



Current Issues in Prayer

June 2018

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray:

That social networks may work towards that inclusiveness which respects others for their differences.



Getting started:

I find a comfortable position and focus on my breathing. I ask God to help me while I am praying. I think about the different ways of communication and how I use them in my daily life.



Short story:

Damian loves technology and he literally spends hours following the different social networks, especially Facebook. However, he does not like it when persons with disability are portrayed as objects of charity or as some kind of *heroes*. He feels that these two images do not reflect his own reality or that of his friends. On the contrary, he believes that persons with disability have the right to be financially independent and that they do not have to rely on charity. Damian noticed that although Facebook could reach a great number of people, only very few persons with a disability were using this opportunity to communicate with others.



After giving it a lot of thought, he decided to start posting messages on Facebook with the aim of raising awareness and fostering respect for those with a disability. At the same time, Damian also posted daily comments that were not linked to disability, showing that life was after all very broad and could transcend the reality brought about by disability. Damian's efforts and encouragement motivated others to reflect, react and some went on to set up their own page.



Time to reflect:

What importance do I give to communication with others?

How cautious and respectful am I to others when communicating on social media networks?

Do I realise that people can be discriminated on social media networks? How do I react?



Let us pray:

Lord, grant me the grace to use the networks and the means of social communication in such a way that I show respect towards others and that I pass on positive and encouraging messages.



Inspiration:

Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarization and division between individuals and groups. The digital world is a public square, a meeting-place where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in a meaningful discussion or unfair attacks.

Pope Francis



Hands on:

I will communicate on one of the social networks by sending positive messages that display the importance of respect and inclusion.