



From the Deacon's Desk

On April 2nd, Pope Francis issued the Post-Synodal Exhortation of the Synod of Bishops: "Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment -- *Christus Vivat* [Christ is alive]. Here are some brief highlights.

Chapter 1: Word of God. *"Jesus, who is eternally young, wants to give us hearts that are ever young." "We should never repent of spending our youth being good, opening our heart to the Lord, and living differently."*

Chapter 2: Jesus, ever young. Christ must be presented *"in an attractive and effective way"; "the Church should not be excessively caught up in herself but instead, and above all, reflect Jesus Christ. This means humbly acknowledging that some things concretely need to change."*

Chapter 3: The "now" of God. *"Each young person's heart should thus be considered "holy ground." The **digital world** "can be a place of "loneliness, manipulation, exploitation, and violence." Regarding **migration** and **abuse**, he acknowledges the church's sins "they [sins] appear all too clearly in the lines on the age-old face of the Church, our Mother and Teacher."*

Chapter 4: A great message. The pope announces three great truths: A *"God who is love," "Christ saves you,"* and *"He is alive."*

Chapter 5: Paths of youth. *"Our best dreams are only attained through hope, patience, and commitment, and not in haste."* Of **growth and maturity**, the pope writes of the importance of ... *"seeking the Lord and keeping his Word."*

Chapter 6: Roots. The pope advises *"your relationship with the elderly"* is fundamental. *"When young and old alike are open to the Holy Spirit, they make a wonderful combination. The old dream dreams and the young see visions."*

Chapter 7: Youth ministry. *"Youth ministry has to be synodal, that is, capable of shaping a "journey together."*

Chapter 8: Vocation. Vocation is a call to missionary service to others, *"for our life on earth reaches full stature when it becomes an offering."* He addresses occupation, marriage, and religious vocations.

Chapter 9: Discernment. *"A particular form of discernment involves the effort to discover our own vocation. Since this is a very personal decision that others cannot make for us, it requires a certain degree of solitude and silence".*

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