

Translated by DeepL / Revised by Mario Kevin R. Armijo CMF

A fire that lights the heart

IDEAS FOR ACCOMPANYING THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE
CLARETIAN FAMILY IN A VOCATIONAL WAY



Addressees

For Claretian youth and
vocation ministry
REFERENTS

And for the young men
and women of our
communities

Introduction

We offer some points for reflection and accompaniment in our communities and pastoral structures with a double objective:

- To provide ideas for linking pastoral ministry with young people of the Claretian Family (CF) in a vocational key considering the common charismatic traits and the guidelines of the Church of our day.
- To offer clues to transform the contents of the course of REFERENT of the pastoral with youth and vocations (YVM) of the CF into a proposal of concrete vocational accompaniment.

where does this proposal come from?

- From the meeting of YVM referents of the CF in Rome (2018); where we felt challenged by the searches of young people and urged to accompany them on the path of life.
- From a "synodal" process, that is, from a path of reflection, dialogue, and shared searches by the CF groups of the four continents.
- From the desire to strengthen our vocational culture with the richness of the Institutes and Movements that make up the CF.

why are we writing to you?

Because you are the recipients and protagonists of this proposal. And it is our wish that we can implement it in the most convenient way in the different communities and platforms of youth ministry that we have.

how is this proposal articulated?

The proposal has two parts: the first one refers to our sources of evangelical and Claretian inspiration while the second one presents the nuclei of youth ministry in a vocational key.

li disse: «Tu l'hai già visto; se parla con te, è lui».

rispose: «Signore, io credo». E disse: «Io sono venuto in mondo per fare un giudizio, non per quelli che non vedono, ma per quelli che vedono diven-

ti ciechi». I farisei, che erano con lui, gli dissero: «Queste cose e gli altri, che anche noi?». Rispose loro: «Se foste ciechi, non avreste alcun peccato; ma ora che vedete, il vostro peccato rimane».

Il pastore

Ez 34:1-19; 1 P 5:1-4; Eb 13:20

In verità, in verità vi dico: io sono il pastore delle pecore, ma vi dico che dall'altra parte, è un ladro e un

ladrone che entra per la porta e il pastore delle pecore,

che è il portinaio, e le pecore lo riconoscono per la sua voce, ed egli chiama le pecore per nome e le riconduce ai loro padroni.

Ma io ho messo fuori tutte le sue pecore davanti a loro, e le pecore lo riconoscono, perché conoscono la

voce dello straniero non lo seguiranno; e se aggirano via da lui per non riconoscono la voce degli

stranieri. In similitudine disse loro: «Io so che essi non capirono quali cose dicevo loro».

10:11; Sl 23) 1 P 2:24, 25; 2:11-19

«Io so che Gesù di nuovo disse loro: in verità vi dico: io sono la porta delle pecore».

«Io so che quelli che sono venuti prima di me sono stati ladri e briganti; ma non li hanno ascoltati».

«Io so che io sono la porta; se uno entra per me, sarà salvato, entrerà e uscirà, e non sarà

mai messo al bando dalla società».

37 cfr. Gv 4:26

38 cfr. Fidei vv. 36-38; Gv 10:42

(Gv 3:20; Eb 11:28), nota; per Mt 8:2; cfr. Gv 20:16-17, 26-29

39 cfr. Prima venuta di Cristo; Gv 10:10 (Gv 3:15, At 1:11), nota

40 cfr. Gv 10:10; nota

41 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

42 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

43 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

44 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

45 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

46 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

47 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

48 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

49 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

50 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

51 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

52 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

53 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

54 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

55 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

56 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

57 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

58 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

59 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

60 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

61 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

62 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

63 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

64 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

65 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

66 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

67 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

68 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

69 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

70 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

71 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

72 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

73 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

74 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

75 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

76 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

77 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

78 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

79 cfr. Gv 15:22-24

1. Sources of evangelical and claretian inspiration

1.1. A heart that burns

"Then their eyes were opened, and they said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us, while he talked to us on the road and expounded the scriptures to us?"

LUKE 24:31-32

The passage in Lk 24 tells us what happens when the Risen Jesus meets two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus. We share below some calls that emerge from the vocational reading of the text:

- With the death of Jesus, his community is affected by suffering and disappointment. Uncertainty does not allow them to understand what is happening and it is difficult for them to understand what is happening and to glimpse a future.
- Many times, young people experience similar feelings: they feel marginalized and excluded by the realities they live or they do not find a reason to live or to get out of the meaninglessness.

These realities hurt, wound, and challenge our way of walking with them. However, God comes to meet us and invites us to go beyond ourselves.

We feel called to fan the fire that lights the hearts of young people and our own hearts!

- The disciples of Emmaus do not walk alone in difficulty and discouragement. When we walk in the company of others and share what happens to us, we make the difficulties less burdensome and multiply the joys, even if the task is arduous.
- Sharing the journey with young people implies reciprocity in listening, caring, and encouraging us to open our hearts to allow ourselves to be questioned by the Word that Jesus sows in us.

In accompaniment, the community is very important. This service is made of meeting and welcoming, of sharing experiences and life projects.

We feel called to look for paths where others see only walls, to recognize possibilities where others see only dangers!

- Jesus and the disciples converse about the events that upset their expectations, affect their existence, and move them interiorly; that which they need to understand or to which they must find an answer. This is very similar to the dialogues we have with young people when they feel confident.

Dialogue makes us attentive to listening, to discernment, and to the impulses that move young people to go "forward"[1].

We feel called to grow in attentive listening to young people in order to discern with them the passage of God in their search and in their lives!

- When the disciples' eyes are opened and they understand what has happened, Jesus disappears. They review what they have experienced along the way and are filled with enthusiasm and self-determination.

Friendship with Jesus Christ is the model of discernment that, together with the Church, we want to propose to young people. It is a matter of "encouraging processes and accompanying them without imposing our own roadmaps, because we accompany processes of people who remain always free and unique"[2].

We feel called to cultivate friendship with Christ and to propose it as a model of discernment to young people!

[1] Pope Francis proposes that those of us who prepare ourselves to accompany young people should cultivate these three sensitivities in listening: paying attention to the person, to discernment and to what impels them to go forward. (Cf. *Christus vivit*, 291-294).

[2] *Christus vivit*, 287; 297.

1.2. Men and women of fire

"O my Jesus, I ask You for something that I know You want to grant me. Yes, my Jesus, I ask You for love, Love, great flames of that fire that You have brought down from heaven to earth. Come, divine fire. Come, sacred fire; kindle me, burn me, melt me, and melt me to the mold of the will of God"

AUTOBIOGRAPHY 446

St. Anthony Mary Claret links his love for God and neighbour with the fulfilment of the divine will and the apostolic mission. Under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, he knew how to discern the most urgent needs, the most opportune responses, and the most effective means to respond to God's plan in every situation. All his concerns were to constantly seek the will of God in his life and to respond passionately to the urgencies of his time.

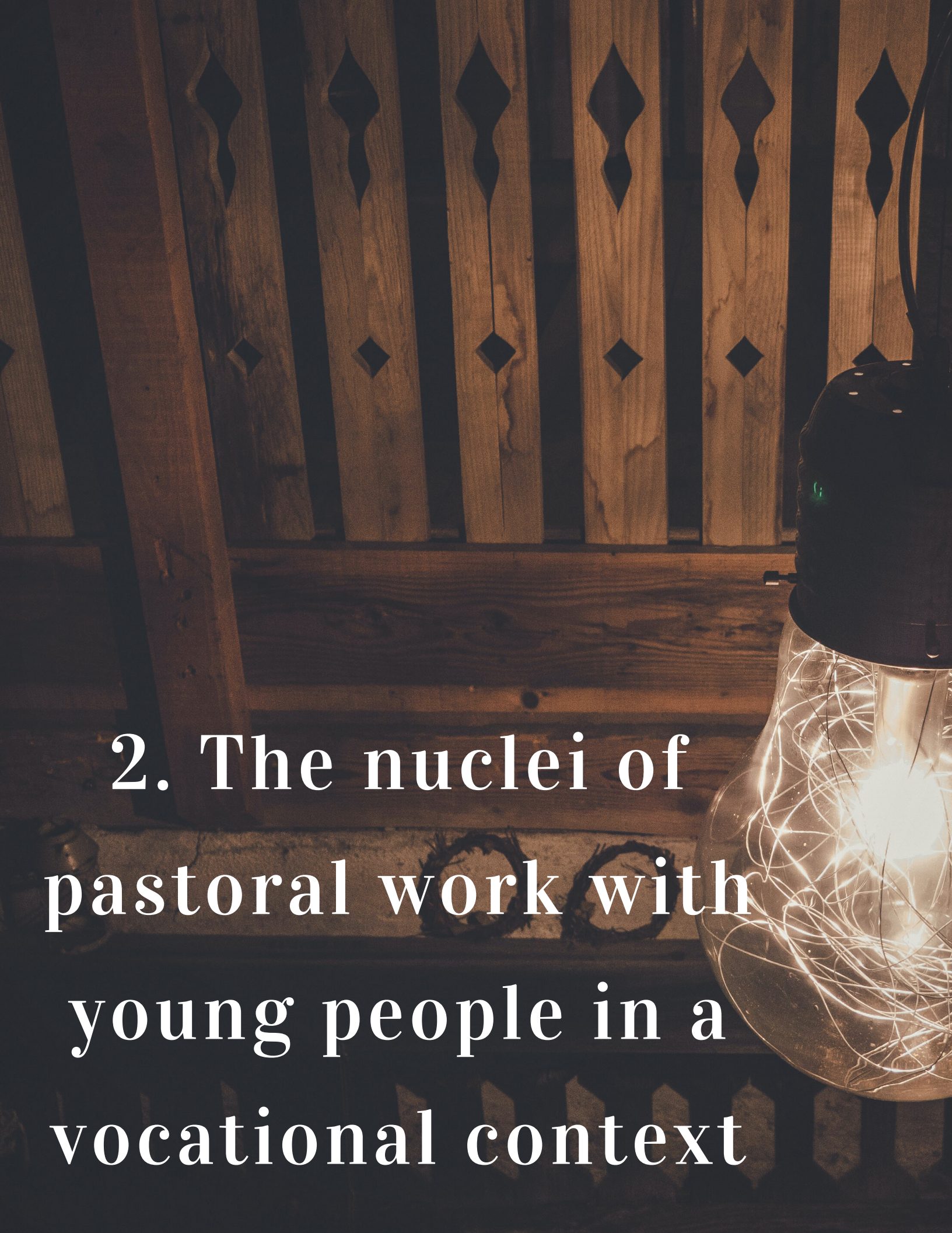
In the light of the Word of God and prayer, in the forge of the Spirit, the Heart of Mary and the mission, St. Anthony Mary Claret transformed his "natural compassion" into "apostolic zeal" in the service of the neighbours of his time and called to the apostolic mission other people "animated by the same spirit".

In the same way, the other founders and foundresses of the Claretian Family^[3] knew how to discern the calls of God in the framework of history "to preserve and defend the beauty of the Church" responding to the concrete needs of their time, and in a particular way of women, the poor, the illiterate, the new evangelizers, the children and those who had not yet heard the message of Jesus.

From this perspective, the Claretian pastoral ministry with young people in a vocational key proposes "to awaken and accompany the vocations that the Lord grants to our family and to the Church".

We feel called to a pastoral ministry that calls young people as part of our family and accompanies them in their vocational searches in any of the forms of Christian life: lay, consecrated and/or priestly!

[3] With the name "founders and foundresses" of the different branches of the CF we refer, in chronological order of foundation, in addition to St. Anthony M. Claret, to M. Antonia Maria Paris, foundress of the Religious of Mary Immaculate Claretian Missionary Sisters (1855); Sr. Antonia Maria Paris, foundress of the Religious of Mary Immaculate Claretian Missionary Sisters (1855); Sr. Imelda Makole and Fr. Armengol Coll CMF, founders of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate (1909); M. Carmen Serrano y Rugama y Rugama, foundresses of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate (1909); Sr. Carmen Serrano y Rugama and Fr. Julián Collell y Guix CMF, founders of the Cordimarian Missionary Sisters (1921); to M. María Dolores Solá and Fr. Luis Pujol CMF, founders of the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institution (1951); to M. Leonia Milito and Msgr. Geraldo Fernandes CMF, founders of the Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony Mary Claret (1958).



2. The nuclei of
pastoral work with
young people in a
vocational context

So that the fire may burn

This proposal of pastoral ministry with young people in a vocational key is structured in three interconnected nuclei.



The first core is the spark that ignites the whole process and what happens when we meet with young people.

Like Jesus with his disciples on the road to Emmaus, the encounter generates the desire to get to know young people, ourselves, and the challenges we face along the way.

- The pandemic of Covid 19 and the violence of war highlight our interdependence with the universe, our fragilities, and the injustices of the world. The need we feel for others and for human encounter help us to redefine what is truly important and valuable: caring for life without excluding anyone, placing ourselves at the service of those who suffer from the crisis among so many other sufferings and injustices. We are a global village.

Therefore, our vocational proposal must favour spaces of life and inclusion that are an alternative to individualism, indifference and the throwaway culture that dehumanizes our social coexistence.

- Young people are "God's 'now' and their hearts a 'holy ground'" that we must visit with bare feet[4]. They do not exist in the abstract and, although sometimes they feel or are indeed alone, it is important that our pastoral proposal helps them to connect with the roots that shape their identity: the family, the culture, the people they belong to, the group and the Christian community and so on.

Therefore, our vocational proposal must help them rethink these bonds to assume them as values that shape them and give meaning to their lives, with the certainty that God does not forget them and carries their names tattooed on the palm of his hands[5].

- At WYD + CF Panama 2019 we meet young people in solidarity, who live with enthusiasm the mission and service to the neediest and value the Gospel witness; eager to meet and walk together. They long to know Jesus, his Word, Claret, our charism, and spirituality. They want to learn to ask themselves questions and seek answers to the challenges of their affective, relational, social, economic, and other similar realities; they demand that we take care of the formative processes of self-knowledge and healing of wounds.

Therefore, our vocational proposal must be translated into concrete actions that accompany the most genuine searches of the young people who frequent our communities.

- As we journey with young people, challenges arise that make us mature as disciples of Jesus and grow in the ministry entrusted to us. We think, for example, of the challenge of strengthening our closeness without pretending what we are not to be accepted; of growing in wisdom so as to accompany without imposing; or of increasing our empathy towards them and cultivating a merciful, compassionate and prophetic heart, that is, capable of denouncing the injustices that exclude them and dreaming of alternatives.


Therefore, in our vocation ministry we need to be attentive, creative, and flexible in order to value and liberate the potential of each young person, giving them the possibility to go beyond themselves.

[4] Christus vivit, 67; 84.

[5] Cf. Is 49:14-16.

- The Digital Continent offers us an opportunity for dialogue, encounter, exchange, and knowledge that links young people to each other, even if not all have the same possibilities of access and connection. For us the virtual world has become a meeting place with them and, although we are aware of the difficulties and challenges of the networks and the importance of face-to-face encounters, we understand that the Internet and the networks offer us the possibility of sharing with young people the Gospel and the beauty of our charism.

For this reason, our vocation ministry goes out to meet young people in a personal, community and virtual way, taking advantage of the possibilities offered by each type of encounter.



The second nucleus is the flame that illuminates and has to do with listening, dialogue, and discernment.

In the manner of the disciples of Emmaus, we review the events of our encounter with Jesus as experiences that are a path to freedom and bring out what is unique in each person.

- Listening to the voice of the Spirit, allowing ourselves to be challenged by it and seeking the most appropriate responses, in the light of the Word and in community, is a challenge that involves processes and relationships: no one grows alone or suddenly. Accompaniment is a tool of discernment and a pedagogy; a way of evangelizing and giving life to the "culture of encounter". It allows us to discover the passage of God in life and in history.

For this reason, we propose to discern the opportunities that enkindle the hearts of young people, the moments that are full of meaning, widen horizons and allow us to understand what we live.

- The active compassion of young people in the face of injustice and violence in our societies is a source of communion with the sentiments of Jesus Christ. It is a privileged environment to grow together in listening, discernment of what is moving in us as we encounter God in the peripheries of the world and concrete commitment.


For this reason, we promote going out to the peripheries as an opportunity to discover God's calls and encourage the desire to respond to them by generating life like Jesus.

- The Claretian following of Jesus that we live is what we propose to the young men and women as we go with them on their journey:
 - A discipleship of the heart on fire, doing and living what Jesus lived,
 - welcoming the Word of God and allowing ourselves to be enlightened and guided by it;
 - in missionary communities that include others, in networks, generating spaces of encounter;
 - announcing the Gospel with freedom, availability and audacity, being sensitive and attentive to the cries of God in history;
 - committed to changing society and the Church, seeking justice and peace, living our universal fraternity and sisterhood;
 - like Mary, attentive to the needs of others, courageous in the fight against evil and committed to mission.

Therefore, the imprint of our charism defines our experiences and our way of accompanying young people.

- Pastoral care in accompaniment makes us trust, care for and respect young people. God wants the happiness of his sons and daughters and draws them to him by moving them interiorly and awakening in them the best of themselves and the desire to choose what gives them life and makes them happy.

Therefore, we do not impose processes, but in every circumstance, we welcome them and respect their uniqueness, their rhythms, their searches, and their choices.



3 The third nucleus is the burning ember, the understanding of one's own life as mission.

Like the disciples of Emmaus who, when they discover Jesus, go out to tell what happened, the encounter with Christ launches us into mission in community and in the world.

- Every vocation is a mission that orients us to procure the good of others as an effective participation in God's creation. From this perspective, vocational discernment is a way of seeking and finding how to serve others more and better in society and in the Church[6].

For this reason, we encourage them to go beyond a mere pragmatic choice by asking opportune questions at the most appropriate times so that they may discover the meaning and direction of the things they do[7].

[6] Cf. *Christus vivit*, 253-254.

[7] Cf. *Christus vivit*, 256-257.

- Work dignifies young people; " Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment" [8]. Living the professional orientation in a vocational horizon makes them discern if the job offers, even if they are attractive, are in the perspective of the Gospel of Jesus and recognize their own talents to put them at the service of the Kingdom of God[9].

For this reason, we promote a positive vision of work so that they can give it their mark, discerning God's calls and can be personally fulfilled[10].

- The horizon of vocation is broader than the work or professional field, although it includes it. The Claretian charism offers young men and women diverse ways of living the following of Jesus and being happy, according to the vocation to which they have been called: as a couple, in a family, as single persons, as consecrated men and women, as ordained ministers[11].

Therefore, we promote all the specific vocations in the Church, and, in a special way, we make known and encourage the concrete way of living them in the different institutes and movements of the Claretian family.

[8] Cf. Laudato Sí, 128, 891.

[9] Cf. Final Document of the XV Synod of Bishops, Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment, 86.

[10] Cf. Christus vivit, 268-271.

[11] Cf. Christus vivit, 259-277.



Conclusion



These ideas and guidelines for the Claretian pastoral ministry with young people in a vocational key that we share are inspired by the Magisterium of the Church in recent years and gather our own experience of shared searches and dreams in the path that we have been traveling together as Claretian family in this pastoral field.

This pastoral reflection invites us to deepen in the theme of accompaniment looking for and finding concrete ways to put it into practice in our communities and apostolic structures. It is our wish that we can ignite in young people the fire that burns in us, the spark that makes hearts burn so that they too can find their specific vocation in the horizon of the Claretian family.

Therefore, we hope that these keys can be taken into consideration by the different movements and institutes of our family when planning and offering specific proposals for accompaniment and vocational discernment to young people.

