

CHAPTER ONE

CHRISTUS VIVIT



Summary *authored by Andrea Tornielli,*

""What does the Word of God have to say about young people?" Francis recalls that "in an age when young people were not highly regarded, some texts show that God sees them differently" (6). He briefly presents figures of young people from the Old Testament: Joseph, Gideon (7), Samuel (8), King David (9), Solomon and Jeremiah (10), the very young Jewish servant of Naaman, and the young Ruth (11). Then he moves on to the New Testament. The Pope recalls that "Jesus, who is eternally young, wants to give us hearts that are ever young" (13) and adds: "Let us also keep in mind that Jesus had no use for adults who looked down on the young or lorded it over them. On the contrary, he insisted that "the greatest among you must become like the youngest" (Lk 22:26). For him age did not establish privileges, and being young did not imply lesser worth or dignity". Francis affirms: "We should never repent of spending our youth being good, opening our heart to the Lord, and living differently" (17)."

Source:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-04/pope-francis-apostolic-exhortation-christ-is-alive-synthesis.html>

Thoughts for your own reflection

submitted by Deacon Trevor Klein

Pope Francis invites us in the open chapter of Christus Vivit to recognize the development of young hearts; hearts that are naturally ready to change, to turn back, get up and learn from life. He calls us to develop their true nature of love and to keep their souls from growing old; everything that separates us from others makes the soul grow old.

After reading the opening chapter of Christus Vivit I am reminded of one of my favourite passages from Mark's Gospel, " But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them." This passage is referring to how we are called to help young people form their faith and grow in their commitment to their personal vocation.

We read in this opening chapter, a call for all people to open their hearts, set their eyes on new horizons and great challenges, all the while guarding themselves from riches and comforts that will lead them away from a true encounter with the living God. He reminds the youth that if they have lost their inner vitality, their dreams, their enthusiasm, optimism and generosity, that Jesus stands before them as he once stood before the dead son of the widow, and with all the power of his resurrection, he urges them, "I say to you, arise!" (LK 7:14)

Young people are not meant to become discouraged; they are meant to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves to the building of something better. That is why Pope Francis constantly urges young people not to let themselves be robbed of hope; to each of them he repeats: "Let no one despise your youth" (1Tim 4:12).