

Discernment in a Digital Age

John Dardis, SJ, General Counsellor

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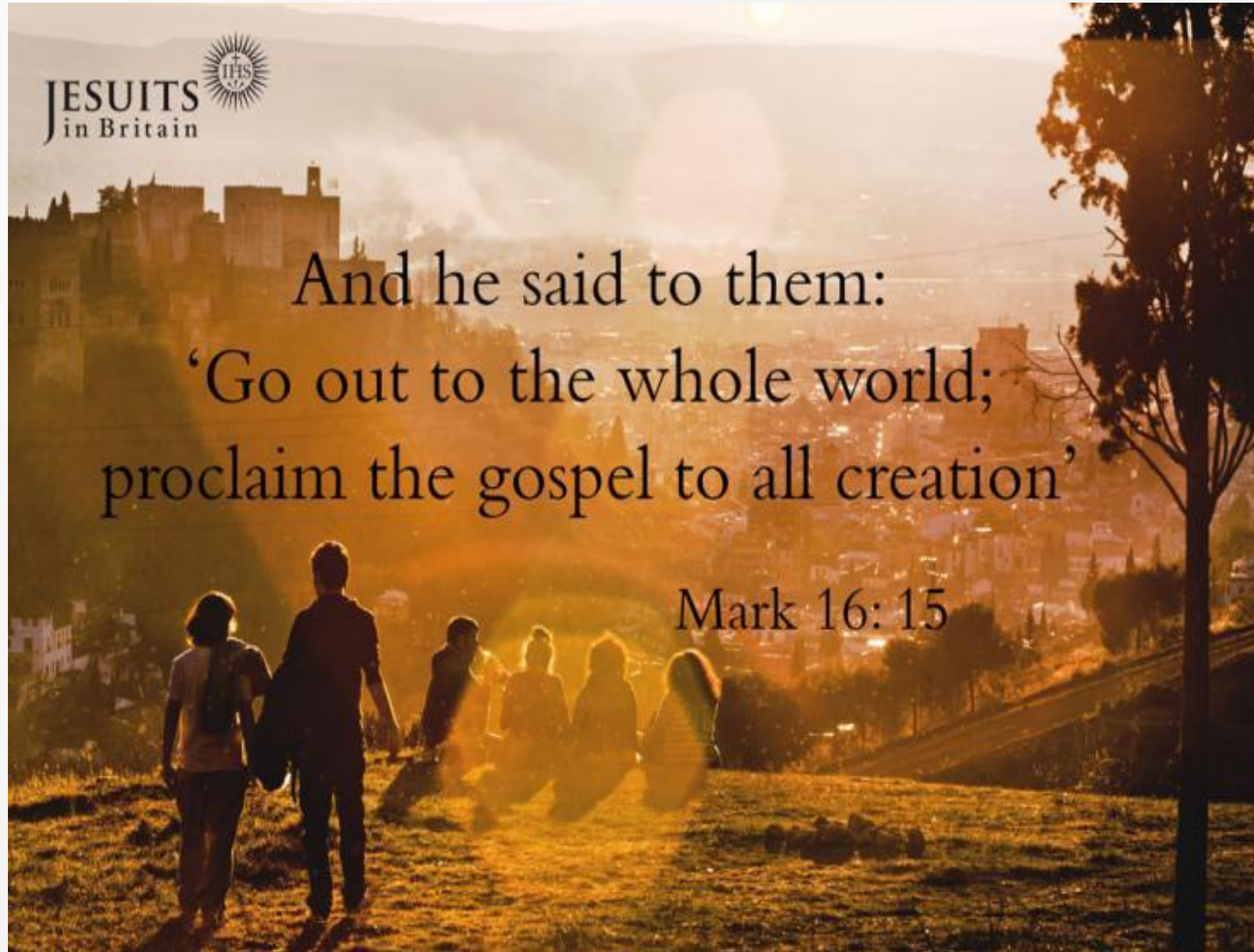
Is Ignatian discernment possible in the Digital Age?

In one of his prayers, Ignatius of Loyola says, "Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, understanding, my entire will!" The internet is certainly a helpful tool, but has it also made us more dependent and addicted? Have we lost the capacity to remember? In Ignatian Spirituality, imagination is key in contemplation. Are we able to imagine ourselves or must we download images?

It is not only possible...but it is absolutely essential

Our mission

If this is our mission....we have to get involved in media...even with all the ambiguities.





Some aspects of our cultures today

An increasing narrative of division



Secularism



THERE'S PROBABLY NO GOD.
NOW STOP WORRYING AND ENJOY YOUR LIFE.

Dominant messages

- “Blessed the rich”
- Blessed the successful
- You are not a real woman unless...
- You are not a real man unless....

Narratives underlie our world ...and create a new and different world...for better or worse.







11/6/2020



But also...we
live in a world
full of love
and
tenderness





And even beauty

So....there IS hope.



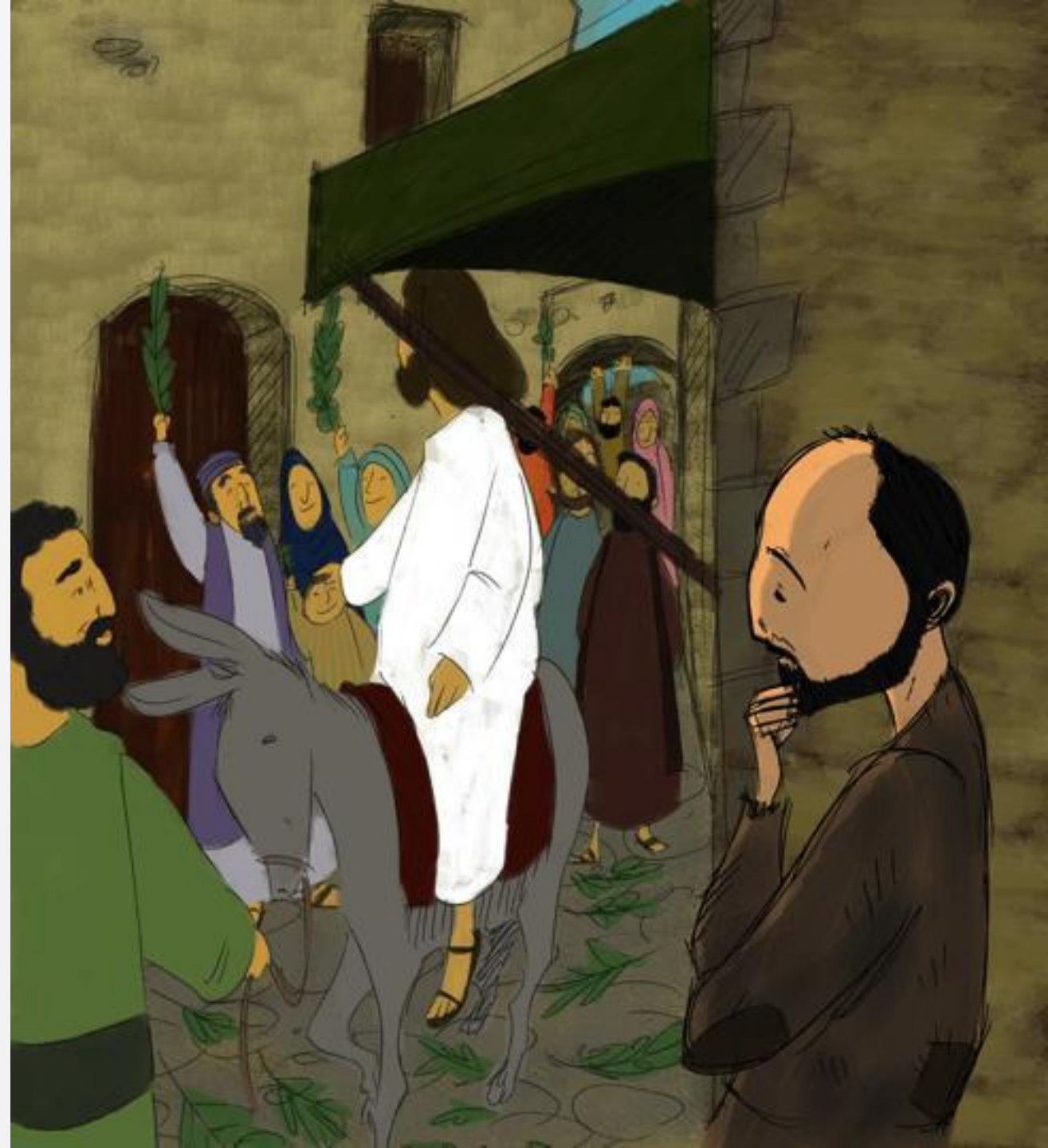
But we have to search...and to build
OUR narrative.



“Who is really
imagining your life
for you?”

Michael Warren - theologian

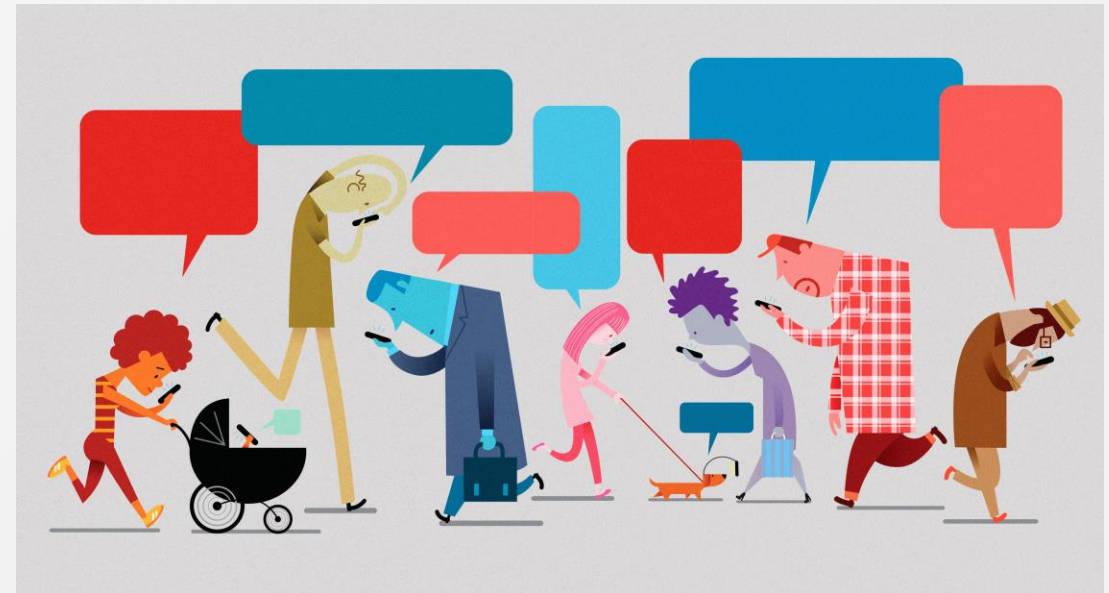
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Risks, Challenges of Media discourse



- Superficiality
- Trolling...getting caught in fake debates where others set the rules
- Getting trapped in Ego issues
- Impoverished imagination
- Living in a bubble
- Politics in danger: coarseness
- Young people made feel small



C. Wilmot, “The Space Between Mourning and Grief”, in *The Atlantic*, June 8, 2016



“Social media often reproduce the worst cultural failures surrounding death, that is banalities that help those on the periphery of a tragedy to rationalize what happened, but obscure the uncomfortable, disorderly reality of loss. Social media have increased the speed and ease of communication to an unprecedented level, yet sites like Facebook and Twitter are poorly suited to represent the peculiarity of grief [...]. Social media may have opened up the space for public grief, but a ritual to ensure that the outburst supports grieving people (or at least does not make their situation more painful) has yet to be processed.”^[17]



So...how to deal with this?

A Gospel....creative....human... way through the mess

1. See it in context of our mission as religious



- Help people imagine a new reality...the Kingdom of God....a Gospel reality.
- By our deeds
- By our worlds
- By our love
- By our faith
- By our hope
- No substitute for Love. Only Love saves.





2. Simple Standards and Policies

- Avoid offensive language or stupid debates
- Go deeper
- Tell stories...like Jesus
- Do get involved. Don't cop out





The Power of Words

- “There are words which delimit and isolate, but there are also words which render a single thing translucent to the infinity of all reality.
- They are like sea-shells, in which can be heard the sound of the ocean of infinity, no matter how small they are in themselves.” Karl Rahner in an essay *Priest and Poet*
- So...we can **choose our words**. Words that bring salvation and healing...or that bring darkness and division.
- Discernment is at the core of this choice



3. The power of Imagination.

"Imagination = rediscovery of our 'faculty of possibility' " *MP Gallagher SJ*

"The possible's slow fuse is lit by imagination" *Emily Dickinson*

What do prayer and poetry have in common? They connect us with our hopes."

Dorothy Soelle



3. Imagining new reality



- “All around us, imagination is traumatised and addictive;
-but imagination is also a source of healing. *William Lynch SJ*
- Our Faith can heal and liberate imagination

Start by doing what's necessary;
then do what's possible;
and suddenly you are doing
the impossible.

- Francis of Assisi



PositiveThinkingMind.com

"Imagining our possibilities we become prophets of our own existence..."

History and Truth, 127, Paul Ricoeur





CARRIERS OF THE MESSAGE

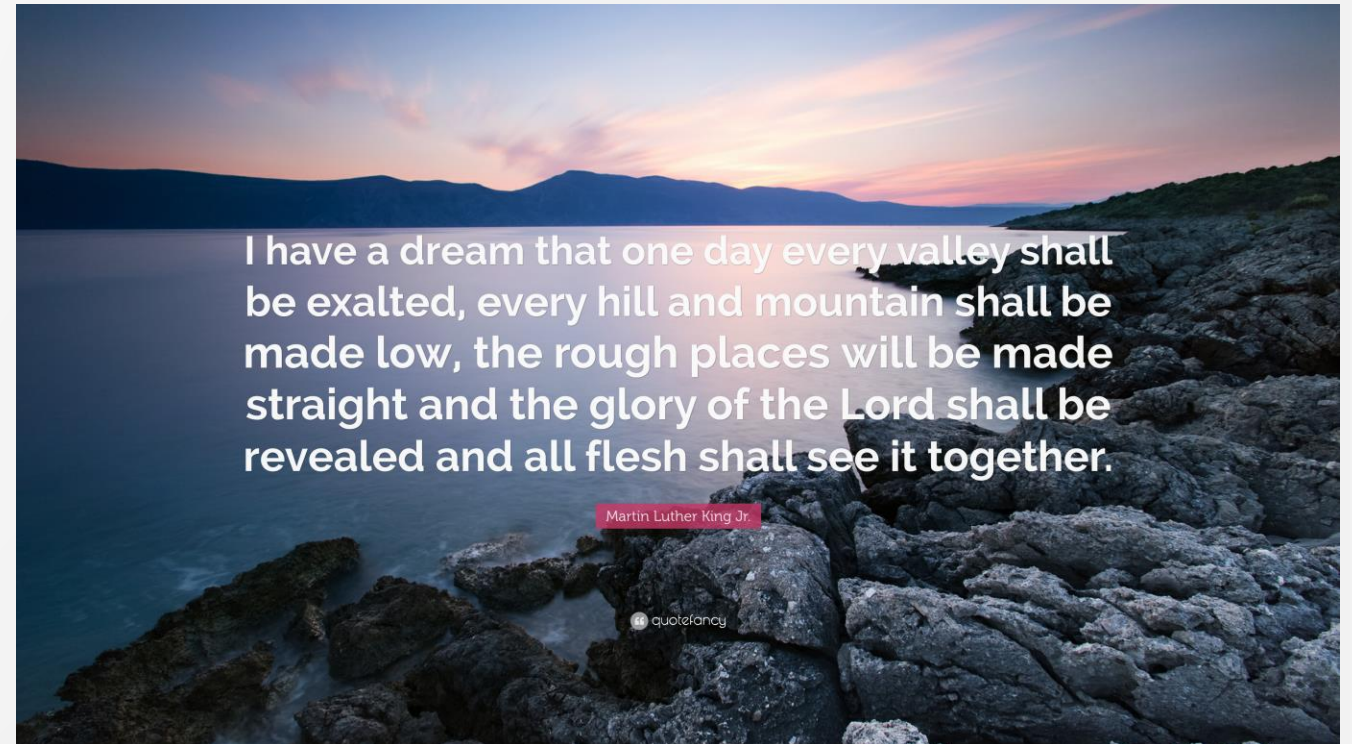
Contrasting Realities...which will we present?



How to be a prophet... in a digital age?



- See...with new eyes
- Imagine...new possibilities
- Point out the wrong...yes
- But also...Paint a picture.
- Nourish the longing
 - Valleys raised up and mountains laid low
 - A people coming back to their land, rejoicing.



Fr Frans...and others

Hymn: let our hands be hands of healing



Remember. Hope. Act.

Opening Song: "Hands of Healing" (by Marty Haugen)

Refrain: Let our hands be hands of healing,
let our words be clear and true,
In our work, God's love revealing
just and gentle in all we do.

Free the one in bondage: hands of healing,
Bring the reign of new hope: clear and true;
sing the God of freedom: love revealing,
love revealing, just and gentle in all we do.

Touch the ones who sorrow: hands of healing,
Hope beyond all grieving: clear and true;
sing the God of mercy: love revealing,
love revealing, just and gentle in all we do.

Comfort for the dying: hands of healing,
Vision of new life: clear and true;
sing the resurrection: love revealing,
love revealing, just and gentle in all we do.

May we always be your hands of healing,
make us in your image: clear and true;
give us voice to praise you: love revealing
love revealing, just and gentle in all we do.



Hands of Healing

Marty Haugen

The Song and the Silence



The invitation



4.

**Write a New
Narrative**

Tell stories like Jesus did



The Children of this Age..



"For the people of this world are more shrewdthan are the people of the light".

Luke 16:8



Closing Prayer



- Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
- Help us to recognize the evil latent in a communication that does not build communion.
- Help us to remove the venom from our judgements.
- Help us to speak about others as our brothers and sisters.
- You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words be seeds of goodness for the world:
 - where there is shouting, let us practise listening;
 - where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony;
 - where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity;
 - where there is exclusion, let us offer solidarity;
 - where there is sensationalism, let us use sobriety;
 - where there is superficiality, let us raise real questions;
 - where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust;
 - where there is hostility, let us bring respect;
 - where there is falsehood, let us bring truth.
- Amen.