



Changing Times: Week 3

I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home...

Pope Francis: *Laudato si*

Dialogue rests on:

- ❖ Openness
- ❖ Willingness to learn and explore
- ❖ Willingness to listen
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Interest in, and respect for the other
- ❖ An understanding of common interest
- ❖ Desire to cooperate

Monologue assumes:

- ❖ I / we have the experience and the answers
- ❖ You have nothing to tell us – we have everything to tell you
- ❖ Our agenda is the one that matters
- ❖ We have the right to impose

Many things have to change of course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, our mutual belonging and of a future to be shared by everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.

Pope Francis: *Laudato si*



In the way of **mastery** we are looking for control. We are at the centre of our universe, and everyone and everything exists to meet our needs. We are acquisitive and possessive – insistent on claiming what is ours. Though this attitude has an outward appearance of strength – and a tendency towards violence – what feeds and drives it is fear. We are on the defensive, against those others who might challenge our supremacy. We like to build walls to shut out those not of our tribe – anyone who might challenge our way of thinking and perceiving. This is the way of monologue.

In the way of **reverence**, we honour the other. We recognise our interdependence. We understand that we can only thrive by co-operation. Rather than hold what we have against the other we express our common life by giving and receiving, according to what each one needs. The principle at the heart of our shared existence is love rather than fear. Rather than build walls we welcome the other in and go out of our own house to be



welcomed by them. The way we communicate is by dialogue.

- Prayer is transformative dialogue
- God is expressed in dialogue – in invitation, engagement, hospitality and humble service.
- Dialogue connects those who were once apart

Some bible readings for prayer and reflection:

Isaiah 25:4-9; Isaiah 61:1-4; Mark 6: 30-44; Micah 6. 6-8; Isaiah 58. 6-12

Doing one thing very well

It helps now and then to step back and take the long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the kingdom is always beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection, no pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives achieves everything.

This is what we are about:

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.

This enables us to do something, and do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest

We may never see the end results, but that's the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders – ministers not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

Planting seeds

The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground...

[Mark 4. 26-32]

Imagine you have been given packet of seeds of the kingdom of God.

Each day, take out a seed and find some ground to plant it.

Taking inspiration

At this point, as you contemplate change in your own life and the part you might play in being part of a movement towards change within society, whose life inspires or encourages you?

What personal quality do you admire in them? Ask God for that same gift yourself.

Prayer

God of light, **shine in our darkness**

Liberator, **break the bonds of oppression**

Prince of Peace,



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turn our hearts from violence
Send us out to work with you, let your
Kingdom come!

God our host,
you make a place for all at your table
God of Resurrection,
you make all things new
Comforter,
you wipe away your people's tears
Send us out to work with you, let your
Kingdom come!

God of joy, **you delight in your people**
God, three in one, **you build community**
Reconciling God, **you heal our divisions**
*Send us out to work with you, let your
Kingdom come!*

Sovereign Lord,
you bring good news to the poor
Healing God,
you bind up the broken hearted
Compassionate God,
you bring beauty for ashes
Send us out to work with you, let your
Kingdom come!