

Let us Dream

The Path to a Better Future

“*Let us Dream*” is a reflection by Pope Francis offering a path to a better future for the world. In *Let us Dream*, Pope Francis offers a deeply personal and passionate reflection on the Covid crises in his own life and insightful observations on the present Covid crisis as he looks and sees what is going on around the world. His conclusion is that Covid, as well as bringing untold suffering, has brought blessing in the present and can shape our future for the better. But, he says, for this to happen, “We have to see clearly, choose well and act right” p7. These selections help introduce the main themes and approach of *Let us Dream*, and more is available in the [Selected Resources](#) section.

Introduction

To enter into crisis is to be sifted. Your categories and ways of thinking get shaken up; your priorities and lifestyles are challenged. You cross a threshold, either by your own choice or by necessity, because there are crises, like the one we’re going through, that you can’t avoid.

The question is whether you’re going to come through this crisis and if so, how. The basic role of a crisis is that you don’t come out of it the same. If you get through it, you come out better or worse, but never the same. (p1)

Questions for Reflection:

- 1. As a result of the Covid19 crisis where do you now see ‘restless hearts’?**
- 2. +Francis uses the parable of the Good Samaritan as a call to change and later says ‘God asks us to dare to create something new’ Just how well do you think this is being received?**
- 3. Why can't we just go back to the old normal? What would you say to those that support this view?**

A Time to See

(Let us Dream, Pages 11-47)

“Sometimes, when you think globally, you can be paralyzed: there are so many places of apparently ceaseless conflict, there’s so much suffering and need. I find it helps to focus on concrete situations: you see faces looking for life and love in the reality of each person, of each people. You see hope written in the story of every nation, glorious because it’s a story of sacrifice, of daily struggle, of lives broken in self-sacrifice. So rather than overwhelm you, it invites you to ponder and to respond with hope.” (p11)

Questions for Reflection

1. Pope Francis writes:

“The crisis has made visible the throwaway culture. The Covid health measures have exposed, for example, how many of our brothers and sisters do not have housing where social distancing is possible; nor clean water to wash.” (p.17)

Is this crisis just about Covid or is it about what Covid has uncovered?

2. *“We have to find ways for those who have been cast aside to act, so that they become the agents of a new future. We have to involve people in a common project that doesn’t just benefit the small number who govern and make decisions. We have to change the way society itself operates in the wake of Covid.” (p.18)*

In what ways can you see that +Francis' dream that those people now on the edge of the crisis become the protagonists of social change?

A Time to Choose

(Let us Dream, Pages 51-72)

Between the first step, which is to come close and allow yourself to be struck by what you see, and the third step, which is to act concretely to heal and repair, there is an essential intermediate stage: to discern, and to choose. A time of trial is always a time of distinguishing the path of the good that lead to the future from other paths that lead nowhere or backward. With clarity, we can better choose the first. (p51)

Questions for Reflection

1. Pope Francis says, "A time of trial is always a time of distinguishing the paths of the good that lead to the future from other paths that lead nowhere or backward. (p.51)

During the pandemic are you aware of "paths" that seem to lead to good? If so what are they?

2. Pope Francis suggests two sets of guidelines to help us choose ...

"...we need not just openness to reality but a robust set of criteria to guide us: knowing we are loved by God, called to be a people in service and solidarity. We need too a healthy capacity for silent reflection, places of refuge from the tyranny of the urgent. Most of all we need prayer, to hear the prompts of the Spirit and cultivate dialogue in a community that can hold us and allow us to dream." (p.51)

Francis suggests these further aids to help us in our growth: the Beatitudes, Catholic Social Teaching, the preferential option for the poor, the common good, universal destination of goods, solidarity, subsidiarity.

Which of the above seem most important to you? Why?

A Time to Act

(*Let us Dream*, Pages 98-144)

We must not let the current clarifying moment pass us by. Let it not be said, in years to come, that in response to the coronavirus we failed to act to restore the dignity of our peoples, to recover our memory and to remember our roots. (p99)

Questions for Reflection

1. Pope Francis has often insisted on the importance of going to the margins, for example on p.119 of *Let Us Dream*, where we read, "To recover the dignity of the people we need to go to the margins of our societies to meet all those who live there. Hidden there are ways of looking at the world that can give us all a fresh start". He adds to this on p.126, saying, "to embrace the margins is to expand our horizons, for we see more clearly and broadly from the edges of our society".

From your own experience and knowledge, what might some of those “hidden ways” be? What are those margins in your locality? Where might there be those life-giving ways in the margins that the Pope is sure we will find?

2. The Pope ends this third section stating that “the central objective of the post-Covid world” is the “restoration of peoples’ dignity”. This is clearly very different from just getting back to a pre-Covid normal. He says it’s not just a dream but could be a reality “through concrete actions” (all p.133).

Is it possible for a country or a society to move forward unless its members agree to embrace positive change through concrete actions? What is that change for you and through what concrete actions might it be embraced? How can you encourage others to share the vision and make it a reality?

Closing prayer

God of our hopes and dreams,
the love you offer always exceeds the furthest expression of our human longing,
for you are greater than the human heart.

By the power of your Spirit,
make us dreamers of your dream for ourselves and for our
world.

Give us the faith and vision to make that dream a
reality.

Direct each thought, effort of our life,
so that the limits of our faults and
weaknesses may not obscure the vision of
your glory.
or keep us from the peace you have promised.

We ask this in Jesus’ name.

Amen

Selected resources

Pope Francis: My life's three moments of solitude - Vatican News

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-11/pope-francis-let-us-dream-book-ivereigh-excerpt-summary.html>

Pope: Promote a politics not only for people, but with people - Vatican News

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-04/pope-francis-videomessage-international-conference-politics.html>

Pope Francis' 'Let Us Dream' inspires readers to meet the challenge of our age

<https://uscatholic.org/articles/202012/pope-francis-let-us-dream-inspires-readers-to-meet-the-challenge-of-our-age/>

Let Us Dream by Pope Francis review – the holy father of fraternity | Religion | The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/nov/29/let-us-dream-by-pope-francis-review-the-holy-father-of-fraternity>

Let-us-Dream-_-EasterResource.pdf

https://www.praywiththepope.net/wp-content/uploads/Let-us-Dream-_-EasterResource.pdf

How to.....Use the Pastoral Cycle | NATIONAL JUSTICE & PEACE NETWORK

<https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/resources/how-to-use-the-pastoral-cycle>

Birmingham Diocese J&P

J&P resource pack - pastoral cycle.pub - jpresourcepack-pastoralcycle1.pdf

A useful way of working to ensure a balance between reflection and action

<http://www.birminghamjandp.org.uk/uploads/2/9/0/5/29053005/jpresourcepack-pastoralcycle1.pdf>

The method of See, Judge, Act, Review | Young Christian Workers

<https://ycw.ie/resources/see-judge-act-resources-2>

Seek, Judge, Act - the Sertillanges side of the story | Cardijn Research

<http://www.cardijnresearch.org/2012/10/seek-judge-act-sertillanges-side-of.html>

International Conference 15 April 2021 "A Politics Rooted in the People"

<https://theology-centre.shorthandstories.com/let-us-dream-conference/index.html>

Suggested suppliers of the book:

<https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Pope-Francis/Let-Us-Dream--The-Path-to-a-Better-Future/25556396> (e-book)

<https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Pope-Francis/Let-Us-Dream--The-Path-to-a-Better-Future/25343028> (hardback)