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## **Pope Francis: Message for World Communications Day, “stories employed for exploitation and power have a short lifespan”**

“Human beings are storytellers. From childhood we hunger for stories just as we hunger for food. Stories influence our lives, whether in the form of fairy tales, novels, films, songs, news, even if we do not always realize it. Often we decide what is right or wrong based on characters and stories we have made our own. Stories leave their mark on us; they shape our convictions and our behaviour. They can help us understand and communicate who we are”. Pope Francis wrote this in his Message for the 54<sup>th</sup> World Communications Day. “The stories of different ages all have a common ‘loom’: the thread of their narrative involves ‘heroes’, including everyday heroes, who in following a dream confront difficult situations and combat evil, driven by a force that makes them courageous, the force of love. By immersing ourselves in stories, we can find reasons to heroically face the challenges of life”, the Pope continued: “But whereas the stories employed for exploitation and power have a short lifespan, a good story can transcend the confines of space and time. Centuries later, it remains timely, for it nourishes life”. “In an age when falsification is increasingly sophisticated - the Holy Father pointed out -, reaching exponential levels (as in deepfake), we need wisdom to be able to welcome and create beautiful, true and good stories. We need courage to reject false and evil stories. We need patience and discernment to rediscover stories that help us not to lose the thread amid today’s many troubles. We need stories that reveal who we truly are, also in the untold heroism of everyday life”.

Valentina Bombelli