PRAYER INTENTIONS
inspired by
The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation
CHRISTUS VIVIT
of the Holy Father,
FRANCIS

These prayer intentions derive from the individual paragraphs of Christus vivit. The number before each prayer indicates the paragraph of the Exhortation that inspired it. Some paragraphs were broken down into several prayers, which explains why some numbers are repeated. Some paragraphs did not yield a prayer intention, which explains why some paragraphs are missing.

One suggestion for using these prayers might be to include one or two each day in the daily recitation of Morning and Evening prayer. They may also be inserted to the prayer of the faithful at mass.

The goal is to keep Christus vivit alive in our midst, in our pastoral planning and in our praxis as we strive to accompany the young in more significant ways.
CHAPTER ONE

What Does the Word of God Have to Say About Young People?

5-11. That the lives of so many young faith heroes present in the Sacred Scriptures will inspire our young people to consider how often the Lord speaks to and through the young and how the Lord continually draws near to encounter them.

12. That young people, who like the prodigal son in Luke's gospel, have experienced a life of excess and loneliness through the unguided use of their independence, may experience love, mercy and support when they resolve to learn from life and return home.

14. That adults will never look down on the young or lord it over them, never equate fewer years with less worth or dignity, but rather be inspired by Jesus who tells us, “the greatest among you must become like the youngest”.

15. That young people will always be treated as brothers and sisters who are encouraged to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves for the building of something better.

16. That young people may “accept the authority of those who are older” and show a profound respect for the elderly who offer a wealth of experience through their successes and failures, joys and afflictions, dreams and disappointments.

16. That young people may avoid the pitfalls of the cult of youth and not dismiss others simply because they are older or from another generation.

16. That young people may be open to the future yet still capable of learning from the experience of others.

17. That young people will delight in spending their youth being good, opening their heart to the Lord, and living according to the Gospel.

18. That the natural openness of spirit which prompts young people to seek new horizons and great challenges may never be dampened by an attachment to riches and comforts.

19. That young people may not spend their youth distracted by superficial things, skimming the surface of life, half-asleep, incapable of cultivating meaningful
relationships or experiencing the deeper things in life, but rather aspire to beautiful and
great things, and thus store up a future full of life and interior richness.

20. That young people who have lost their inner vitality, their dreams, their enthusiasm,
their optimism or their generosity may recognize the voice of Jesus who tells them, “I
say to you, arise!”.

CHAPTER TWO

Jesus, Ever Young

22. That young people may come to know and love Jesus who is young among the
young, and by their example inspire their peers to dedicate themselves to the Lord.

Jesus’ Youth

25. That young people may deepen their baptismal identity and explore their Christian
call to mission by believing that the Father speaks to them the same words he spoke to
Jesus at his baptism: “You are my beloved child”.

26. That young people, like the adolescent Jesus, may grow in wisdom, age and grace
before God and people as they deepen their family bonds.

27. That young people, like Jesus, will see their youth as a “training”, a time of
preparation to carry out the Father’s plan for them.

28. That young people will share fully in the life of their families and their
communities, avoid becoming self-absorbed, and, like Jesus, be intentional about doing whatever
God the Father asks of them.

Jesus’ youth teaches us

30. That young people, as they prepare to take up their mission of life, may grow in their
relationship with the Father as Jesus did, aware that they are part of a family and a
people. May they be open to the Holy Spirit who helps them to carry out the mission
God gives them, their personal vocation.

30. That youth pastoral workers will always encourage projects that deepen the
relationships between young people, their families and the larger community, and
accompany them and impel them to encounter others, to engage in generous service in
mission.
31. That young people may discover Jesus as a teacher who speaks to them from within their very youth, a youth he shares with them.

31. That young people may learn to contemplate the young Jesus as presented in the Gospels, a teacher who is truly one of them, and shares many of the features of their youth.

31. That today’s youth may contemplate and grow more like the young Jesus who had unconditional trust in the Father, maintained friendship with his disciples and even in moments of crisis remained faithful to them.

31. That today’s youth may contemplate and grow more like the young Jesus by showing profound compassion for the weakest, especially the poor, the sick, sinners and the excluded.

31. That today’s youth may see themselves in the young Jesus who had the courage to confront the religious and political authorities of his time, who knew what it was to be misunderstood and rejected, who experienced the fear of suffering and who knew the frailty of the Passion.

32. That young people may trust that Jesus is risen and believe that he wants to make us sharers in the new life of the resurrection.

32. That today’s youth may love the risen Jesus who is the true youthfulness of a world grown old, the youthfulness of a universe waiting “in travail” to be clothed with his light and to live his life.

33. That Church and pastoral leaders may heed the Lord’s call to enkindle stars in the night of young people.

**The youth of the Church**

34. That the Church with her age-old history may be ever young as she proclaims Christ, the “companion and friend of youth”, and allow herself to be renewed, rejuvenated and enriched by the young.

**A Church open to renewal**

35. That the Lord may 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.

35. That the Lord may free the Church from the temptation of thinking she is young because she accepts everything the world offers her, thinking that she is renewed because she sets God’s message aside and acts like everybody else.
That the Lord may renew the Church’s youthfulness by guiding her back to her source: the strength born of God’s word, the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of his Spirit in our lives.

That all members of the Church may be seen as a people who stand together as friends and neighbors, like the apostles, who “enjoyed the good will of all the people”, even as they dared to be different, to point to ideals other than those of this world, to testify to the beauty of generosity, service, purity, perseverance, forgiveness, fidelity to our personal vocation, prayer, the pursuit of justice and the common good, love for the poor, and social friendship.

That the Lord may deliver his Church from the temptation of losing enthusiasm for the mission because she no longer hears Him calling her to take the risk of faith regardless of the dangers involved.

That the Lord may deliver his Church from the temptation to seeking a false, worldly form of security.

That young people with their high ideals may keep the Church young, stop her from becoming corrupt, keep her moving forward, prevent her from being proud and sectarian, help her to be poorer and to bear better witness to the Gospel, to take the side of the poor and the outcast, to fight for justice and to be humble enough to let herself be challenged.

That young people may offer the Church the beauty of youth by renewing her ability to rejoice with new beginnings, to give unreservedly of herself, and to set out for ever greater accomplishments.

That Church leaders and all those who are no longer young in years will find ways of keeping close to the voices and concerns of young people and so make the Church a place of dialogue and a witness to life-giving fraternity across the generations.

That Church leaders and all those who are no longer young in years will make more room for the voices of young people to be heard, convinced that listening makes an exchange of gifts possible in a context of empathy, and sets the conditions for a preaching of the Gospel that can truly, decisively and fruitfully touch the heart.

A Church attentive to the signs of the times

That faith educators may present Jesus to young people in ways that are attractive and effective, even when the young appear indifferent to God, religion and the Church.

That the Church may not be excessively caught up in herself, but above all, reflect Jesus Christ to whom the young are attracted and responsive.
39. That the Church, in her efforts to better reflect Jesus Christ, may humbly acknowledge he need to change in some concrete ways, and to this end, that she may welcome both the vision and the criticisms of young people in her regard.

40. That Church and pastoral leaders may address with humility and courage the various factors that cause many young people to distance themselves from a Church that seems insignificant for their lives: alienation caused by scandal; clergy who are ill-prepared to engage effectively with the sensitivities of the young; poorly prepared homilies and presentation of the Word of God; the passive role assigned to the young within the Christian community; the Church’s difficulty in explaining her doctrine, and ethical positions to contemporary society.

41. That the Church may be both confident in her gifts and capable of offering fair and fraternal criticism, but also inclined to listen more and not simply to condemn the world.

41. That the Church will never be afraid to speak out when necessary, but without battling obsessively over two or three issues.

41. That the Church may regain credibility among young people by seizing every opportunity to be humble and listen, recognizing that what others have to say can help her better understand the Gospel.

41. That the Church, in her efforts to respond to the dreams of young people, may be humble, listen to others and leave room for questions.

41. That the Church, in her efforts to respond to the dreams of young people, will acknowledge that even if she possesses the truth of the Gospel, this does not mean that she has completely understood it, but is called to keep growing in her grasp of that inexhaustible treasure.

42. That the Church may not be overly fearful, tied to its structures, or critical in dealing with the rights of women; that she may become more attentive to the legitimate claims of those women who seek greater justice and equality.

42. That the Church may learn from its history of male authoritarianism, domination, various forms of enslavement, abuse and sexist violence and become more supportive of women’s rights.

42. That the Church, while recognizing her points of divergence with the feminist agenda, will offer convinced support for greater reciprocity between males and females.

42. That the Church, ever responsive to the sensitivities of young people, will renew her commitment to end discrimination and violence on sexual grounds.
Mary, the young woman of Nazareth

43. That Mary, the supreme model for a youthful Church seeking to follow Christ with enthusiasm and docility, may renew the heart of the Church.

44. That Mary’s ‘yes’, a determined, unhesitating acceptance of all that is at stake in Christian discipleship, may inspire all believers to take a risk on God, confident that they are the bearer of a promise.

44. That Mary’s ‘yes’ and her desire to serve may motivate the faithful beyond paralyzing cowardice and inspire them in times of doubt and difficulty.

45. That Mary, who accompanied her Son through his suffering, supported him by her gaze and protected him with her heart, may help believers not to be overcome by suffering.

45. That those who suffer may find in Mary a great guardian of hope; may they learn from her the tenacious endurance and creativity of those who, undaunted, are ever ready to say ‘yes’ and start over again.

46. That our lives may be modelled on the example of Mary, a young woman whose heart overflowed with joy, whose eyes, reflecting the light of the Holy Spirit, looked at life with faith and treasured all things in her youthful heart.

46. That we may be like Mary: energetic, ready to set out “in haste” to serve those in need, especially our own family members.

48. That we may welcome Mary as our Mother who watches over us, her children, on our journey through life, especially when we are weary, anxious or in need; that the light of hope may never fail.

48. That young people may find new hope in Mary our Mother who looks upon God’s pilgrim people with love, who illumines those who seek her in the silence of their hearts, and shows us how to be attentive to God amid all the noise, the chatter and the distractions on the journey.

Young saints

49. That we may recognize in the Church’s young saints and martyrs so many precious reflections of the young Christ whose radiant witness encourages us and awaken us from our lethargy.

49. That the Church’s many young saints may inspire young people to discover how they too can become prophets of change when they open themselves to encounter Christ and allow their youthfulness to shine forth in all its beauty.
50. That the holiness of the young may renew the Church's spiritual ardor and apostolic vigor.

50. That the good lives of so many young people may be a balm of holiness that heals the wounds of the Church and of the world, bringing us back to that fullness of love to which God has always called us.

50. That the many young saints who never reached adulthood may remind us that there is another way to spend our youth, and inspire us to return to our first love.

51. Like the martyr St. Sebastian, may young people bear public witness to their love for Christ, encourage their peers to be committed disciples, and never renounce their faith even in the face of violent opposition.

52. Like St. Francis of Assisi, may young people seek their treasure in the poverty of Christ, and their pleasure in rebuilding His Church. May they praise God by caring for creation and becoming builders of universal fraternity.

53. Like the martyr St. Joan of Arc, may young people defend religious freedom with courage and commitment, regardless of their age, social status, or negativity from others.

54. That the martyr Blessed Andrew Phû Yên may inspire young people to become catechists and to have a heart for the missions, proclaiming the name of Jesus with their lives and even with their death.

55. Like the martyr St. Kateri Tekakwitha, may young people remain strong in their faith even when persecuted; may their lives and their death proclaim their love for Jesus.

56. Like St. Dominic Savio, may young people offer all their sufferings to Mary and delight in becoming holy by being constantly joyful, especially in the service of the most abandoned and infirm of their peers.

57. Like St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, may young people who are called to the consecrated life overcome whatever obstacles may stand between them and their vocation, guided by complete trust in the Lord's love and determined to fan with their prayers the fire of love burning in the heart of the Church.

58. That Blessed Ceferino Namuncurá may inspire young people to embrace the consecrated vocation and to be zealous about evangelizing indigenous peoples.

59. That Blessed Isidore Bakanja, a faithful layman and martyr, may inspire young people to be Christian witnesses to their peers, to forgive those who persecute them, and to stay faithful to Christ even to the point of martyrdom.
60. That Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young man filled with contagious joy and courage to overcome many difficulties in life, may inspire young people to love Jesus in the Eucharist and to pay forward the love they have received from Jesus by visiting and helping the poor.

61. That young people may draw courage from the martyr, Blessed Marcel Callo, who, amid the harsh conditions in a concentration camp, strengthened his fellow prisoners in faith.

62. That young people may learn from Blessed Chiara Badano that physical illness and pain can be transfigured by love when we place complete trust in the Lord and accept illness as a mysterious expression of God’s will for us and for the good others.

63. That through the intercession of the young saints of the Church, those officially recognized and those who in hidden silence lived the Gospel to the full, the Church may be full of joyous, courageous and committed young people who offer the world new testimonies of holiness.

CHAPTER THREE

You Are the “Now” of God

64. That the Church may recognize young people not only as the future of our world, but also as the “now” of God, as they begin to assume more responsibilities to enrich the Church.

In positive terms

65. That members of the Church will learn to listen to young people rather than provide prepackaged answers and ready-made solutions.

65. That members of the Church will set aside narrow preconceptions and listen carefully to the young, allow their real questions to emerge and face the challenges they pose.

65. That the Church may be enriched by listening to young people with greater empathy, by allowing them to make their own contribution to the community, and by helping the community to appreciate new sensitivities and to consider new questions.

66. That adults in the Church may resist the temptation to identify only the problems and failings of today’s young people, and build instead a church culture that bridges
distances and promotes greater closeness and mutual assistance between the
generations.

67. That parents, pastors and guides of young people may recognize and appreciate
the little flame of faith that continues to burn, the fragile reed that is shaken but not
broken, in the young people whose lives they share.

67. That parents, pastors and guides of young people may see things as God the
Father sees them, and so be able to discern pathways where others see only walls, to
recognize potential where others see only peril.

67. That parents, pastors and guides of young people will model the love of God the
Father for the young by cherishing and nurturing the seeds of goodness sown in their
hearts.

67. That parents, pastors and guides of young people will consider each young person’s
heart as holy ground, a bearer of seeds of divine life, before which we must take off our
shoes in order to draw near and enter more deeply into the Mystery.

Living in a world in crisis

72. Let us pray for so many young people who live in war zones and experience
violence in countless different forms: that they may be freed from kidnapping, extortion,
organized crime, human trafficking, slavery and sexual exploitation, wartime rape.

72. Let us pray for young people around the world who, because of their faith, struggle
to find their place in society and endure various kinds of persecution.

72. Let us pray for so many young people, who, whether by force or lack of alternatives,
live by committing crimes and acts of violence: that child soldiers, those in armed
criminal gangs, and those involved in drug trafficking or terrorism may be restored to the
freedom of the children of God.

72. Let us pray for young people in prison who responded to the destructive forces of
violence in their lives with their own acts of violence or wrongdoing: that they may know
God’s peace.

73. Let us pray for the many young people who are taken in by ideologies, used and
exploited as cannon fodder or a strike force to destroy, terrify or ridicule others: that they
may rediscover their true human dignity.

73. Let us pray for young people who become individualists, hostile and distrustful of
others: that they may not fall prey to the brutal and destructive strategies of political
groups or economic powers.
74. Let us pray for young people who suffer marginalization and social exclusion for religious, ethnic or economic reasons.

74. Let us pray for adolescents and young people in difficult situations: those who are pregnant, those who experience the scourge of abortion, those affected by the spread of HIV, those trapped by various forms of addiction like drugs, gambling and pornography.

74. Let us pray for street children without homes, families or economic resources: that we may carry them in our hearts as God carries them in his.

75. That the Church, like a loving mother, may never fail to weep before the many tragedies that afflict young people.

75. That the Church’s tears for young people who suffer will transform society itself into a more caring mother, so that in place of killing it can learn to give birth, to become a promise of life.

75. That the Church may never fail to weep for those young people who have already lost their lives to poverty and violence, and that her maternal concern will encourage society to become a more caring mother who decries the harsh realities that can no longer be concealed.

75. That the Church may always be responsive to the needs of young people who suffer, and never adopt a worldly spirit whose solution is simply to anaesthetize young people with other messages, with superficial distractions, or with trivial pursuits.

76. That all people, especially those who live a reasonably comfortable life, may see through eyes cleansed by tears the reality of young people who are starving, on drugs or on the street, homeless, abandoned, mistreated or exploited as a slave by society.

76. That as an expression of mercy and compassion, we may learn to weep for so many young people who suffer and are less fortunate than ourselves.

77. That young people who no longer believe in anyone because of their suffering may receive new hope from the divine promise of Jesus: “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”.

77. That all young people who are suffering may feel the closeness of a Christian community whose words, actions, and concrete assistance extend the comfort that Jesus promises to those who mourn.

78. That young people in poor, developing countries may not fall victim to ideological colonization that ties economic aid to the acceptance of Western views of sexuality, marriage, life or social justice.
78. That young people may not be duped by a certain kind of advertising that teaches them to be perpetually dissatisfied and contributes to the throwaway culture, in which young people themselves end up being discarded.

79. That our capitalist culture will not exploit the beauty and image of the young as a means of selling products without any genuine respect, love and care for young people.

80. That young people may find value in family traditions and not flee from them under the impulse of a globalized culture that can leave them without any meaningful points of reference.

80. That adults will pass on the basic values of life to the young.

80. That adults will stand in right relationship with young people, without trying to imitate them or inverting the relationship between generations.

80. That the relationship between adults and young people may develop not only on the affective level, but also in regards to conveying educational and cultural values.

**Desires, hurts and longings**

81. That young people, maturing in a culture that exalts sexuality, may have a healthy sense of their sexual identity, maintain a healthy relationship with their body and a serene affective life.

81. That the Church may share her wisdom on sexual morality without provoking young people to feel misunderstood, alienated, judged or condemned.

81. That young people who express an explicit desire to discuss questions concerning the difference between male and female identity, reciprocity between men and women, and homosexuality will find adult guides prepared to accompany them.

82. That young people, maturing in an age of advanced sciences and biomedical technologies, may address anthropological and ethical questions mindful that life is a gift, and that we are creatures with innate limits, open to exploitation by those who wield technological power.

82. That young people who engage in high-risk behavior as a means of self-exploration, seeking powerful emotions or gaining attention, may be wisely accompanied to overcome any obstacles in their serene growth in maturity.

83. That young people who suffer the hurt of past failures, setbacks, disappointments, painful memories, discrimination and injustice, may come to know genuine love and unacceptance.
83. That young people who carry moral wounds, the burden of past errors, or a sense of guilt for their mistakes, may recognize Jesus present amidst their crosses, offering them his friendship, his consolation and his healing companionship.

83. That young people who carry heavy burdens may discover in the Church so many paths to interior healing and peace of heart.

84. That the desire for God that exists in varying degrees within the hearts of young people may be recognized as a real starting point for friendship with Jesus, an inner resource open to a word of wisdom and encouragement.

*The digital environment*

88. That young people who rightly enjoy the benefits of the web and social media will be savvy to the limitations and deficiencies of virtual contact and not confuse it with interpersonal communication.

88. That young people will make wise use of digital technology and not fall into the loneliness, manipulation, exploitation and violence that are part of the virtual environment.

88. That those who use digital media will avoid the risk of addiction, isolation and gradual loss of contact with concrete reality, and develop authentic interpersonal relationships.

90. That young people may not allow their on-line relationships to become inhuman, never grow blind to the vulnerability of another human being, or lose their capacity for self-reflection.

90. That young people may recognize that pornography distorts a person’s perception of human sexuality and creates a delusional parallel reality that ignores human dignity.

90. That people may enjoy the benefits of the virtual world without sliding into “digital migration”, with its tendency towards withdrawal from family, cultural and religious values.

90. That those who navigate the virtual world may use it to build healthy real time relationships, and not to enter a world of loneliness or self-invention.

90. That young people, with their exuberance for life and desire to affirm their personality, may interact with the real and virtual world in such a way as to build a realistic synthesis of what is personal, what is distinctive to their culture, and what is global.

90. That young people, who are natives of the digital continent, may find ways to pass from virtual contact to good and healthy communication.
Migrants as an epitome of our time

91. That the Church may respond to the reality of migration not as a passing emergency but as a structural phenomenon, especially as it affects young people fleeing from war, violence, political or religious persecution and natural disasters, including those caused by climate change, and from extreme poverty.

91. That migrants seeking better opportunities for themselves and their families and who dream of working to build a better future may remind us of a basic aspect of our faith: that we are ‘strangers and exiles on the earth’.

92. That migrants who are attracted to Western culture will not fall victim to unscrupulous traffickers or cartels who exploit their weakness and inflict abuse and sufferings on their journey.

92. That vulnerable migrants, especially unaccompanied minors and those compelled to spend many years in refugee camps or in transit between countries, may have opportunities to study and to use their talents.

92. That host countries will receive migrants without fear and without exploitation for political ends.

92. For the courage and wisdom to address decisively a closed, xenophobic mentality in some countries that receive migrants.

93. That the Church will continue to be an important point of reference for young migrants who experience separation from their place of origin, and from their cultural and religious roots.

93. That the Church will be an important point of reference in communities who have lost their most vigorous and enterprising elements to emigration, especially for divided families where one or both of the parents migrate, leaving the children in the country of origin.

93. That communities and societies to which migrants come will promote a positive encounter between individuals and between cultures, and offer opportunities for enrichment and the integral human development of all.

93. That the Church may lead initiatives to receive migrants with dignity, to facilitate their transition from new comers to full citizenship, and to instill confidence that migrants bring new life to communities capable of welcoming them.

94. That young people may not play into the hands of those who would set them against other young people entering their countries as migrants; that they may see these newcomers not as a threat, but as persons having the same inalienable dignity as every other human being.
**Ending every form of abuse**

95. That the cry of victim-survivors of different kinds of abuse perpetrated by some bishops, priests, religious and laypersons may be heard.

96. That the widespread scourge of sexual abuse of minors be eradicated from all sectors of society: families, institutions, and the church.

96. That the justified anger levied against the Church for the sexual abuse perpetrated by her leaders may be accepted as a reflection of the wrath of God, betrayed and insulted.

97. That the Church, with the grace of God, will never turn back on her commitment to prevent any future sexual abuse of those entrusted to her care, and implement sanctions for wounds inflicted in the past.

98. That authority in the Church will be exercised in such a way that abuse in its various forms will be eradicated, and the irresponsibility and lack of transparency with which so many abuse cases were handled will be confronted and changed.

99. That the Church be cleansed of every inclination that allows corruption to thrive: the desire to dominate, lack of dialogue and transparency, forms of double life, spiritual emptiness, and psychological weaknesses.

99. That priests may not succumb to the constant temptation of clericalism which distorts the ministry they have received into a power to be exercised; may they always live their ministry as a free and generous service to be offered.

99. That priests may reject the temptation of clericalism which leads them to think they have all the answers and that they no longer need to listen or have anything more to learn.

99. That priests may reject the temptation of clericalism which can lead them to lose respect for the sacred and inalienable worth of each person and of his or her freedom.

99. That the Church may receive with thanks, gratitude and affection all those who come forward to report the abuse they have experienced, aware that they help the Church to acknowledge what happened and the need to respond decisively.

99. That, amidst the challenges that face the Church, we will always have deep gratitude for the generous commitment of countless lay persons, priests, consecrated men and women, and bishops who devote themselves daily with integrity and dedication to the service of the young.
100. That the crimes committed by a small minority of priests may never overshadow the faithful and generous ministry of a vast majority of priests who are an inspiration to the young.

100. That all people, including the young, may contribute to the prevention of future abuse by being attentive when a priest appears to have lost the joy of his ministry or is taking the wrong path, and challenging him to stay faithful to his commitment to God, to his people, and to way of the Gospel.

100. That young people may help lift the dark cloud of abuse and be a source of great healing for the Church through their capacity to bring about renewal, to urge and demand consistent witness, to keep dreaming and coming up with new ideas.

101. That we may never abandon Mother Church as she advances on her pilgrim way sharing the joys and the hopes, the grief and anguish of all humanity, even with her long history of sinful members and without cosmetic surgery of any kind.

101. That the Church, as Mother, will courageously reveal the sins that some of her members would try to hide, and bring them to the purifying light of the Gospel.

101. That the Church may stand humbly before God, reciting each day, in shame, “Have mercy on me, Lord, in your kindness… my sin is always before me”.

101. That people of faith may never abandon the Church, our Mother, but always stand beside her when she is wounded, so that she can summon all her strength and all her ability to begin ever anew.

102. For a firm conviction that in the midst of the tragedy of abuse, the Lord Jesus never abandons his Church and offers her the strength and the means to set out on a new path.

102. That this dark moment in the history of the Church may be an opportunity for a reform of epoch-making significance by opening us to a new Pentecost and inaugurating a new stage of purification and change capable of renewing the Church’s youth.

102. That young people may play a strong role in the renewal of the Church by being fully a part of the holy and patient, faithful People of God, borne up and enlivened by the Holy Spirit, able to free God’s people from the plague of clericalism and the disgrace of abuse.
A way out

104. That young people may always be assured that the Good News we received as a gift on the morning of the resurrection will offer a way out of every painful situation that confronts us.

104. That, like the Venerable Carlo Acutis, young people will take full advantage of the digital world to transmit the Gospel, to communicate values and beauty, while avoiding the risk of self-absorption, isolation, consumerism and empty pleasure.

106. That young people may explore their individuality and develop their God-given talents without falling for the traps of consumerism and distraction which can turn them from “original” masterpieces into “photocopies” of pop culture.

107. That young people will not allow consumerism and distraction to rob them of their hope and joy, or drug them into becoming slaves to consumer interests.

107. That the young will dare to believe that they are more than their possessions, and strive for the greatness for which God created them.

108. That young people may realize that youth is not only about pursuing fleeting pleasures and superficial achievements, but a time also to seek the help of the Holy Spirit in their quest for holiness.

108. That young people may use their youthful years as a time of generous commitment, whole-hearted dedication, and sacrifices that are difficult but ultimately fruitful in fulfilling their purpose in life.

109. That young people who feel weak, weary or disillusioned may turn to Jesus and be renewed by his friendship.

110. That young people who feel overwhelmed by vices, bad habits, selfishness or unhealthy pastimes may find new hope in Jesus who is brimming with life and is always there to make life worthwhile.

110. That every young person may find meaning in his or her life through friendship with Jesus and offer the world the unique contribution that only he or she can bring.

110. That young people will experience the beauty of community life as a source of strength to avoid selfish pleasure, a means to resist the snares and temptations of the devil, and a rich alternative to living in isolation.
CHAPTER FOUR
A Great Message for All Young People

A God who is love

112. That every young person may be convinced of the essential truth that God speaks these words to each of them at every moment of their lives: “I loves you”.

113. That young people whose human fathers were distant, absent, harsh, domineering or disappointing, may discover the embrace of our heavenly Father whose love will always respect their freedom and offer them confidence and constant support.

114. That young people may discover in God’s word the many rich expressions of his love for them.

114. That the hearts of the young may be moved by God’s tender, affectionate love for them, a love that desires to lift them like infants to his cheeks.

115. That the young may be open to God’s deep love for them, a love like that of a mother whose visceral love for her children makes it impossible for her to neglect or abandon them.

115. That the young may experience God’s passionate love for them, a love like that of a lover who goes so far as to write his beloved on the palm of his hands, to keep her face always before him.

115. That young people may know God’s powerful, steadfastness and invincible love for them, a love so powerful that even if the mountains should fall and the hills be shaken, it would never leave them nor his covenant of peace with them be broken.

115. That young people will experience God’s eternal, faithful love for them, and know that they did not come into the world by chance, but an as expression of God’s love.

115. That young people will believe that God sees a beauty in them that no one else can see, and trust that they are precious in God’s sight.

115. That young people will realize that God’s love is not cheerless, but pure joy, welling up whenever they allow themselves to be loved by him who is the source of every success and gladness.

115. That young people will recognize that they are precious and important to God, that they are the work of his hands, that God cares for them and looks upon them with affection.
115. That young people will trust that God’s memory is not a ‘hard disk’ that ‘saves’ and
‘archives’ all our data, but rather a memory that comes from a heart full of tender
compassion that finds joy in ‘deleting’ every trace of evil from us.

115. That young people will know that God is a God of love who does not keep track of
their failings and is always ready to help them learn even from their mistakes.

115. That young people will learn to silence all the noise within and cultivate an interior
stillness where they can experience God’s love for them and rest in his loving embrace.

116. That young people will trust God whose love does not overwhelm or oppress, cast
aside or reduce to silence, humiliate or domineer, but always builds up.

116. That young people will experience every day the discreet and respectful love of the
Lord, a love that is free and freeing, a love that heals and raises up.

116. That young people will know that the love of the Lord has more to do with raising
up than knocking down, with reconciling than forbidding, with offering new changes than
condemning, with the future than with the past.

117. That young people will be open to God when he asks something of them, or simply
makes them face life’s challenges; that they will allow him to nudge them forward, to
help them grow.

117. That young people may know that God welcomes their questions and is concerned
when they don’t talk to him or when they are closed to dialogue with him.

117. That, like Jacob the patriarch, young people may find the freedom to fight with
God, even as they persevere in their relationship with Him.

117. That young people will know that God’s love is so real, so true, so concrete, that it
invites us to a relationship of openness and fruitful dialogue with him, a closeness that
empowers us to become his courageous witnesses on earth.

Christ saves you

118. That young people will be convinced of the great truth that Christ, having loved his
own who were in the world, loved them to the end, and with his arms outstretched on
the cross sacrificed himself completely in order to save them, because he is a friend
who will stop at nothing to save those he loves.

118. That young people, like St. Paul, will put complete trust in Jesus’ self-sacrificing
love for them, and live by faith in the Son of God who loves them and gave his life for
them.
119. That young people may look to the crucified Christ, cling to him, and accept his offer of salvation and freedom from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness.

119. That young people may believe that when we sin and stray far from Jesus, he will come to lift us up by the power of his cross, forgive us over and over again, and bear us on his shoulders.

119. That young people may believe that no one can strip them of the dignity bestowed upon them by God’s boundless and unfailing love.

119. That young people may experience the tender love of God that never disappoints and is always capable of restoring our joy, lifting up our heads and allowing us to start over again.

120. That young people may never think they have exhausted God’s love for them, no matter how many things they have done against him; may they trust in his endless love and believe that if they welcome God’s embrace, he can transform them.

120. That young people may take courage in knowing that the Lord’s love is greater than all our problems, frailties and flaws, and that even with all our burdens God wants to write his love story on our hearts.

120 That young people may trust that God wants to embrace them after they fall and help them get back on their feet, just as he embraced the prodigal son who came home, and Peter who denied him.

120. That young people may know that the worst fall is not when we wander from God’s ways, but when we stay down and do not allow God to help us get back up.

121. That young people may seek God’s forgiveness as a total gift which we can never earn or buy, but simply accept with immense gratitude and joy because we are loved more greatly than we could ever imagine.

122. That young people may know that they are priceless to God and not let themselves to be bought, seduced, or enslaved by forms of ideological colonization that rob them of their freedom and potential for success.

122. That young people may fall in love with the freedom that Jesus offers.

123. That young people may keep their eyes fixed on the outstretched arms of Christ crucified, and let themselves be saved over and over again.

123. That young people may seek God’s freeing love by confessing their sins, seeking his mercy that frees them from guilt, and contemplating the crucified Jesus in whose blood they are cleansed and reborn ever anew.
He is alive!

124. That young people may believe that Christ who liberates us, transforms us, heals and consoles us is someone fully alive today and not simply a role model from the distant past.

125. That young people will allow the living Christ to be with them every moment of their lives and allow him to fill them with light, to lift all sorrow and solitude, and to lead them towards ever new horizons.

126. That in Jesus, risen from the dead and alive among us, young people will be filled with confidence that evil does not have the last word because in Jesus they have a friend who loves them and wants to triumph in them.

127. That Jesus, fully alive, may inspire youth people with hope as they face their personal struggles and look to the future.

128. That young people will face the storms of life with trust in the power of the risen Jesus who will never abandon them and will fill their hearts with a security that is firmly rooted and enduring.

129. That young people my build a firm foundation for their entire Christian life by appreciating the beauty of the Christian message, seeking to encounter the Lord, letting him love and save them, building a friendship with him and speaking to him about the realities of their lives.

129. That young people may be open to Christian discipleship which is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and clear direction.

The Spirit gives life

130. That the Holy Spirit who fills the heart of the risen Christ may flow into the lives of young people, quietly open their hearts to receive God's love and Christ's salvation, and draw them more deeply into the heart of Christ so that they may grow in his love, his life and his power.

131. That young people may seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help them experience anew the great message of God's love for them and the fullness of life promised by the Risen Christ.

132. That young people will learn to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit in their search for love, happiness, and meaning in life, rather than chasing desperately after the things of this world.
132. That young people will discover the passion of falling in love with God, and experience that nothing is more practical than finding God, falling in love with God and staying in love with Him.

CHAPTER FIVE
Paths of Youth

134. That the years of youth, which are a gift of God, may not be squandered but received with gratitude and lived to the full in the transforming light of the Gospel.

135. For an awareness that God is the giver of youth and that he is at work in the life of every young person, making youth a blessed time for the young and a grace for the Church and for the world, a season of life that is worthwhile in itself, and not simply as a prelude to adulthood.

A time of dreams and decisions

136. That young people may welcome their capacity to take personal responsibility for their lives as a gift from God, and use it wisely.

137. That young people, as they develop their personality, follow their dreams, build new relationships, face new trials and gradually build a life project, may move forward without cutting themselves off from their roots and so grow in autonomy without falling into isolation.

138. For young people: that the restless discontent that is typical of their age may mature into an adult commitment to responsibility for a mission.

142. For young people: that the Spirit of life may keep them from the “paralysis of the living dead” and empower them to make wise life choices and persevere in their commitments.

142. For young people: that they may dream God’s dreams for them and attain them through hope, patience, dedication and commitment.

A thirst for life and experience

148. For young people: that they may seize the occasions for growth that present themselves each day, and accomplish their ordinary actions with extraordinary love.
149. For young people: that they may persevere in faith and hope especially when they feel that God has abandoned them, so that their trials may become moments of encounter with divine mercy.

*In friendship with Christ*

150. For young people: that amidst all their experiences, they may know that life’s deepest and fullest meaning comes from the daily encounter with Jesus.

151. For young people: that they may build human friendships through Jesus who refines their humanity and brings them to maturity through his consoling presence in their lives.

152. For young people: that they may know the beauty of true friendship that is stable, faithful and matures over time through generous love and commitment to the good of the other.

153. For young people: that their friendship with Jesus will become incarnate in new friendships with others and that their witness may draw their peers to seek their own place in the community of faith.

154. For young people: that they may stay faithful to Jesus even when he appears to be silent.

155. For young people: that in heartfelt prayer they may share every aspect of their lives with Jesus and rest confidently in his embrace.

156. For young people: that their friendship with Jesus will deepen and allow them to say, “it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me”.

156. For young people: that like the disciples of Emmaus they may recognize that even in times of discouragement, Jesus “draws near and walks with them” and is always at their side.

156. For young people: that they may see Christianity not as an ideology but a person, Jesus Christ, who loves them immensely and asks for their love in return.

157. For young people: that God’s dream, whose name is Jesus, may live in their hearts, run through their veins and inspire them to dance.
**Growth in Maturity**

158. For young people: that their commitment to physical and intellectual development may be guided by their search for God, their fidelity to his word, and their growth in Christian virtue.

158. For young people: that they may “remain online” and constantly connected with Jesus, aware that happiness and holiness are impossible through human efforts alone.

159. For young people: that they may preserve their spontaneity and openness even as they make intentional efforts to grow spiritually and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.

162. For young people: that they may desire to become saints not by imitating others but by developing their particular giftedness and becoming more authentically whom God made them to be.

162. For young people: that they may accept their flaws and limitations honestly and serenely, and seek growth by bringing their human weakness into prayerful dialogue with divine patience.

**Paths of Fraternity**

164. For young people: that they will build up the body of Christ by growing in fraternal, generous and merciful love of others.

164. For young people: that they may develop fraternal relationship by recognizing the hidden beauty, dignity and grandeur in others as images of God and children of the Father.

164. For young people: that they may build fraternal bonds by coming out of themselves, being concerned for others and seeking their good.

164. For young people: that they may experience Christian community with their peers who become brothers and sisters in Christ and with whom they share their affection, their time, their faith, their struggles and their joys.

165. For young people: that they may not withdraw from relationships or nurse feelings of anger when they have been hurt, but strive to accept God’s call to forgiveness.

167. For young people: that they may know the joy of fraternal communion which is multiplied the more it is shared with other.

167. For young people: that they may know the depth of fraternal communion by rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep.
167. For young people: that they may resist the allure of individualism, build Christian fellowship, and always be ready to forgive so as never to be robbed of fraternity.

167. For young people: that their youthful spontaneity may increasingly find expression in fraternal love and a constant readiness to forgive, to be generous, and to build community.

**Young and committed**

170. For young people: that they may be accompanied in the creative use of their skills and encouraged to take up new responsibilities.

170. For young people: that they may commit to social engagement and direct contact with the poor as a fundamental way to discover and deepen their own faith and to discern their vocation.

173. For young people: that they may face their difficulties in life with faith in the risen Lord, who is the source of creativity and hope; may they always be ready to be of service, like the servants at the wedding feast in Cana, who unknowingly cooperated in Jesus’ first miracle.

173. For young people: that they may they follow Mary’s instruction to “do whatever Jesus tells you”, so that mercy, creativity and hope may bring forth new life.

174. For young people: that they may be protagonists for the transformation of the world, aware that through them the future enters into the world today.

174. For young people: that they may fight apathy and offer a Christian response to the social and political troubles wherever they emerge in the world.

174. For young people: that they may not be bystanders in life, but, like Jesus, get involved and immerse themselves in the realities of the world in order to build a future guided by gospel values.

**Courageous missionaries**

175. For young people: that, filled with the love of Christ and their manner of living, they may respond to God’s call to be witnesses of the Gospel wherever they are.

176. For young people: that they may witness to Jesus as their source of strength in life.

176. For young people: that they may not let the world draw them into things that are wrong and superficial, but with the strength of Jesus, learn to swim against the tide and share their gift of faith.
176. For young people: that they may they be moved by that same irresistible impulse that led Saint Paul to say: “Woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel”.

177. For young people: that they may not be afraid to go and bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away and most indifferent.

177. For young people: that they may be fearless missionaries of the joy of the Gospel wherever they are and in whatever company they find themselves: in their neighborhood, at school or in sports, in their social life, in volunteer service or in the workplace.

177. For young people: that they may be fearless missionaries of Gospel hope and light, convinced that through their courage, boldness and enthusiasm, the Lord goes out to meet everyone.

177. For young people: that they will not wait until tomorrow to contribute their energy, audacity and creativity to changing our world, because they are the now of God.

CHAPTER 6

Young People With Roots

179. For young people: that they may grow into beautiful trees, their branches reaching to the sky, with deep roots to allow them to withstand the storms of life.

Don’t allow yourself to be uprooted

181. For young people: that they may have a deep regard for history and a lively respect for the experiences of their elders as a source of guidance for their future.

181. For young people: that their grounding in history may keep them from becoming shallow, uprooted and distrustful, confident in God’s promises and responsive to his plans.

181. For young people: that they may recognize and resist ideologies that destroy or deconstruct all differences so that the ideology can reign unopposed.

181. For young people: that they may cherish the spiritual and human riches inherited from past generations, and not remain ignorant of everything that came before them.
182. For young people: that they may not fall prey to these masters of manipulation who exploit the cult of youth to dismisses all that is not young as contemptible and outmoded.

182. For young people: that they will not allow their bodies to be idolized and lusted after, robbed of their real value, or exploited for personal, financial or political profit.

183. For young people: that they will not allow their youth to be exploited to promote a shallow life that confuses beauty with appearances.

184. For young people: that they will not be seduced by the false cult of youth and appearance.

184. For young people: that they may reject a spirituality without God, an affectivity without community or concern for those who suffer, or a view of society that fears the poor.

184. For young people: that they may embrace a spirituality born of freedom, enthusiasm, creativity and new horizons, while at the same time cultivating the roots that nourish and sustain us.

186. For young people: that they may care for their cultural and spiritual roots as the source that provides them with strength to grow, flourish and bear fruit.

*Your relationships with the elderly*

187. For young people: that they may focus on the future with energy and dynamism while retaining a living memory of the past from which they come and the many gifts transmitted to them by their parents, their grandparents and the cultural experience of the society in which they live.

187. For young people: that they may be accompanied by elders who love them and are willing to help them discover the living richness of the past, to treasure its memory and to use it when making choices and discerning opportunities.

188. For young people: that the word of God may encourage them to remain close to the elderly and to benefit from their experience.

190. For young people: that they may honor their parents and elders while developing a healthy critical spirit.

190. For young people: that they may be open to receiving wisdom passed down from generation to generation, a wisdom familiar with human weakness and able to withstand the novelties of consumer society and materialism.
191. For young people: that they will avoid creating a rupture between generations and strive instead to make progress that has roots and a sense of origins.

191. For young people: that they may resist the lie that only what is new is good and beautiful.

191. For young people: that they may nurture intergenerational relationships which bring a collective memory to their community, as each generation takes up the teachings of its predecessors and in turn bequeaths a legacy to its successors.

_Dreams and visions_

192. That young people may thrive in intergenerational relationships where “the old dream dreams, and the young see visions”.

193. For young people: that they may sink roots in the memories and images offered by the long experience of the elderly in order to form a clear vision for broader horizons and new paths.

197. For young people: that they may learn from the elderly that life without love is arid, that anxiety about the future can be overcome, that there is more joy in giving than in receiving, and that love is not only shown in words, but also in actions.

_Taking risks together_

198. For young people: that they may love in a way that is generous and outgoing, that acts and takes risks, and that may at times make mistakes.

198. For young people: that they may see that God, in his genius and mercy, takes our triumphs and our failures and weaves them into beautiful tapestries that are full of irony.

199. For young people: while they live firmly rooted in the present, may they revisit the past with the elderly in order to learn from history and heal old wounds; may they look to the future in order to nourish new enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom.
CHAPTER SEVEN
Youth Ministry

A pastoral care that is synodal

203. For leaders of youth ministry: that they may value young people in their own right, not just as recipients but also as agents of youth ministry.

203. For leaders of youth ministry: that their manner of helping and guiding may allow young people freedom to develop new approaches to ministry with creativity and a certain audacity.

203. For leaders of youth ministry: that they may encourage the young to bring their own insights, ingenuity and knowledge to bear on issues and concerns of other young people.

206. That youth ministry may become more and more synodal, a “journeying together” in the values and charisms which the Spirit bestows in accordance with the vocation and role of different Church members, through a process of co-responsibility.

206. That youth ministry, under the promptings of the Spirit, may give rise to a more participatory and co-responsible Church, a Church capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, groups, associations and movements.

Main courses of action

210. That youth ministry programs will have a far-reaching and attractive outreach by encouraging and empowering young people to organize events and gatherings that appeal to them, and to invite their peers to attend.

210 That the young, in any context, will be daring enough to sow the seed of the Gospel message on that fertile terrain that is the heart of another young person.

211. That outreach to young people will be done through the language of closeness, the language of generous, relational and existential love that touches the heart, impacts life, and awakens hope and desires.

211. That youth ministers may reach out to the young not by preaching at them but with the grammar of love.
211. That youth ministers may speak the language that young people understand by being men and women who radiate life, who are there for and with the young and who, even with their limitations and weaknesses, try to live their faith with integrity.

213. That youth ministry and educational projects may focus primarily on a foundational experience of encounter with God through Christ’s death and resurrection, leading to growth in fraternal love, community life and generous service.

214. That youth ministry projects will offer a profound, secure, meaningful and wisdom-filled experience of the initial proclamation so as to invite the young to enter more deeply into the kerygma and to incarnate it ever more fully in their lives.

215. That youth ministry programs will include various means and resources to help young people grow in fraternity, live as brothers and sisters, help one another, build community, be of service to others, and be close to the poor.

215. That youth ministry programs may give a primary place to growth in fraternal love, which is the “new commandment”, “the fullness of the Law”, and the best way to show our love for God and to grow into maturity.

*Suitable environments*

216. That Catholic institutions may be better equipped to welcome young people as a way to help them overcome their sense of being orphaned.

216. That parishes and schools may be communities where young people can experience openness and love, affirmation and growth.

216. That Catholic communities may lift the young from a world in ashes so they can keep alive the flame of great dreams and projects.

216. That Catholic communities may offer the young an alternative to living in a meaningless desert by nurturing their desire to devote their lives to sowing seeds that will bear fruit.

216. That Catholic communities may address the sense of orphanhood, discontinuity, uprootedness and confusion experienced by many young people by creating an attractive and fraternal environment where they as can live with a sense of purpose.

217. That the Catholic community may become a “home” and “a family” where the young can find meaningful connections with others, form bonds that are more than just utilitarian and practical, and experience a unity that makes life feel more human.

217. That the Church may be a home for the young where prophecy takes flesh and the passing hours and days are less cold, less indifferent and less anonymous.
217. That the Church may be a family where the young experience that no one can be indifferent or stand apart, since each person is a living stone needed to build the home.

217. That Church and youth leaders may be open to God’s grace by which they learn to be patient, to forgive one another, and to start over each day.

217. That Church and youth leaders may create strong bonds with young people by nurturing confidence and trust that are nurtured daily by patience and forgiveness.

217. That the confidence and trust nurtured by Church and youth leaders will allow the young to recognize God’s caress, be reborn in his love, and experience the miracle of new hope for a world that is more divine because it is more human.

218. That church institutions may provide young people with places they can make their own, in a friendly and relaxed setting where friendships can grow.

218. That church institutions can become centers where young people can experience person-to-person relationships which are indispensable for passing on the Christian message and which cannot be replaced by any pastoral resource or strategy.

219. That youth ministry projects will promote friendship and discussion, within more or less structured groups, in a context in which one is neither analyzed nor judged.

219. That youth ministry projects may promote group experiences in which young people can share their faith and offer each other mutual help in bearing witness to Christ as they guide other young people and exercise a genuine apostolate among their friends.

Youth ministry in educational institutions

221. That Catholic schools will undertake a courageous self-criticism to evaluate the results of their pastoral outreach, asking whether the kind of religious instruction they offer is capable of nurturing lasting experiences of faith.

221. That Catholic schools may not be “bunkers” that simply protect the young from “errors from without”, which leave the young ill-prepared to face the insurmountable disconnect between what they were taught and the world in which they live.

221. That Catholic schools may offer instruction in religious and moral values that prepare the young to uphold those values in a world that often holds them up to ridicule.

221. That Catholic schools may teach young people different ways of praying and practicing the faith that can be easily sustained amid the fast pace of society and thus prepare them to mature into strong, well-integrated people, leaders who are prepared to give.
223. That Catholic education may offer an integrated spiritual and cultural formation by raising questions that keep young people from being anaesthetized by banality, and impels them to pursue meaning in life.

223. That Catholic education may respond to the crippling refrains of cultural consumerism with thoughtful and firm decisions, research, knowledge and sharing.

*Areas needing to be developed*

224. That youth ministers may help young people to appreciate the importance of silence, closeness to God, and contemplative prayer.

224. That young people may experience prayer opportunities and sacramental celebrations capable of speaking to their daily lives through a fresh, authentic and joyful liturgy.

225. That young people may be introduced to Christian service as a unique opportunity for growth and openness to God’s gifts of faith and charity.

225. That the attraction within many young people to helping others, especially children and the poor, may be developed as a first step to a discovery or rediscovery of life in Christ and the Church.

226. That the beauty of the arts, theater, and especially music may find their place in youth ministry as a means of promoting culture and a language capable of arousing emotion and shaping identity.

227. That youth ministry may give due importance to sports as a rich source of education and formation.

227. That the experience of sports in youth ministry may help young people get beyond the idolization of champions, subservience to commercial interests and the ideology of success at any cost.

227. That the experience of sports in youth ministry may help young people discover that at the heart of the experience of sport is the joy of exercising, of being together, of being alive and rejoicing in the gifts the Creator gives us each day.

228. That youth ministry may give young people opportunities to be close to nature, to develop their appreciation for the need to care for the environment, and in this way be initiated into the school of universal fraternity and contemplative prayer.
229. That our quest for new opportunities to evangelize the young may never lead us to forget that, despite the changing times and sensibilities of young people, there are gifts of God that never grow old, for they contain a power transcending all times and places, especially the Word of the Lord, the nourishing presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the sacrament of Reconciliation, the example of the saints and the teachings of the great spiritual masters.

229. That youth leaders may balance wisely, on the one hand, the need to respect different stages of growth of different young people and the need to wait patiently for the right moment to intervene, and on the other hand, the courage to invite young people to drink from the wellsprings of new life: God’s word, the sacraments, the example of the saints, and the riches of the spiritual masters.

*A “popular” youth ministry*

230. That pastoral ministry will include not only well-planned programs, but also a “popular” youth ministry marked by a broader and more flexible style, schedule, pace and method.

230. That pastoral ministry will include not only well-planned programs, but also a “popular” youth ministry which reaches out to those places where young people are active in their everyday environments, and fosters the natural leadership qualities and the charisms sown by the Holy Spirit.

230. That pastoral ministry will include not only well-planned programs, but also a “popular” youth ministry which avoid imposing obstacles, rules, controls and obligatory structures on young believers who are natural leaders in their neighborhoods.

230. That youth ministers may trust more and more in the genius of the Holy Spirit who acts as he wills even as we accompany and encourage the young.

231. That we may encourage the formation of true youth leaders who are not elitist or closed off in small groups of select individuals, but who are able to generate a “popular” ministry to youth.

231. That we may encourage the formation of “popular” youth leaders who listen to the sense of the people, become their spokespersons and work for their promotion.

231. That we may develop a “popular” youth ministry that reaches out to all those persons who journey, not as individuals, but as a closely-bound community of all and for all, one that refuses to leave the poor and the vulnerable behind.

231. That we may develop “popular” youth leaders who seek to give everyone a share in the common good and agree to keep pace with its least members so that all can arrive together.
231. That we may form “popular” youth leaders who make everyone, including the poor, the vulnerable, the frail and the wounded, part of the forward march of youth.

231. That we may form “popular” youth leaders who do not shun or fear those young people who have experienced hurt or who have borne the weight of the cross.

232. That we may encourage all the good that we can in young people who do not come from Christian families or institutions and who are slowly growing to maturity in Christ.

232. That our youth ministry may not strive to become so pure and perfect, so marked by abstract ideas and protected from all the flaws of the world, that we turn the Gospel into a dull, meaningless and unattractive proposition.

232. That youth ministry may not become out of touch with the world of young people and suited only to an elite few who see themselves as different, while living in an empty and unproductive isolation.

233. That youth ministry will not overwhelm young people with a body of rules that makes Christianity seem reductive and moralistic, but rather invest the fearlessness of the young and train them to take up their responsibilities, in the sure knowledge that error, failure and crisis are experiences that can strengthen their humanity.

234. That youth ministry may be inclusive, welcoming all kinds of young people, to show that we are a Church with open doors.

234. That young people who do not fully accept all the teachings of the Church may know that they are welcome to take part in our youth ministry activities to the degree that their faith commitment allows.

234. That youth leaders may be sufficiently open-minded to welcome all those who have the desire and willingness to be encountered by God’s revealed truth.

234. For a more “popular” youth ministry that can open doors and make room for everyone with their doubts and frustrations, their problems and their efforts to find themselves, their past errors, their experiences of sin and all their difficulties.

235. For a “popular” youth ministry which accompanies all those who have other visions of life, who belong to other religions or who distance themselves from religion altogether.

235. For a “popular” youth ministry which makes all the young, without exception, know that they are in God’s heart and thus in the Church’s heart.

235. That youth ministers will reach out to all young people, including those of other faiths or no faith, not just in word but also in deed.
235. That youth ministers will reach out to all youth, including those of other faiths or no faith, by not remaining closed in their familiar environments where the voice of these young people does not penetrate.

235. That youth ministers will reach out to all young people by going beyond the comfort of less demanding and more enjoyable activities, and embracing a healthy pastoral restlessness that would urge them to move out from their comfort zone.

235. That youth ministers may embody the Gospel’s call to be daring, without presumption and without proselytizing, testifying to the love of the Lord and extending their hands to all the young people in the world.

236. That youth ministry may become less elitist and more “popular” through a process that is gradual, respectful, patient, hopeful, tireless and compassionate.

237. That youth ministers may accompany young people as Jesus accompanied the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

238. That youth ministry will include the various manifestations of popular piety, especially pilgrimages, which attract young people are a concrete sign of their trust in God, even if they do not readily feel at home in ecclesial structures.

238. That youth ministry may recognize, encourage and promote expressions of popular piety as a legitimate way of living the faith and an expression of the spontaneous missionary activity of the People of God.

*Always missionaries*

239. That young people, even those who are most frail, limited and troubled, may discover how they can be missionaries in their own way.

239. That young people may discover that they can be missionaries simply by sharing their goodness, even if it exists alongside many limitations.

240. That youth ministers, attentive to what the voice of the Spirit is saying to us, will realize that youth ministry is always missionary.

240. That young people may overcome their reticence and dare to visit people in their homes, and in this way be enriched by making contact with people’s lives.

240. That young people, through their encounter with other people in simple missionary experiences, may learn to look beyond their family and their group of friends, gain a broader vision of life and deepen their sense of being part of the Church.
240. That youth missions, especially those experienced during school holidays, may lead young people to a renewed experience of faith and even serious thoughts about a vocation.

241. That pastoral leaders will encourage young people to find new fields for mission in the most varied settings, such as social networks which they can fill with God, fraternity and commitment.

**Accompaniment by adults**

242. That adults may balance the need of young people to have their freedom respected and their need to be accompanied.

242. That each family may be the first place of accompaniment of the young.

242. That youth ministry may present the ideal of life in Christ as the process of building a house on rock.

242. That youth ministry and the pastoral care of families may be better coordinated and integrated, with the aim of ensuring a continuous and suitable accompaniment of the vocational process.

243. That the community may recognize and take up its important role in the accompaniment of young people by collectively taking up its responsibility for accepting, motivating, encouraging and challenging the young.

243. That all members of the community may regard young people with understanding, appreciation and affection, and avoid constantly judging them or demanding of them a perfection beyond their years.

244. For an increase of qualified people prepared to accompany the young, and for greater commitment to this important ministry.

244. That the theological and pastoral value of listening may bring about a rethinking and renewal of how priestly ministry is exercised.

244. That the ministry of listening may become a higher priority for priests.

244. That more consecrated persons and laypeople, male and female, will be trained to accompany young people.

244. That the charism of listening which the Holy Spirit calls forth within communities might receive institutional recognition as a form of ecclesial service.

245. That young men and women who show leadership potential may be accompanied and receive training and the necessary qualifications.
246. That the hopes of young people for a spiritual mentor may be fulfilled.

246. That those who offer the ministry of spiritual mentorship may embody the qualities for which the young are looking: a faithful Christian who engages with the Church and the world; someone who constantly seeks holiness; someone who is a confidant and who does not judge.

246. That those who offer the ministry of spiritual mentorship may embody the qualities for which the young are looking: someone who actively listens to their needs and responds appropriately; someone deeply loving and self-aware; someone who recognizes his or her limits and knows the joys and sorrows of the spiritual journey.

246. That those who offer the ministry of spiritual mentorship to the young may acknowledge their own humanity as forgiven sinners.

246. That spiritual mentors may nurture the seeds of faith in young people, without expecting to see immediately the fruits of the work of the Holy Spirit.

247. That the Church’s educational institutions may be communal settings for the accompaniment and guidance of as many young people as possible by welcoming all students, regardless of their religious choices, cultural origins, and personal, family or social situations.

247. That the Church’s educational institutions, as communal settings for the accompaniment and guidance of young people, may be as accessible as possible and not be unduly restricted by rigid criteria for students to enter and remain in them.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Vocation

248. That the word “vocation” may be understood broadly as a calling from God, including the call to fullness of life, the call to friendship with him, and the call to holiness.

248. That the world “vocation, understood broadly as a calling from God, may help the faithful to trust that nothing is the result of pure chance but that everything in our lives can become a way of responding to the Lord, who has a wonderful plan for us.

249. That all the faithful may deepen their common vocation to grow and mature for the glory of God.
249. That all the faithful may respond to God’s call to holiness in a way that is practical for our own time, with all the risks, challenges and opportunities it presents.

249. That all the faithful, whatever their condition or state in life, may heed the Lord’s call to holiness, and grow towards that perfect holiness by which the Father himself is perfect.

God’s call to friendship

250. That spiritual accompaniment may help people to discern and discover the basic truth that Jesus wants to be a friend to every young person.

250. That spiritual discernment may help young people to answer the same question that the risen Jesus put to Simon Peter as the basis of a true friendship: “do you love me?”.

250. For young people: that their friendship with Jesus may mature into gratuitous love offered in service to others.

251. That young people may become aware of the Lord’s loving gaze upon them, and not go away from him sad, like the rich young man in Mark’s gospel.

251. That young people may not be so attached to their material possessions that, despite their good intentions, they remain unable to accept friendship with Jesus.

252. That young people may see that the life which Jesus gives us is a love story, a life history that wants to blend with ours and sink roots in the soil of our own lives.

252. That young people may see that life is not salvation up ‘in the cloud’ that needs to be downloaded, a new ‘app’ to be discovered, or a technique of mental self-improvement, but rather an invitation to be part of a love story with God interwoven with our personal stories.

252. That young people may welcome God’s salvation as something that is alive and wants to be born in our midst so that we can bear fruit just the way we are, wherever we are and with everyone who is around us.

252. That young people may see their own lives here and now as the place where the Lord comes to sow and to be sown.

Being there for others

253. For young people: that they may welcome their vocation, in the strict sense, as a call to missionary service to others, an invitation from the Lord to share in his work of creation and to contribute to the common good by using the gifts we have received.
254. That our life on earth may reach its full stature by becoming an offering to others.

254. That life, lived as a mission of service to others, may not be just a partial commitment or a badge one can take off, or just another moment in life, but rather something that cannot be uprooted from one's being without destroying one's very self.

254. That young people may come to say, "I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world".

255. That young people will discern their personal vocation as a path that guides their many efforts and actions towards service to others, which includes but goes beyond the work they do.

256. That young people will discern their vocation as something to which they are called by God, something that is more than a pragmatic decision, more than work done to make money, or to keep busy or to please others.

256. That young people will embrace their vocation as a recognition of why they were made, why they are here on earth, and what the Lord’s plan is for their life.

256. That young people will trust their Creator God to show them a direction for their life; that they may listen to his voice, so that, like clay in the hands of a potter, they may allow themselves to be shaped and guided by him.

256. That young people will respond to all that God asks of them as the surest way to become what they were meant to be and to be faithful to their own reality.

257. That young people may respond to their vocation by developing all that they are, by finding their true selves in the light of God, and in that light to flourish and bear fruit.

257. That young people may seek their fulfillment in whatever task God asks of them, and so discover the inspiration they need to bring out the best in themselves for the glory of God and the good of others.

257. That young people may not lose themselves in just doing more, but do what they do with meaning and direction.

**Love and family**

259. That young people may discern their God-given vocation to marriage and family life which he reveals to them through their feelings, desires and dreams.

260. That young people who marry will recognize the call of the Lord in their own love story, the vocation to form one flesh and one life from two, male and female.
260. That young people who enter the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony may recognize that their human love is rooted in God himself and is enveloped by his grace.

261. That those called to marriage will cherish human sexuality and sexual intimacy as a marvelous gift from God the Creator to his creatures, and fulfill in their marriage the two purposes of sexual intimacy: to love and to generate life with body and soul.

262. That youth ministry will include ministry to families as the principal point of reference for young people.

262. That ministry to families as part of youth ministry may empower children to appreciate the love and care of their parents, deepen family bonds, and nurture hope in forming a successful family of their own when it is their time.

262. That ministry to families as part of youth ministry may help young people to overcome the suffering and identity crisis they often experience as a consequence of separation, divorce, second unions and single-parent families.

262. That intergenerational ministry with families and with the young may tap the crucial aid of grandparents in offering affection and religious education, and draw on their wisdom as a vital link in the relationship between generations.

263. That young people who have experienced difficulties in their family of origin will not be discouraged but rather see the value of starting a new family of their own, being faithful, and being generous.

263. That young people may see the value of investing in the family as the context in which they can mature and share the greatest joys.

263. That young people may never be robbed of experiencing great love within their families and not be led astray by individualism that leads to isolation and loneliness.

264. That young people may not be fooled by the culture of the ephemeral or blinded by the illusion that nothing can be definitive.

264. That young people, living in a culture of relativism and the importance of ‘enjoying’ the present moment, may not give up on marriage as something that is old fashioned.

264. That young people may swim against the tide of modern culture that sees everything as temporary, and opt for marriage as a positive lifelong commitment, a meaningful expression of responsibility and true love.

265. That young people may prepare for marriage by growing in self-knowledge and developing the greater virtues, particularly love, patience, openness to dialogue and helping others.
265. That young people may prepare for marriage by maturing in their sexuality, so that it can become less and less a means of using others, and increasingly a capacity to entrust themselves fully to another person in an exclusive and generous way.

266. That young people called to marriage may strive to overcome their weakness and lack of constancy so that their love can grow and endure.

266. That those who are called by God to marriage will be open to the grace God offers them to achieve gradually their ideal of married life in accordance with God’s plan.

267. That young people called to single life will offer a witness to that vocation through their own path of personal growth.

Work

269. That young people may value diligent work as a necessity, a part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment.

269. That young people may have an awe-filled contemplation of creation which lends a rich and balanced understanding to the meaning of work.

270. That young people in the work force may be free from all forms of exclusion and marginalization which keeps them poor and robs them of their right to dream, to hope and to contribute to the development of society.

271. That the young may not be exploited or overlooked in the workplace by politics or economics, but be given opportunities for employment that is not merely a means of making money, but also as an expression of their human dignity, a path of development and of social inclusion.

271. That young people may be given employment opportunities as a stimulus to grow in responsibility and creativity, a protection against the tendency towards individualism and personal gratification, and a way to give glory to God by developing their abilities.

272. That young people, even in a difficult job market, may never give up their aspirations, abilities and choices, never completely bury a calling, and never accept defeat.

273. That young people may discover whatever God is calling them to – whether it be nursing, carpentry, communication, engineering, teaching, art or any other kind of work – and then devote themselves to that purpose with their best capacities for sacrifice, generosity and dedication.

273. That young people may discern what field of work God is calling them to, aware that human work is not just something to do, but rather a response to a deep call to offer something to others and thus discover a sense of deep fulfilment.
The vocation to special consecration

274. That pastoral leaders will have renewed conviction that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life.

274. That pastoral leaders will once more cast out their nets in the Lord’s name, and encourage young people to ask God if he is calling them to priesthood or consecrated life.

275. That young people whom God is calling to priesthood or consecrated life may be open to this call and move beyond the initial resistance that leads them to say, “No, that’s not for me!”

275. That the negative example of some priests and religious may not discourage the young from discerning God’s call to serve the Church’s mission through the priesthood and consecrated life.

276. That young people called to devote themselves to God in the priesthood, the religious life or in other forms of consecration may trust that they will find complete fulfilment in their vocation.

277. That amidst the stress, quick pace and hyper-stimulation of our age, young people will recognize Jesus in their midst, welcome him as he stops and gazes into their eyes, and make room for that interior silence where they can perceive Jesus’ gaze and hear his call.

277. That the young may discover in the gaze and voice of Jesus a meaningful alternative to the many attractive packages offered to them that seem appealing and exciting but that in time will only leave them feeling empty, weary and alone.

277. That young people, bombarded with so many stimuli and distractions, will seek out that calm and quiet that enables them to reflect, pray, look more clearly at the world around them, and then, with Jesus, come to recognize the vocation that is theirs in this world.
CHAPTER NINE

Discernment

279. That young people and all people of faith may learn the wisdom of discernment to keep them from becoming easy prey to every passing trend.

279. That all people, but especially the young, may learn to discern whether a new trend or possibility is “fresh wine” brought by God or an illusion created by the spirit of this world or the spirit of the devil.

280. That all people, but especially the young, may grow in the wisdom of discernment which includes reason and prudence, but which goes beyond them to offer a glimpse of that unique and mysterious plan that God has for each of us.

281. That all people, but especially the young, will discern God’s mysterious plan for them, a plan that offers meaning to their life before the Father who knows and loves them, and reveals the real purpose of their life, which nobody knows better than God.

281. That young people will seek ongoing formation of conscience so that their capacity for discernment will deepen and their fidelity to God may grow as they learn to cultivate in their own lives the very sentiments of Christ and adopt as their own the criteria behind Jesus’ choices and the intentions behind his actions.

282. That the formation of conscience that young people receive may guide them through life lived as a process of allowing themselves to be transformed by Christ by developing the habit of doing good.

282. That pastoral leaders may teach the young the value of a regular examination of conscience, not simply to identify sins, but especially to recognize God’s work in our midst: in daily life, in the events of one’s personal history and in the world around us, in the witness of all those men and women who have gone before us and in those who accompany us with their wisdom.

282. That the examination of conscience may help young people to grow in the virtue of prudence and to give an overall direction to their lives through concrete choices, in the serene awareness of both their gifts and their limitations.

Discerning your vocation

283. That young people may learn the value of solitude and silence as essential conditions for discerning their vocation.

283. That young people discerning their vocation may appreciate the silence of prolonged prayer which enables them to perceive God’s language, to interpret the real
meaning of the inspirations God offers, to calm anxieties and to see the whole of their existence afresh in God’s own light.

284. That young people discerning their vocation may discover the prayerful power of silence, not as a closing in on themselves, but as an openness to listening to the Lord, to others, and to reality itself.

284. That young people may find the freedom to set aside their own partial or insufficient ideas about their vocation by listening to God in silence.

284. That the power of listening to God in silence may help young people to surrender the false security of clinging to their own ideas and to trust that accepting God’s call will lead them to a better life.

285. That young people discerning their vocation will not begin by wondering where they could make more money, achieve greater recognition, social status, or pleasure, but rather ask: “Do I know myself, quite apart from my illusions and emotions? Do I know what brings joy or sorrow to my heart? What are my strengths and weaknesses?”

285. For young people: that true self-knowledge may help them to discern their vocation as God’s call to serve people better and to be most helpful to our world and to the Church.

285. That young people may grow in true self-knowledge in order to discern their real place in this world, what they can offer to society, what their real abilities are and how they can develop those abilities to be of service to others.

286. That young people discerning their vocation will be less centered on themselves and on their own inclinations, and more centered on others, and so build their lives in relation to their brothers and sisters.

286. That young people discerning their vocation may be less concerned with asking, “Who am I?”, and more concerned with asking “For whom am I?”; that they may see that they are for God and that their many God-given qualities, inclinations, gifts and charisms are meant to be shared with those around them.

*The call of Jesus our friend*

287. That young people will see their personal vocation as a calling from a friend, who is Jesus.

287. That young people may accept their personal vocation as a gift from Jesus who knows that it will make them happy.
288. That young people will recognize their vocation as a gift from God to them, the way in which God will help them to live life to the full, to become someone who benefits others, someone who leaves a mark in life.

289. That young people will be open to their vocation as an “interactive” gift from God, a gift that offers joy and meaning, but that also requires an openness to certain risks and demands.

289. That young people will see the demands that accompany a vocation not as an obligation imposed from without, but as an incentive to let that gift grow and develop within, and then be given as a gift to others.

290. That the vitality of young people and their yearning for the infinite may lead them to encounter the unconditional friendship that Jesus offers them.

**Listening and accompaniment**

291. That priests, men and women religious, lay and professional persons, and qualified young people will choose to help the young with their vocational discernment through attentive listening.

292. That those qualified to help the young discern their vocation will offer a ministry of listening that is sensitive and directed to the individual who shares.

292. That those qualified to help the young discern their vocation may offer them an unhurried ministry of listening that makes them feel that they have all the time they need to say everything they want.

292. That spiritual guides may show sensitivity to the individual young people who shares his or her story so that the young person will sense that the guide is listening unconditionally, without being offended or shocked, tired or bored, just as Jesus did with the disciples on the way to Emmaus, even when they are going in the wrong direction.

292. That those qualified to help the young discern their vocation may offer an unhurried, unconditional, attentive and selfless ministry of listening as a sign of their respect for others, whatever their ideas or their choices in life.

293. That those qualified to accompany the young in their vocational choices may listen with a discerning heart, trying to grasp where grace or temptation is present.

293. That those qualified to accompany the young in their vocational choices may listen with a discerning heart that seeks to understand what the young person is trying to say or what they want the guide to realize is happening in their lives.
293. That those who accompany the young though a ministry of listening will try to discern the salutary promptings of the good Spirit who proposes the Lord’s truth, but also the traps laid by the evil spirit, his empty works and promises.

293. That those who offer spiritual direction to the young may do so with courage, warmth and tact as they help the young distinguish the truth from illusions or excuses.

294. That spiritual guides to the young may be attentive to what is driving the young person and careful to discern the direction in which he or she truly wants to move.

294. That spiritual guides may assist the young to look beyond their own superficial wishes and desires to what is most pleasing to the Lord, to God’s plans for their life.

295. That spiritual guides may assist the young to engage in discernment that becomes a genuine means of spiritual combat, helping them to follow the Lord more faithfully.

295. That spiritual guides may assist the young to experience discernment as a path of freedom that brings to maturity what is unique in each person, something so personal that only God knows it.

296. That those who offer spiritual accompaniment to the young will know when it is time for them to “disappear” in order to let the young person follow the path he or she has discovered, just as the Lord vanished from the sight of his disciples in Emmaus.

297. That spiritual guides may never impose their own roadmaps but encourage and accompany processes in which the person being directed always remains unique and free to chart his or her course.

298. That spiritual guides may themselves follow the paths of the Lord before they propose them to others.