

Reflection – The vision of listening

This week's reflection links in with a recent webinar presentation by Amy Woolam Echeveria from the Global Catholic Climate movement as part of the Laudato Si' animators' program.

Given our communication with each other has predominantly shifted from our usual face to face interactions to electronic means such as telephone, Skype or Zoom, the ability to "listen" more has become essential. When we communicate, we can usually also see how our communication is being received through physical "tells" of the person we are with. We no longer have these physical "tells" so listening more intently and with understanding is especially important in these current times.



Using the above pictures – all the same flower, we can see different levels of understanding of the flower if we decide to look further.

In the first photo – you can explore and examine its surroundings, the ivy, the tree trunk and the light that shines on that area.

In the second photo – it's the same daffodil but notice the different ruffled edges, you can see its stem more clearly, and the sunlight cascading on the flower.

In the third photo - look again at the same flower, look at the depth, and look at the light and shadows. You can start to see the center of the flower, and again this is the same flower, but it looks very different and it has something more to say.

In the fourth photo - Here again the same flower, but this time you can investigate the heart of the flower. You can see the brown specs that are tiny creatures living in the flower. How would we even know about these specs if we stopped at photo 3?

Each photo of the same flower tells a different part of the story at each level and this analogy can be linked to the way we “listen” to each other within our changed communication modes.

In recent times: -

- Have you listened at Level 1 and only heard part of the story?
- Did you seek clarity by listening to Levels 2 and 3?
- Was there a time the person you were speaking to felt they were being listened to equivalent to Level 4?

As we may have to do our normal tasks a bit differently during these times, perhaps it is useful for us to reflect on our listening skills so that when life returns to its usual busyness, we can be ready to listen more deeply.

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