

PRESS RELEASE n. 3

Professional Seminar for Communications Offices (April, 28-30, 2014)

Cardinal Timothy Dolan (Archbishop of New York): “We needs competent lay people to represent the Church”

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ROMA, 28 APR 2014 - “The day of old, fat, balding bishops like me being the best spokespeople for the Church is long gone: now needs to have trained, competent lay people to represent them!”. With a personal sense of irony, Cardinal Timothy **Timothy Dolan**, Archbishop of New York, shared this belief when opening this afternoon, the *IX Professional Seminar for Communications Offices*, promoted by the School of Church Communications of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross.

Speaking about the “cultural challenges for Church communicators”, the archbishop offers “seven observations” about how to realize efficacious institutional communications, the fruit of his experience as a Bishop in contact with journalists. He told many anecdotes, from which emerged an original and positive approach toward media systems, in an epoch in which one can be detracted by their influence.

Among these propositions, Dolan highlighted that “we need a real sense of professionalism in all that we do”. In fact, “how we say something is just as important as what we say!” Without doubt, “we should never be afraid to tell the truth” even in negative situations for the institution, because “people want and expect transparency from the Church”. The same principle, obviously, applies to good news.

“We bishops deserve criticism, need it, welcome it, take it to heart, -- as long as it’s fair and civil”, but we cannot fall to “a knee-jerk reaction that everything a bishop does is wrong”.

Facing inevitable attacks, “we must respond in charity and love”, following “Jesus’ instruction to ‘turn the other cheek’ but not responding to invective with harsh words of our own”.

Moreover, it is helpful not to forget that “the people have hunger for meaning in their lives”. In this context, the cardinal confessed that he never gave an interview without mentioning the name of Jesus. Indeed, “if they ask me for an interview, it is because I am a pastor, not because I am the mayor”.

The seminar continues till Wednesday, April 30. Tomorrow, Tuesday April 29, is planned a speech from the archbishop of Lyon, **Philippe Barbarin**, on “The family as a Communication opportunity”, and from Prof.ssa **Helen Alvaré**, from *George Mason University*, who will speak on human identity.

Also, there are scheduled two practical sessions, one with those responsible for the communications of great diocese and the Episcopal Conference and the other with some Vatican journalists on the communications style of **Pope Francis**.

- **Program details of the Seminar:**

www.pusc.it/csi/ucc2014/programma

Press Accreditations:

<http://eventi.pusc.it/accreditamento/index.jsp?e=UCC2014>

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