# Mission at the service of people

***A faith that does not go beyond pious words and theological thoughts is dead. Jesus warns disciples who cry "Lord, Lord,"but do not do His Father's will".*** (Mt 7, 21-23) ***The letter of St. James condemns Christians who "dishonour the poor" and refuse to give them what they need to live. "Faith without works is dead."*** (Jm 2)

***The mission of the Church has always the whole person in view: body, mind and soul. Wherever mission stations were established, health centres, schools and other social services followed. This was not a trick to attract people, but an expression of the will to follow the example of Jesus. His mission was to announce good news to the poor, give sight to the blind and set prisoners and the oppressed free.*** (cf. Luke 4: 18-19)

***The council has given us a deeper insight of Christian responsibility for the world. Evangelisation is not just about converting individuals. The Gospel is meant to penetrate and change cultures and social structures and the whole of human reality. The commitment to a holistic development and tosocial justice, to peace andthe integrity of creation is part of the mission of the Church and of all the disciples of Jesus.***

***One way to contribute to the mission of the Church is by supporting the Pontifical Mission Societies and Church Aid agencies. They enable local churches worldwide in spreading the message of Jesus, caring for the poor and working for greater social justice.***

### *Texts*

- Since this mission goes on and in the course of history unfolds the mission of Christ Himself, who was sent to preach the Gospel to the poor, the Church, prompted by the Holy Spirit, must walk in the same path on which Christ walked**: a path of poverty and obedience, of service and self - sacrifice** to the death, from which death He came forth a victor by His resurrection. (Ad Gentes 5)
- **Development**… cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man… What counts for us is the human being—each individual, each human group and humanity as a whole. (Populorum Progessio 14)
  Our faith in Christ, who became poor and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members. Each individual Christian and every community is called **to be an instrument of God for the liberation** and promotion of the poor… It means working to **eliminate the structural causes of poverty** and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as **small daily acts of solidarity** in meeting the real needs which we encounter… I want a **Church which is poor and for the poor**. They have much to teach us. (EG 186.187.188.198)
- Any Church community, if it thinks it can comfortably go its own way **without creative concern and effective cooperation in helping the poor to live with dignity** and reaching out to everyone, will also risk breaking down, however much it may talk about social issues or criticize governments. It will easily drift into a spiritual worldliness camouflaged by religious practices, unproductive meetings and empty talk. (EG 207)

### *Questions for reflection*

- Where in my environment are poor, sick or lonely people who need my affection?
- How do we live in our community our responsibility to create a more just, peaceful and sustainable world?