





## REFLECT

Pope Francis has identified the importance of dialogue for the ongoing development of the church. He notes that dialogue is not negotiation:

Negotiating is to try to get one's own 'slice' of the communal pie ... Discuss together, dare I say get angry together, think about the best solutions for all. Many times the encounter is involved in conflict. In dialogue conflict occurs: it is logical and predictable that it is this way. And we should not fear it or ignore it but accept it. 'Agreeing to bear the conflict, resolve it and transform it into a connecting link of a new process' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, §227).

—address to National Ecclesial Congress for the Church in Italy, Florence, 13 November 2015

Dialogue is risky because it means that solutions to challenges will need to be found together. It's not about convincing the other; it's about an invitation. It asks us to propose, not impose. It requires a generous heart and a capacity to accept that individually we do not have all the answers. It underpins a form of encounter with the other.

And just as we encounter each other, we are encouraged to encounter the person of Jesus—because the message of Jesus didn't stop at the resurrection. When we encounter Jesus, we are drawn into the church's ongoing task of thinking about what Jesus' message might look like for the world today. This encounter encourages us to think about how we can help transform the church from an 'institution' into the living presence of God in our world—a church where faith is dynamic, involving all the people of God and serving all people.

Perhaps the invitation of this week's gospel is to look with the eyes of God at the 'other' and to respond to the needs of the world with the hands of Jesus.

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## BECOMING A MISSIONARY DISCIPLE ...

### Encounter

'I invite Christians, everywhere, at this very moment to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you do to this unfailingly each day.'

—Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, §3

- How can I accept this invitation to encounter Jesus in my daily life of faith?

### Accompany

If we are to share our lives with others and generously give of ourselves, we also have to realise that every person is worthy of our giving.

—Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, §274

- How will I accompany others this week?

### Community

The Church which 'goes forth' is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice.

—Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, §24

- How will I encourage others in my community to go forth this week in a missionary spirit?

### Go forth

Today, as the Church seeks to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which falls to each of us as a daily responsibility.

—Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, §127

- How will I accept the challenge of preaching the Good News in word and action this week to people and communities on the margins, locally and globally?

## PRAY

Loving God,  
Encourage me in my living and my loving.  
Gift me with a gracious spirit,  
in order that I may more readily respond to your call.  
Amen.

