

# *CHRISTUS VIVIT*

***Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation  
of the Holy Father Francis  
To Young People and to the Entire People of God***

# BACKGROUND & HISTORY

- Pre-Synod international gathering in March 2018--three young adult delegates representing the US (Br.Javier Hansen, FSC; Nick Lopez, Katie Prejean McGrady); several young adult representatives from Eastern Rite, various apostolates & movements)
- October 2018 - 15th Annual Gathering of Bishops
- Release of *Christus Vivit* in April 2019.

# WHO IS THIS DOCUMENT FOR?

- Youth and Young Adults (especially ages 16 to 30s)
- Those who are active in the Catholic Church
- Those who are less active in their Catholic faith
- Those who are not active at all in a religious community
- Bishops and Pastors
- Diocesan and Parish Leaders (Laity, Religious, and Clergy)
- Religious Communities and Catholic Organizations
- Active Lay Catholics and Parishioners
- Parents and Families of Youth and Young Adults

# WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

**“Because youth and young adults matter. Not only are they the future, Pope Francis is very clear that young people ‘are the now of God.’ They are influencing and impacting the Church and the world today, and any person of faith should be walking alongside them: as peers, as mentors, as guides, and as fellow travelers on the road toward Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.”**

# *The Drought in Texas*



**“Faith without works is dead.”**

**James 2**

**“If you do not act as you believe, you eventually believe how you act.”**

**Bishop Fulton Sheen**

# WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

**In *Christus Vivit*, the terms “youth and young adults,” “young people,” and “the young” are used interchangeably. The age range designated by the synodal process and in *Christus Vivit* includes those ages 16-29, which spans across older adolescence and early young adulthood.**

# Chapters 1-3: See/Observe

Pope Francis helps us to see young people in the context of Scripture (Chapter 1), the Church (Chapter 2), and the world today (Chapter 3).

This is inclusive of some key observations about youth and young adults he received through the synodal process, especially in his encounters with young people at World Youth Days in Rio (2013), Krakow (2016), with the international delegates at the Pre-Synod Meeting (March 2018), and with the young adult auditors at the Synod of Bishops (October 2018).

# READ & DISCUSS

en be tempted to list all the problems and failings of today's young people.  
d it praiseworthy that we seem so expert in discerning difficulties and dangers.  
e result of such an attitude? Greater distance, less closeness, less mutual

oe a parent, pastor or guide to young people must have the farsightedness to  
lame that continues to burn, the fragile reed that is shaken but not broken (cf.  
o discern pathways where others only see walls, to recognize potential where  
That is how God the Father see things; he knows how to cherish and nurture the  
wn in the hearts of the young. Each young person's heart should thus be  
nd", a bearer of seeds of divine life, before which we must "take off our shoes"  
and enter more deeply into the Mystery.

## Chapters 4-6: Judge/Interpret

Pope Francis offers his response to the situation of young people (shared throughout Chapter 3) by providing three essential understandings of life and faith: that God loves us, that Jesus saves us through his death, and that Christ is alive through his resurrection, and gives us hope with the help of the Holy Spirit (Chapter 4). He then shares his commentary on, or assessment of, what it means to be a young person, and how youth and young adults move from dreams to fully participating in today's global society (Chapter 5). This includes his expression of the great hope he has for young people and intergenerational cohesion (Chapter 6).

## Chapters 7-9: Act/Choose

Pope Francis concludes *Christus Vivit* by pointing to needed improvements and actions in both youth and young adult ministries and by the global Church in response to young people. He outlines ideas for parishes and academic institutions and proposes a radical ministry model beyond church walls and with youth and young adults as the chief protagonists (Chapter 7). He then provides a framework for understanding and acting on one's calling/vocation in life (Chapter 8) through an intentional process of listening, dialogue, and discernment (Chapter 9).

# READ & DISCUSS

**204. The young make us see the need for new styles and new strategies. For example, while adults often worry about having everything properly planned, with regular meetings and fixed times, most young people today have little interest in this kind of pastoral approach. Youth ministry needs to become more flexible: inviting young people to events or occasions that provide an opportunity not only for learning, but also for conversing, celebrating, singing, listening to real stories and experiencing a shared encounter with the living God.**

**205. At the same time, we should take into greater consideration those practices that have shown their value – the methods, language and aims that have proved truly effective in bringing young people to Christ and the Church. It does not matter where they are coming from or what labels they have received, whether “conservative” or “liberal”, “traditional” or “progressive”. What is important is that we make use of everything that has borne good fruit and effectively communicates the joy of the Gospel.**

212. As for growth, I would make one important point. In some places, it happens that young people are helped to have a **powerful experience of God**, an encounter with Jesus that touched their hearts. But the only follow-up to this is a series of “formation” meetings featuring talks about doctrinal and moral issues, the evils of today’s world, the Church, her social doctrine, chastity, marriage, birth control and so on. **As a result, many young people get bored, they lose the fire of their encounter with Christ and the joy of following him; many give up and others become downcast or negative.** Rather than being too concerned with communicating a great deal of doctrine, let us first try to **awaken and consolidate the great experiences that sustain the Christian life. In the words of Romano Guardini, “when we experience a great love... everything else becomes part of it”.**[112]

213. **Any educational project or path of growth for young people must certainly include formation in Christian doctrine and morality.** It is likewise important that it have two main goals. One is the development of the kerygma, the foundational experience of **encounter with God** through Christ’s death and resurrection. The other is **growth in fraternal love, community life and service.**

# ACCOMPANIMENT



# READ & DISCUSS

**236. Youth ministry, when it ceases to be elitist and is willing to be “popular”, is a process that is gradual, respectful, patient, hopeful, tireless and compassionate. The Synod proposed the example of the disciples of Emmaus (cf. Lk 24:13-35) as a model of what happens in youth ministry.**

**237. “Jesus walks with two disciples who did not grasp the meaning of all that happened to him, and are leaving Jerusalem and the community behind. Wanting to accompany them, he joins them on the way. He asks them questions and listens patiently to their version of events, and in this way he helps them recognize what they were experiencing. Then, with affection and power, he proclaims the word to them, leading them to interpret the events they had experienced in the light of the Scriptures. He accepts their invitation to stay with them as evening falls; he enters into their night. As they listen to him speak, their hearts burn within them and their minds are opened; they then recognize him in the breaking of the bread. They themselves choose to resume their journey at once in the opposite direction, to return to the community and to share the experience of their encounter with the risen Lord”. (Synod of Bishops, Oct. 2018)**

# THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

**Repetitio (Repetition) - Where was I moved most in my prayer?**

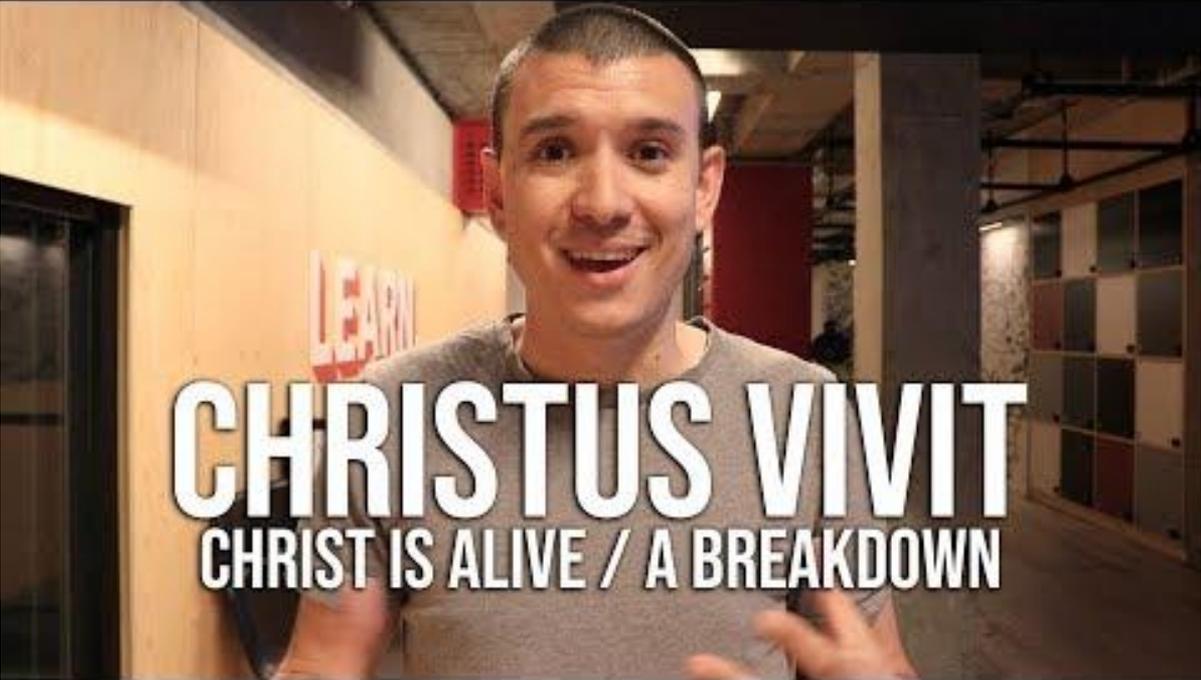
- **Return to the words or phrases in the Word of God that moved me, and where I found fruit in the Gospel reading**

**Actio (Action) - What am I resolved to do now that I have received the Word of God?**

- **Make concrete resolutions about how I can make changes in the way I do ministry, because of what God has given me.**

# HOW CAN WE BETTER ENCOUNTER & ACCOMPANY?





**CHRISTUS VIVIT**  
**CHRIST IS ALIVE / A BREAKDOWN**