NEWS RELEASE

Archbishop John C. Wester Appeals for Greater Understanding

ALBUQUERQUE – Friday, February 8, 2019–IMMEDIATE RELEASE— In his monthly letter to the archdiocese, Archbishop John C. Wester has called for greater understanding and stressed the importance of developing "an authentic and attentive listening ear". He advocates what he calls "active listening" and has expressed concern about the many obstacles to genuine communication in society today. "Name-calling, stereotyping, pre-judgment bigotry, cultural difference, jealousy, anger, and self-centeredness" are just some of the roadblocks facing society today.

People in public and in private expressing deep concern as to the societal division and enmity is an alarm that must be heard. Archbishop Wester believes that genuine communication is an essential character in the shaping of real communion in the midst of division. As to why he chose this theme, he commented, "I offer these brief reflections in the hope that all of us can seek to be better listeners." He sees, in the example of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:5-22), an "icon of Christian listening" and a demonstration that "Jesus listened deeply."

Why is this type of listening important? "There are so many issues that are demanding our attention these days: the sexual abuse crisis in the Church, immigration, abortion, assisted suicide, political rivalries, and so much more. It is essential that we listen to one another." This kind of listening, this listening deeply as did Jesus, is critical to society today more than ever. Archbishop Wester wisely observed: "An active and attentive listener never needs to be afraid of the truth."

To read Archbishop Wester's entire letter, "Communication Is Communion", please visit https://archdiosf.org/wester-letters-messages --END