

Finding Mission ONLINE

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Before taking the Public Witness class, I mostly thought of communication as speaking clearly or sharing information. Over this past semester, I came to understand something much deeper: communication is also a form of presence, responsibility, and ministry. Today, people spend much of their lives online. They learn, build relationships, search for answers, share struggles, and form opinions in digital spaces. Because of this reality, social communication is no longer separate from missionary work. The digital world has become a mission field where the Church can teach, accompany, and listen.

In this class, I learned that the Church has long recognized the importance of communication. Even before the rise of social media, the Church understood that modern forms of media could shape society and influence how people encounter truth and meaning. Today, that reality is even more visible. Many people first encounter news, values, and ideas online rather than through schools, churches, or even family conversations. As a result, digital platforms shape cultural attitudes and public conversations.

If people are gathering in digital spaces, missionaries must be willing to meet them there.

That does not simply mean posting content. It means being present in ways that reflect the Gospel. Pope Francis spoke about the need for authentic encounter online — communication that builds real relationships instead of focusing only on visibility or popularity. This course challenged me to think more

seriously about what it means to communicate as a missionary and how our words, images, and actions online can either build trust or damage it.

Words That Heal or Harm

I have seen firsthand how powerful social communication can be. During times of crisis or disaster, social media often becomes a place where people organize support, ask for prayers, share resources, and bring attention to those who are suffering. A single message can inspire generosity and connect communities across long distances.

At the same time, I have also seen how quickly misinformation, hostility, and division can spread online. False information can travel fast and create confusion or fear before people even have time to verify what they are reading. Hurtful comments and careless words can damage relationships and deepen wounds. Because communication carries so much influence, missionaries must approach it with great care and moral responsibility.

Learning to Communicate with Purpose

This class also taught me that communicating well takes practice, discipline, and good judgment. Not every message that attracts attention reflects the values of the Gospel. In today's digital culture, people are often rewarded for being loud, controversial, or self-promoting. Christian communication should be different. It should avoid

manipulation, insults, and unnecessary division. Instead, it should be rooted in honesty, humility, and respect for others.

One area that especially interested me was storytelling. A testimony, a personal reflection, or a simple story of compassion can touch hearts in ways that arguments cannot. I began to appreciate how missionaries can use storytelling to make faith more understandable and relatable.

This course also reminded me that communication is not only about speaking. It is also about listening and understanding the audience. A good missionary communicator learns how to speak in ways people can understand, especially young people who spend so much time in fast-moving digital environments. Clear language, patience, and respectful dialogue are essential. People are more likely to listen when they feel heard and respected.

I think this is especially important in public witness. A careless message can quickly damage trust, while a thoughtful and compassionate one can open the door to meaningful conversation. As missionaries, we are called not only to proclaim the Gospel but also to accompany people in their questions, struggles, and hopes.

Humility in Digital Ministry

Throughout the semester, I became more aware that communication itself can be a form of pastoral ministry. Online spaces are filled with real people carrying real burdens. Some go online searching for encouragement. Others are looking for connection, guidance, or simply someone willing to listen. When used wisely, digital communication can become a place of evangelization, education, and solidarity.

One of the greatest dangers in digital ministry is the temptation toward pride and self-promotion. Social media often measures success through likes, followers, and visibility. It can become easy to focus more on personal recognition than on service.



Public Witness Class

This course helps students grow in confidence and skill as public speakers and leaders in ministry. Through hands-on experience, they learn how to proclaim Scripture, lead prayer, and prepare and deliver meaningful reflections and homilies. Students also develop practical communication skills such as organizing ideas clearly, speaking with conviction, and giving and receiving constructive feedback.

This class reminded me that missionary communication should never be about making ourselves the center of attention. Missionaries must remain grounded in prayer, accountability, and service so that communication becomes true ministry rather than performance.

Carrying the Lesson Forward

Looking back, this course changed the way I think about mission in today's world. Social communication is not simply about technology or media platforms. It is about human connection. It is about entering the spaces where people already live, struggle, and search for meaning.

One of the most important lessons I learned from this course is that digital communication can be a form of ministry. The people we encounter online are real people carrying real struggles, questions, and hopes. When used wisely, social media and digital communication can encourage others, connect communities, and remind people they are not alone. As missionaries, we are called to communicate with compassion, honesty, and respect.

In the end, this course reminded me that mission today includes both physical and digital presence. The people we encounter online are not just audiences or followers — they are people searching for hope, connection, and meaning. As missionaries, we are called to enter those spaces with wisdom, humility, and compassion, using our voices to reflect the love of Christ.

