

**PASTORAL APPROACHES  
IN THE LIGHT OF  
CHRISTUS VIVIT**

# **I. THE YOUTH AS DEFINED BY THE SYNOD**

“Youth, as a phase in the development of the personality, is marked by dreams which gather momentum, by relationships which acquire more and more consistency and balance, by trials and experiments, and by choices which gradually build a life project. At this stage in life, the young are called to move forward without cutting themselves off from their roots, to build autonomy, but not in solitude. The social, economic, cultural context does not always offer favourable conditions.”

**CV 65**



**1. Marked by dreams which gather momentum**

**2. By relationships which acquire more and more consistency and balance**

**3. Marked by trials and experiments**

**4. Where choices are made that gradually build a life project**

“Young people are the present of the world; even now, they are helping to enrich it. They are at a time when they begin to assume a number of responsibilities, sharing alongside adults in the growth of the family, society and the Church.”

**CV 64**

## **II. THE CALL FOR THE CHURCH: TO BE EVER YOUNG**

There is a tendency for the Church to provide pre-packaged answers and ready-made solutions, without allowing their real questions to emerge and facing the challenges they pose.

**CV 65**

Adults attempt to list all the problems and failings of today's young people resulting only to a greater distance, less closeness, less mutual assistance.

**CV 66**



Jesus calls the Church to be Ever Young as He is eternal young. We need to have hearts that are ever young. St. Paul mentions the following: **“compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving each other.”** (Col 3: 12-13)

CV 66

**III. THE WAY:  
LISTENING AND  
ACCOMPANIMENT**

## LUKE 24:13-35

**<sup>13</sup> Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, <sup>14</sup> and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. <sup>15</sup> And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> He asked them, “What are you discussing as you walk along?” They stopped, looking downcast. <sup>18</sup> One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?”**

## LUKE 24:13-35

**19 And he replied to them, “What sort of things?” They said to him, “The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. 21 But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. 22 Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning 23 and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. 24 Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see.”**

## LUKE 24:13-35

**25** And he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! **26** Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer<sup>[c]</sup> these things and enter into his glory?” **27** Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. **28** As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. **29** But they urged him, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. **30** And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. **31** With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight.

## LUKE 24:13-35

**<sup>32</sup> Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?” <sup>33</sup> So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them <sup>34</sup> who were saying, “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!” <sup>35</sup> Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.**



## **MEETING JESUS ON THE ROAD: A DIALOGUE OF LISTENING AND SHARING**

## JESUS WALKED WITH THEM BUT THEY DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIM. WHY?

- Because Jesus looked different
- Because they were so into their frustration, anger and hopelessness (they even vented their anger on Him)
- For probably not seeing the situation from their own point of view because they were going to Emmaus (the road to nowhere according to some biblical scholars)
- They lost their life direction when Jesus died
- Because before the crucifixion, they had a direction but one that is based on what Jesus said and done
- Because they did not want anything to do with Jesus so they did not recognize him



## WHAT DID JESUS DO?

- He listened to them.**
- He allowed them to vent their frustration, anger, hopelessness, their fears so that they would hear themselves talk about it.**



**LISTENING: “Jesus walked with them.” (Lk 24:15)**

The Risen Lord wants to walk beside all young people, to hear their expectations, even those that are unmet, and their hopes, even those that are imperfect or ephemeral. **Jesus walks, he listens and he shares.**

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 5**

## HOW DO WE LISTEN?

Ears      耳      Eyes  
                 目      Attention  
                 心      Open Heart

The Mandarin symbol for the verb “to listen” reads –  
I give you my ears, my eyes, my undivided attention and my heart

The young are constantly called to make decisions that give direction to their lives; they want to be **heard, acknowledged and accompanied**. Many find that their voice is not considered worthwhile or helpful in social and ecclesial circles. In various situations, little attention is paid to their cry, especially that of the poor and exploited, and there is a lack of adults prepared or willing to listen to them.

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 7**

Listening is an encounter in freedom, which calls for humility, patience, readiness to understand, and an effort to respond in new ways. Listening transforms the hearts of those who do it, especially when it takes place with an inner disposition of harmony and docility to the Spirit. It is not simply a source of information or a strategy for achieving a goal, but the way that God himself relates to his people. God sees the distress of his people and hears their cry; deeply moved, he comes down to deliver them (cf. Ex 3:7-8). The Church, by her listening, enters into the movement of God who, in his Son, draws near to every human being.

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 6**

To be credible to young people, there are times when she needs to regain her humility and simply listen, recognizing that what others have to say can provide some light to help her better understand the Gospel.

**CV 41**

## THREE DISTINCT AND COMPLEMENTARY SIGNS OF SENSITIVITY

- Sensitivity of the individual**
- Sensitivity marked by discernment**
- Sensitivity to what drives the other**





## ACCOMPANIMENT

Accompaniment for the sake of valid, stable and well-founded choices, is therefore a service that is widely needed. **Being present, supporting and accompanying the journey towards authentic choices is one way for the Church to exercise her maternal function, giving birth to the freedom of the children of God.** Service of this kind is simply the continuation of the way in which the God of Jesus Christ acts towards his people: **through constant and heartfelt presence, dedicated and loving closeness and tenderness without limits.**

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 91**

The family should be the first place of accompaniment...that is why youth ministry and the pastoral care of families should be coordinated and integrated.

**CV 242**

Spiritual accompaniment is intended to help people integrate step by step the various dimensions of their lives so as to follow the Lord Jesus. In this process three elements can be identified: **listening of life, encounter with Jesus and mysterious dialogue between God's freedom and that of the individual.**

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 97**

As the account of the Emmaus disciples shows us, accompanying requires **availability to walk a stretch of road together, establishing a significant relationship.**

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 92**

Only a pastoral approach capable of renewal on the basis of care for relationships and the quality of the Christian community will be significant and attractive for the young. **The Church will thus be able to present herself to them as a welcoming home, characterized by a family atmosphere built on trust and confidence.** The longing for fraternity, which emerged so many times as the Synod listened to the young, asks the Church to be “a home for many peoples, a mother for all peoples” (Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 288): pastoral ministry has the task of realizing in history the Church’s universal maternity through concrete and prophetic gestures of joyful, daily welcome that make her a home for the young.

**Final Document of the Synod on Youth, 138**



# **LEADING THE YOUTH BACK HOME**

It's not easy, especially when we're young, to make peace with the fires inside us. We need to establish our own identity and find, for ourselves, intimacy, meaning, self-worth, quiet from restlessness, and **a place that feels like home.**

**Ronald Rolheiser, Sacred Fire**



The stage of youth is the stage of **essential discipleship**: In essence, this is the struggle to get our lives together. During this time we struggle to find ourselves, to get our lives together, to create a new home for ourselves.

**Ronald Rolheiser, Sacred Fire**

What is the goal of discipling the young: so that they can find their vocation and be empowered to be missionary disciples. If we are successful in leading them home, then we can pastor young people and lead them towards the next stage: **generative discipleship**

**Ronald Rolheiser, Sacred Fire**

In essence, this is the struggle to give our lives away. Our main concern now is not so much about what to do with our lives but how to give them away so as to make the world a better place.

**Ronald Rolheiser, Sacred Fire**



# THE NEED FOR MENTORS

**-being a faithful Christian who engages with the Church and the world;**

**-someone who constantly seeks holiness;**

**-someone who is a confidant without judging.**

**-similarly, someone who actively listens to the needs of young people and responds in kind;**

**-someone deeply loving and self-aware;**

**-someone who recognizes his or her limits and knows the joys and sorrows of the spiritual journey.**