

MANIFESTO WYP 2022

GIVING US A VOICE

Reaching the Heights
of a New Communication



WE ARE OUR VOICE:
EVERY WORD, EVERY THOUGHT,
ALL DESIRES.
WE ARE EVERY SINGLE THING
WHICH WE KEPT SILENT.

Silence unveils our frailty.
Thoughts that flood our mind
drowning charity, attention, and hope.
The world cries out:
there is no one else,
no one but ourselves.

However, there,
in our inmost being,
we have heard
a delicate voice
that longs for peace,
that longs to be free.
It never shouts
only listens to a friendly heart
embracing its wounds.

A voice that cleanses us, makes us transparent,
leads us to be truly
who we are.



STATEMENT OF FACTS: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES Analyzing failed expeditions

In our way of expressing ourselves and communicating with others, we observe the following failures.

Fear limits our freedom of expression: we are afraid of being judged, of making mistakes and being mocked for our errors, of feeling odd and rejected, of confronting ideas, of being ridiculed because we are ignorant of a subject that is being talked about. In short, we are afraid of failure. It can also happen that we use this feeling to hurt others; that we hide behind bullying to feel better, different, or superior to others.

Our freedom of expression is wounded by selfishness. We place our "I" before others: my thoughts, feelings, desires and needs. This attitude does not allow us to pay real attention to what the other person wants to communicate, leading to a lack of understanding. Selfishness makes it impossible for us to help our peers, as we issue subjective judgments tactlessly, seeking to manipulate the other person's ideas for our own benefit. We focus on our own good and not on that of the other.

Our freedom of expression is also vitiated by the inner noise of our useless and/or negative thoughts. We do not keep silent when it is necessary and this inability to be silent hinders us from being active listeners. Not knowing how to silence internal noises can lead us to express ourselves in an intemperate or misguided way.

Sometimes our freedom of expression offends and hurts others when it is fueled by anger and resentment. We do not measure our words and make decisions that we later regret. We take things too personally and harbor negative feelings. Thus, we lose trust and respect for the other person and end up feeling bad and guilty, building a wall that impedes dialogue and healthy bonds.

Our freedom of expression is under pressure. In most cases, when we want to fit into groups or social prototypes, we are not truly authentic, we lie or manipulate the truth and we do not communicate with everyone in the same way. When we don't dare to give our points of view so as not to disappoint others, we censor ourselves and make decisions about any issue based on what the majority says and not according to what represents the greatest good. This results in a superficial way of relating to others.

Our freedom of expression is influenced by social networks. Their misuse isolates us and disrupts close communication. We separate ourselves from ourselves and are not true to our values when through social networks we make believe that we are happy all the time, creating false expectations in others and wanting to impress by showing "perfect lives". All this has hedonism as a background. This virtual environment, by its nature and configuration in terms of information management, limits our perspective, as it easily lends itself to misrepresenting information. This results in a biased view of reality and of others.

Sometimes pride and arrogance manifest themselves in the way we express ourselves, leading us to exclude others. Excessive attachment to our judgments and ideas "fanaticizes" our thinking, and we become exclusive and rigid with those who do not think like us. For example, we communicate with a harsh, unkind tone, generating discomfort and causing the other person to become defensive, etc.

Our freedom of expression is conditioned by a generation gap. As young people, our ideas and criteria are not always accepted by adults, sometimes they do not allow us to speak nor do they listen to us, they can become aggressive and violent and think they are right. In the family environment, this generates bad communication. This difficulty of communication also occurs in the opposite way, that is, from young people to adults when, faced with advice, we close ourselves in our way of thinking. In both situations, there is a fear of communicating what one feels, because of the risk of not being accepted for what one wants to say.

Our freedom of expression also deteriorates when we forget our spiritual dimension. Our behavior changes when we do not know how to "work" our inner life. Not having a spiritual accompaniment, not asking for help, and not talking to the right people about our difficulties affects our interpersonal relationships.

The misuse of our freedom of expression leads us to generate judgments against others. We tend to judge, to label people by stereotypes, by the way they speak or think, and by bad past experiences. In other words, we let ourselves be carried away by our prejudices, which leads us to exclude those who think differently from us.



PROPOSALS

1. THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMBING

Freedom of expression is an intrinsic right, but it must be achieved both internally and externally. This construction process is challenging because it requires an effort to conquer silence and attention. At the same time, it implies facing internal obstacles, such as insecurity, fear, ignorance, and pride; and external obstacles such as the censure and constant noises that fill our environment and make us lose sight of what is essential.

Freedom of expression is a challenge and a conquest because we must be aware of the responsibility that comes with our way of communicating. It is essential to know the limits of our freedom of expression because our words, gestures, silences, and the various forms of expression can build or destroy communication. Therefore, we must be aware of what we do and say so as not to hurt others. It is necessary to take responsibility for the consequences that our words and the way we express ourselves can cause.

Freedom of expression is a personal and communitarian conquest because personal effort is necessary in order for the gain to be communitarian. This conquest must be based on freedom, not on libertinism, because freedom is not individualistic and ensures balance and a sense of community: one cannot be free alone.

Freedom of expression is a conquest because some obstacles must be overcome. Let us have as our goal to learn to communicate with ourselves; to learn to communicate with love and truth, always keeping unity in mind as our goal; and to learn to speak without hurting others instead of keeping silent out of the fear of hurting another person.

Freedom of expression requires overcoming our own negative inclinations (pride, prejudice, judgment) to communicate the truth without fear or manipulation, open to the ideas of others. We believe that prejudice is the primary constraint to good communication and one of the most challenging aspects to break through. Faced with this limitation, it is necessary to live the virtue of simplicity in order to be able to listen attentively and be clear when expressing ourselves.

It is a challenge because it implies helping others. We must help one another to be persevering and patient with ourselves, aware of our limitations, and ready to enhance and bring out the best in our peers. Mutual help will therefore be a strength for living authentic freedom of expression.

Communication becomes a challenge when we fail to recognize the positive contribution of others and the effort, they put into it. Each person has a unique personality, and the way they are and express themselves is marked by their experiences. The "other" is a mystery that we must get to know in order to access the richness of their way of seeing the world.

It is a challenge because we often avoid confrontation, we do not want to be vulnerable, nor do we want to commit ourselves to find a solution to a given problem. Therefore, it requires courage to face the conflicts that may exist, instead of choosing the apparently more comfortable option, i.e., to flee from the problems of communication.

2. WHY TOGETHER?

After reflecting on our difficulties in communication, we have realized that it is not a process that depends only on ourselves, nor that it is the exclusive responsibility of others. Communication is, in short, a reciprocal process. This reciprocity is explained by the need to offer some conditions from both sides that ensure the success of authentic communication.

On the other hand, since we are social and relational beings, one of the main objectives of communication is, precisely, to find in the other this source of personal enrichment from complementarity, the richness of being different, and the amazement at the unique and inexhaustible value of each human being.

The key to ensuring these ideal conditions can be summarized as creating an atmosphere of trust. There can be no true freedom of expression if the right environment is not created for communication to take place, corresponding to the high aspirations of the human heart.

The creation of this environment is the responsibility of everyone involved in communication. If one of the parties does not do its part, the result is not what is expected: trust is broken and there is no mutual enrichment.

For there to be trust between people, it is necessary to offer the best of ourselves and help others to come out of themselves, without fear, both in listening and in expressing our point of view. When communicating, we should always offer something valuable of ourselves - perhaps sharing personal experiences that have deep meaning - and be interested in the profound reality of the other: their personal, family, emotional, cultural situation.

To deepen our mutual understanding, we must analyze not only what the person is expressing but also what lies behind it. For example, when we receive criticism, there is always a personal concern, something that can be understood from the person's personal life, their history.

To help others to open up, it is also positive to openly recognize their virtues. Often complementarity and reciprocity are based precisely on the ability to recognize hidden virtues in each other. When we see the other person's potential, despite the fact that they do not see it, this allows them to take the risk of giving the best of themselves.

When we communicate, someone must take the initiative, but there must always be a response from the other party. Silence also has a value in communication, and we should break it only when it is worthwhile; that is, when we are sure that the result of the communication will be a mutual enrichment or lead to a greater good.

3. CHECKING THE TOOLS

In order to achieve a new freedom of expression it is important to keep in mind that communication is integral, as it includes different types of language, such as verbal (what we say), paraverbal (how we say it), nonverbal (body language, our way of dressing, our gestures, etc.), written, musical, poetic language, among others.

It is also essential to analyze which media or channels we should use to best express what we want to convey, taking into account the circumstances and the reality of the other person. In this way, we have to choose the most suitable medium to communicate: chat, video call, e-mail, face-to-face, and more.

Some ways to improve the use of languages and channels are to get to know ourselves and others better, since our way of communicating is also the result of our personality and our personal history. For example, if I am a very shy person, some gestures or other forms of corporal expression can favor the connection with the other person; in the same way, the welcoming attitude of the other person can facilitate our development.

Therefore, to ensure good communication, we must be attentive to our expressions and way of listening to adapt them to the conversation. To do this, it is good to recognize and manage what we can express involuntarily with our gestures, tone of voice, or attitudes.

Freedom of bodily expression is related to being honest with ourselves and breaking down barriers in order to be who we are so that we do not rely on what others want us to be or express with our bodies. We run the danger of confusing body language with exhibitionism and of seeking always to reach some standards imposed by today's culture.

We are aware that the form of the message can be as important as its content, therefore, we commit to:

- Be aware and strive to identify what we are communicating with our body and verbal language, reflecting on why we are communicating each thing.
- To know and work on ourselves and on the communicative effect that our body language has, in order to improve our communication.
- To look at ourselves, be silent and pay attention to the situation and the other person's needs.
- To support with the body language what we want to communicate, that is to say, sustaining the glance and paying attention to our facial expression. We can use body language for what we find difficult to communicate with words.
- To always choose the most appropriate channel for each circumstance and person, in order to ensure effective communication.

4. STEP BY STEP

We recognize that our expression and communication are on the right track when we observe that the following steps are met:

Predisposition

- When meeting a new person, we avoid making prejudices. We try to let ourselves be surprised by the other person.
- We are willing to accept other points of view.
- We trust the other person and believe that genuine communication is possible between us.
- We have self-control, which helps us not to attack or hurt the other person. Without it, communication can be feverish; if present, it is already a good start.
- We give confidence to the other person not only with words but also with gestures or details. Trust is very important for good communication.
- Everyone's thoughts are respected in a conversation.
- Accepting the other person's point of view, listening authentically, understanding others, and recognizing that we also make mistakes and that our opinion is not more important than others, requires the virtue that opposes pride and arrogance: humility.

Approach

- When we talk to another person, we do it with sincerity, naturalness, and transparency.
- We dedicate the necessary time to communicate with the other person, conversing calmly, without rushing.
- We are sincerely interested in the other person and in what he/she wants to communicate.
- An appropriate interaction is created without abrupt interruptions. The conversation is fluid, with a constructive exchange, leading to unity.
- We strive to be assertive and prudent with the words we use, considering whether or not we might hurt the other person.
- We remain calm even when problematic situations arise, without losing sight of the greater good: communion among us.
- We accept our mistakes and learn from them.

Result

- The conversation with another person leaves us in a state of peace and with the desire to repeat or continue that dialogue.
- The other person does not feel judged and has the confidence to open up.
- We experience that the relationship with the other person grows and that we grow together.
- We experience that a conflict becomes a "constructive" occasion. A conflict allows us to better understand the other person and deepen the relationship.
- We feel free to be ourselves without fear and without the need to pretend to be something we are not and as if a weight has been lifted off our shoulders.
- We feel in communion with the other person. This gives us joy and freedom.
- We feel sincerely welcomed and listened to by the other person. This helps us to express ourselves more freely.
- We manage to let go of personal judgments and desires.

5. GOOD COMMUNICATION, GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Today we can affirm that our great discovery is this: freedom in itself is neither the goal nor the end. Communion is the summit of every relationship, yet, it is not a peak conquered once and for all but a path to be traveled daily.

**By looking at the other, we open ourselves
to a new reality,
becoming aware of our bond.
Pilgrims on a climb.
Marching on Charity's pace.
Hope invites us to trust.
Tired but joyful
we accept an origin and destiny
We ascend to a new dawn
illuminated by a new sun.**

Communion is like a summit that allows us to see lines of connection. It gives us a new perspective on all kinds of relationships. It enables us to have a greater awareness of our feelings so that we can share them. By learning about each other, we learn who we are and that we are meant to live with each other. Every relationship to be truly communicative involves sharing thoughts and experiences, telling our story, with moments of joy or sadness, and being willing to disclose what happens to us. It is about giving the little we have. **The beauty of life is to be with others.**

We are committed to:

- Spend ourselves for the others, with friendly glances and silences, daring to go towards the other beyond our possible prejudices, embarrassments, and fears.
- To live in an attitude of listening, leaving aside our prejudices, grudges, and intolerance.
- To educate our verbal and non-verbal language in order to create a healthy, trusting, and empathetic environment where respect always prevails.
- To try to leave behind the selfishness that society imposes on us, seeking to forgive, in a state of openness and acceptance.

6. THE NEW LANDSCAPE

To those who ask us if freedom is possible, our answer is clear: **Yes!**

We will never be absolutely free in our relationships and ways of expressing and communicating ourselves, but we do recognize that **this freedom exists**: we see it reflected in many people we admire, who are present to us, teaching us by their example and way of being.

Faced with these testimonies of freedom, we can say that freedom, before being a capacity, is a state of love and donation, which is reflected in the example of people who:

- Communicate without attacking or harming the other.
- Respect and know how to listen at all times.
- They overcome their fears and communicate what they have inside.
- They live with empathy, trying to understand the other person's intention and the situation they are living in.
- They say what they feel sincerely, with affection and kindness, without being afraid of the reaction of others.

This generates an appropriate and healthy environment for communication.

An example of freedom are people who take into account others and their right to receive only what is good, beautiful, and truthful; who overcome the fear of speaking and expressing what they really have inside; who try to understand the intention of the other person, and what is the situation they live in; who inquire about the things they do not agree with; who communicate without hesitation and without fear of being judged; who, in spite of everything, have trust and faith in their interlocutors.

To be free to express ourselves and communicate with all that we are is not only the freedom to express our opinions but to reach a state of well-being like that limpid air we breathe on the top of a mountain, in front of the sea, or in a clear and crisp landscape.

It consists in a state and in a capacity of:

- Integral openness to discovering the truth. Beyond differences of opinion, to look without prejudice when others share their experiences.
- Being attentive so that everyone can feel welcome, free, and calm, without fear of being rejected.
- Seeking a point of encounter, a common ground where dialogue can take place without haste, with clarity and charity, and always with the truth in mind.
- Cultivating a healthy personal and group solution about how we can improve some aspects.

- Active listening to the other person's explanations and consideration of their feelings. This attitude allows us to move forward in the conversation. It is about trying to understand that someone's behavior has a reason. If we are not willing to listen, we are not prepared to judge and fall into the trap of false assumptions. We must learn to enter into the other person's world. When there are misunderstandings, it is because we have not entered their world.
- Patience towards others' criteria and to think more about a subject, so as not to disregard our opinion. This implies explaining what we want to achieve in order to help the other person understand, bearing in mind that others have different priorities.
- Welcoming the initiative of others and respecting their way of communicating, with their body and face, to be able to share experiences and grow as human beings.
- Overcoming the shyness and fear that often lead us to say "no".
- To admit if we are not understanding what the other person is trying to say, but to seek to clarify it, because when this happens, we give value and respect to one another.
- Taking responsibility for our words and, at the same time, for the positive things we can transmit. This means being aware of my reactions, wanting the best for others and, if I have offended, acknowledging it and asking for forgiveness.
- Recognizing that freedom of expression is also knowing how to remain silent when we do not have or cannot find something constructive to say.

We recognize therefore that freedom of expression and communication is not a starting point, it is more than a right, more than a political issue. It is a journey, a process, a daily struggle that thrives on love and, consequently, requires the following preconditions:

- **Charity** as a guardianship of the bond of friendship that we want to build, as a continuous desire to grow together with others and to know how to connect with those close to me.

- **Transparency**, which implies being simple and sincere, showing ourselves as we are, without masks; and above all, valuing the truth of what we want to transmit, facing the problem at its roots, even if it is uncomfortable. Transparency is to express ourselves and communicate with all that we are in such a way that our body is part of what we communicate, it is to have pure intention and at the same time the courage to say things openly.
- **Humility**, which means to recognize one's own mistakes or those of others, without offending other people just because we do not think like them; it is to confess the mistakes and the things that enslave us. Humility helps us to overcome the fear of being wrong.
- **Overcoming** oneself in order to reach a conclusion together, knowing that each of us has a different way of communicating. This means to create always an atmosphere of dialogue that allows us to share our experiences and to strengthen our communication. This helps us to overcome our own fears.

We commit ourselves to think always before communicating something, to identify the fruits of our actions, and to ask ourselves: What would happen if everyone did what I am about to do? If we realize that the action would result in peace, happiness, joy, and fulfillment, then we have a good chance that our action is free and does not harm the freedom of others. Otherwise, it would be a false freedom, and its fruits would be sadness or despair.

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Identite Youth

Ad Deum propter humanitatem



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