be with* others (especially through social networking).

As Bishop Pompili pointed out, the Internet offers great apostolic opportunities to the FSPs as consecrated women apostles. He urged us to live our charism in the digital world, making the most of its feminine qualities: creative and dynamic fidelity, the inseparability of spirituality and mission, sensitivity to the environment and to persons (which translates into attention to the needs of others); and use of language that is affective, empathetic and poetic rather than rigorous, detached and referential.

We want to sincerely thank Bishop Pompili for helping us see the many possibilities the Internet offers us for evangelization and for remaining perpetually *in mission*.

In the afternoon, five sisters shared with us some of the creative and dynamic apostolic initiatives that were realized in their circumscriptions/communities: a biblical correspondence course (Sr. Caterina Chung, Korea); an online magazine (Sr. Joanna Coleiro, Australia); pastoral-biblical animations (Sr. Ninfa Becker, Brazil); publishing and diffusing the Word of God (Sr. Mariuccia Pezzini, Africa); ecumenical dialogue (Sr. Beatrice Pedrolli, Romania).

This round-table discussion was broadcast on the Internet by means of a video-conference. It was our first attempt to use video-conferencing for this purpose so naturally mistakes were made but we hope to repeat the experience in the future with better results!

We want to thank our technicians (the sisters of our International Secretariat for Communications) for collaborating with us on this project and we also want to thank all of you, sisters, for tuning in to the broadcast.