



The pilgrim people of God

„This is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel... Deep within them I will plant my law... I will be their God and they shall be my people.”

(1st Reading, 5th Sunday of Lent, Jer 31:31-34)

The Church is the new people of God, called out of all nations, peoples and cultures, united with each other and with God through a “new and eternal covenant”, committed to the “new law” to love God and neighbour. As she goes through history as a „pilgrim Church“ she is confronted with dramatic changes and new challenges.

We live in a time of profound changes and are caught up in many contradictions. Often we are unable to grasp their true dimensions. Yet we are forced to take decisions without understanding their long-term consequences and may feel inadequate and ill at ease. These uncertainties cause anxiety. There are different way of dealing with it. Some try to suppress their fears through constant, hectic activity or the pursuit of superficial pleasure. Others withdraw into the past and seek security by clinging to the traditions of the “good old times”.

The documents of the II. Vatican Council as well as Pope Francis describe very accurately the upheavals and challenges of our time. They encourage us to trust in God, the Lord of history, to live radically the Gospel message of Jesus and to allow ourselves to be guided by his Spirit. In this way the whole people of God in dialogue with all people of good will are able to search and find new ways of creating a more just and peaceful world.

- Today, the human race is involved in a new stage of history. **Profound and rapid changes** are spreading by degrees around the whole world... we can already speak of a **true cultural and social transformation**, one which has repercussions on people's religious life as well. As happens in any crisis of growth, this transformation has brought serious difficulties in its wake... Influenced by such a variety of complexities, many of our contemporaries are kept from accurately identifying permanent values and adjusting them properly to fresh discoveries. As a result, **buffeted between hope and anxiety** and pressing one another with questions about the present course of events, they are burdened down with uneasiness. (Gaudium et Spes 4)
- **Our societies are changing**... New and different cultural expressions are being born which do not fit into our familiar patterns. We have to realize that many times **we do not know how to deal with these new situations**... Whether we like it or not, we are called to face reality as it is – our own personal reality and the reality of our communities and societies. (Pope Francis, Santiago 16.01.2018)
- (Christ) is for ever young and a constant source of newness... With this newness he is always able to renew our lives and our communities, and even if the Christian message has known periods of darkness and ecclesial weakness, it will never grow old. Jesus can also break through the dull categories with which we would enclose him and he constantly amazes us by his divine creativity. Whenever we make the effort to **return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel**, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today's world. (Evangelii Gaudium 11)



- What are my feelings when I am faced with the confusing complexities of our society?
- Nobody can foresee the future of our world, our Church or our communities? How do I live with this uncertainty? Retreat into my own little world or live in the memories of the past?
- How can a prayerful listening to the Word of God give us new energy and new hope as individuals and as community? How do we discern the next possible step?

*We are grateful for the holy, catholic Church,
who renews herself and the world through the power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.*