

Pastoral Letter Communications Sunday 2026

‘And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.’

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I want to share with you an encounter I had recently before Sunday Mass. A young man appeared outside the Cathedral as the regulars were entering. He had never been inside, and he asked if it was ok for him to go in even though he was a stranger. Obviously, the answer was yes, and the Administrator of the Cathedral asked one of the parishioners to sit with him so he wasn't on his own. After Mass, he came out, happy to have been there and said he would be back. And he did come back.

The next time, after Mass, I asked him to tell me what brought him here. In short, he said he had grown up with no particular faith and, in his adulthood, decided to investigate Christianity online so he could disprove it. But things went in an entirely different direction, and he began to see the truth of the Christian faith, and he determined to come to a Catholic church. When I asked him why he came to this specific church, he said he had checked it out online first and felt it was the right place for him.

I don't know where his story will end, but I do know this looks like a story of evangelisation, one where the Lord has spoken in his heart and somehow steered him in our direction. And a large part of that was through the digital world. It was there that he made his first connection with the Church and, from there, that he decided to make the next step. However, that's just the start. It's not the end point: that comes through the personal encounter with Christ face-to-face in the Church. But it can be one important contact that starts the journey of faith.

Don't get me wrong, we will never get away from the fact that the principal evangelisers in the Church are those who have already heard the Word of God and answered his call to discipleship: that's you I'm talking about. We all have a role to play in witnessing to our faith; in loving God and our neighbour openly and with courage; in reflecting the joy of the Gospel.

But as a Church we have always supported this universal duty to be evangelisers by using all the means at our disposal to reach out to our brothers and sisters in all places. And as part of our mission, the National Office for Communications and Evangelisation is at your service and Christ's service.

Over the past year, among other things,

- we have expanded our digital footprint on social media;
- we have supported the Church's prophetic voice most notably in the lead-up to the Holyrood vote on assisted suicide;
- we have worked with other partners in the Church to advance their missions;
- and we have sought to communicate more clearly the work of the Catholic Church in Scotland.

It is still early days, and we are just getting started. And inevitably, I am going to ask some things of you:

- Pray! As missionaries, we work with and for the Lord, so we start by asking him to be with us and the Spirit to enliven us;
- Be a public Catholic! Don't be shy and be happy to let others know what your faith means to you. Do not underestimate the value of your personal witness;
- And yes, I am going to ask for financial support. If we are to use the means of communications at our disposal then the bare fact is that it costs money, so I ask you to give what you can to the collection.

The Good News is that the story of that young man who appeared at the door of the Cathedral is one repeated in churches across the country. There is a hunger amongst many people that can only be satisfied by the love of God made present in Jesus Christ. Let us all play our part in communicating that love of God and welcoming our brothers and sisters into the family of God.

Yours in Christ,



Bishop Frank Dougan
Bishop of Galloway