



## Christ Lives!

Pope Francis has written a new Exhortation entitled ***Vivit Christus*** (Christ is alive) directed largely to the young following the Synod on youth last year. He writes:

“Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world, and everything he touches becomes young, new, full of life. The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!

He is in you, he is with you and he never abandons you. However far you may wander, he is always there, the Risen One. He calls you and he waits for you to return to him and start over again. When you feel you are growing old out of sorrow, resentment or fear, doubt or failure, he will always be there to restore your strength and your hope.

Jesus is “young among the young in order to be an example for the young and to consecrate them to the Lord”. For this reason the Synod said that “youth is an original and stimulating stage of life, which Jesus himself experienced, thereby sanctifying it”.

Dear young people, make the most of these years of your youth,” he tells them. “Don’t observe life from a balcony. Don’t confuse happiness with an armchair, or live your life behind a screen. 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...don’t take an early retirement.

A Church always on the defensive, which loses her humility and stops listening to others, which leaves no room for questions, loses her youth and turns into a museum.

Let us ask the Lord to free the Church from those who would make her grow old, encase her in the past, hold her back or keep her at a standstill. But let us also ask him to free her from another temptation: that of thinking she is young because she accepts everything the world offers her, thinking that she is renewed because she sets her message aside and acts like everybody else. No! The Church is young when she is herself, when she receives ever anew the strength born of God’s word, the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of his Spirit in our lives.

The Church is young when she shows herself capable of constantly returning to her source.”