

SYNOD ON YOUNG PEOPLE. “THE UNIQUE VOICE OF THE IDEAL”

In these days, a collection of texts dedicated to students by Father Julián Carrón will be presented in bookstores. They are an instrument to be used to get ready for the Synod this Fall. We offer here Carrón’s introduction to the book.

by **Julián Carrón** – April 11, 2018

The young people who live in this change of epoch are in search of points of reference that will accompany them along the path of life, in front of the fundamental choices they must make. They are often disoriented, prey to insecurities and fears about the future, and therefore are not content with words; nor are a set of rules enough for them. They need something that lives up to the endless desire of their heart, as Pope Francis underlined in Chile: “The young people in the Gospel we heard today [...] sought that connection to help them keep the flame alive in their hearts. [...] **Andrew and the other disciple—whose name is not given, so we can imagine that each of us can be that “other” disciple—were looking for the password to connect with the one who is ‘the way, and the truth and the life’** [...]. Jesus is that fire; everyone who draws near to it is set ablaze.” Only a present reality, in fact, can move the heart: “It is not enough to hear a sermon or learn an answer from the catechism; we want to live the way Jesus lived. [...] Therefore the young people in the Gospel asked: ‘Lord, where do you live?’ [...] How do you live? Do I ask Jesus this? We want to live like Jesus, with that ‘yes’ that thrills our heart” (*Meeting with Youth*, National Shrine of Maipú, 17 January 2018).

This little book is a contribution in view of the Synod of Bishops on *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment* next October, called for by Pope Francis to listen to the questions and concerns of young people, in an attempt to accompany them on the path of life.

Accepting the challenge of a relationship with the younger generations is decisive, because they represent the future of society. Above all for the Church, this constitutes an enthusiastic adventure: **to verify if the Christian proposal still finds space in the hearts of young people, who are searching for their vocation—as a profession and as a state of life.** It is the risk that Father Giussani ran when he began to teach at Berchet High School in Milan back in 1954; he was animated by the desire “to show the pertinence of faith to the demands of life”.

In his meetings with young people, Pope Francis constantly witnesses to the fact that faith has something to do with life, with the questions and worries that we all have, that the faith can generate an I that is capable of entering into relationship with reality—without being suffocated by circumstances—because we have been conquered by the unique voice of the ideal.