

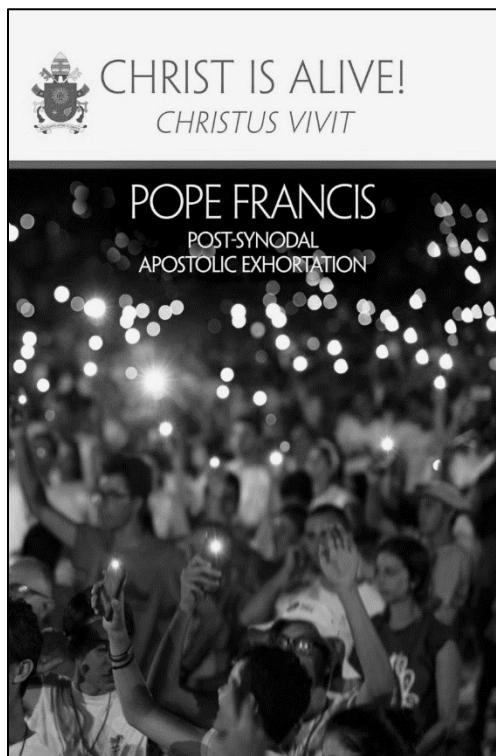
# Christus Vivit

## Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation on Young People\*

Summary compiled by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth ©2019

In April 2019, Pope Francis released his post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Christus Vivit* (*Christ is Alive!*), addressed to youth and young adults and the entire People of God. This document is the Holy Father's reflection and insights on the Church's synodal journey which focused on *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment* from 2016 to 2019.

*Christus Vivit* is written in nine (9) chapters that roughly correspond to the pastoral method of "see" (chapters 1-3), "judge" (chapters 4-6), and "act" (chapters 7-9). There are 299 paragraphs and many footnotes and references.



### \*Who are young people?

In *Christus Vivit* and during the synodal process that led up to it, young people (*jóvenes* in Spanish, *giovani* in Italian) are defined as those approx. ages 16 to 29, or who we would call *youth and young adults* in the United States.

- Chapter 1:** **Scriptural Observations** | "...the Word of God..."  
*Looking at youth and young adults in salvation history.*
- Chapter 2:** **Theological Observations** | "Jesus, Ever Young"  
*Looking at Jesus, Mary, and the saints as young people, which inspires the Church to regain her youthfulness.*
- Chapter 3:** **Sociological Observations** | "You are the 'Now' of God"  
*Looking at some realities and challenges facing young people today, as heard in the synodal listening process.*
- Chapter 4:** **Spiritual Assessment** | "A Great Message..."  
*Understanding three key foundations: God loves you, Jesus saves and suffers with you, and Christ is alive.*
- Chapter 5:** **Developmental Assessment** | "Paths of Young People"  
*Understanding the transitions and pathways youth and young adults experience from the personal to the global.*
- Chapter 6:** **Generational Assessment** | "Young People with Roots"  
*Understanding the call to dialogue and co-responsibility across generational lines in the Church and in society.*
- Chapter 7:** **Pastoral Action** | "Ministry with Young People"  
*Advancing new models for pastoral ministry and accompaniment with youth and young adults.*
- Chapter 8:** **Missionary Action** | "Vocation"  
*Advancing a culture of vocations among young people, helping them see their mission and service to the world.*
- Chapter 9:** **Synodal Action** | "Discernment"  
*Advancing a mutual listening (synodal) model of discernment in engaging youth and young adults.*

Taking care of young people is not an optional task for the Church, but an integral part of her vocation and mission in history. (2018 Synod *Instrumentum Laboris* 1)

## **Christus Vivit is an invitation to youth and young adults**

### **1. to share, to listen, and to learn from one another.**

*"There exist only young people, each with the reality of his or her own life."* CV 71

- See also *Christus Vivit* 64-102 (Ch. 3), 179-201 (Ch. 6), 291-298 (Ch. 9)

### **2. to remind you to have hope in the midst of darkness.**

*"There can be no doubt that goodness will have the upper hand."* CV 127

- See also *Christus Vivit* 1-63 (Ch. 1-2), 103-133 (Ch. 3-4), 299 (Ch. 9)

### **3. to grow and go beyond yourself and your own experiences.**

*"I ask young people to go beyond... and to build social friendships."* CV 169

- See also *Christus Vivit* 134-178 (Ch. 5), 248-258 (Ch. 8)

### **4. to commit to your vocation and mission in the world.**

*"Come to recognize the vocation that is yours in this world."* CV 277

- See also *Christus Vivit* 202-241 (Ch. 7), 259-277 (Ch. 8), 278-290 (Ch. 9)

### **Dear young people, make the most of these years.**

Don't observe life from a balcony. Whatever you do, do not become the sorry sight of an abandoned vehicle. Don't be parked cars but dream freely and make good decisions. Take risks, even if it means making mistakes. Make a ruckus! Cast out the fears that paralyze you, so that you don't become young mummies. Live! Give yourselves over to the best of life. Open the door of the cage, go out, and fly! Please don't take an early retirement. (CV 143)

**We cannot just say that young people are the future of our world.** They are its present; even now, they are helping to enrich it. Young people are no longer children. They are at a time of life when they begin to assume a number of responsibilities, sharing alongside adults in the growth of the family, society and the Church. **Yet the times are changing.** (CV 64)

**Young people can be tempted to withdraw into small groups...** They may feel that they are experiencing fraternity and love, but their small group may in fact become nothing other than an extension of their own ego... I ask young people to **go beyond their small groups and to build "social friendship, where everyone works for the common good..."** It is not easy, it always means having to give something up and to negotiate, but if we do it for the sake of helping others, we can have the magnificent experience of setting our differences aside and working together for something greater. If, as a result of our own simple and at times costly efforts, we can find points of agreement amid conflict, build bridges, and make peace for the benefit of all, then we will experience **the miracle of the culture of encounter.**" (CV 168, 169)

**Young friends, don't wait until tomorrow** to contribute your energy, your audacity and your creativity to changing our world. Your youth is not an "in-between time." **You are the now of God,** and he wants you to bear fruit. (CV 178)

**The world has never benefitted, nor will it ever benefit, from a rupture between generations.** That is the siren song of a future without roots and origins. It is the lie that would have you believe that only what is new is good and beautiful. **When intergenerational relationships exist, a collective memory is present** in communities, as each generation takes up the teachings of its predecessors. (CV 191)

**Ministry has to be synodal; it should involve a "journeying together"** ...Motivated by this spirit, we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, as well as groups, associations, and movements. **No one should be excluded or exclude themselves.** (CV 206)

**Dear young people, my joyful hope** is to see you *keep running the race* before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running... 'The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them! And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, **have the patience to wait for us.'** (CV 299)