

## Dreaming of a fraternal world

*Pope Francis has given us three significant encyclicals. 'The Joy of the Gospel' - on proclaiming the Gospel in the world today; 'Laudato Sí - on care for our common home' and more recently 'Fratelli Tutti' - on fraternity and social friendship. During the weeks of Lent, we want to reflect together on Fratelli tutti. It is a summary of his ideas, sermons and speeches, a kind of testament, in which he presents his vision of how the world can be shaped according to God's plan.*

*Some have called this vision utopian. But perhaps this is exactly what we need in the church and in society today. We all have many short-term goals, but no vision of what the purpose and meaning of life is. Our society is busy with a thousand problems and projects, but lacks a narrative, a vision of the future. This is what Pope Francis offers in Fratelli tutti. He is following in the footsteps of the great prophets who gave the people of Israel a vision of the future and thus hope in difficult times. With the 'good news' of the Kingdom of God Jesus gives God's vision of the future and shows us ways to contribute to this plan of God. The Pope draws inspiration from his namesake, St Francis, who lived in harmony with all creatures, all people and God.*

### Quotes

- Francis felt himself a brother to the sun, the sea and the wind, yet he knew that he was even closer to those of his own flesh. Wherever he went, he sowed seeds of peace and walked alongside the poor, the abandoned, the infirm and the outcast, the least of his brothers and sisters. *Fratelli tutti 2*
- There is an episode in the life of Saint Francis that shows his openness of heart, which knew no bounds and transcended differences of origin, nationality, colour or religion. It was his visit to Sultan Malik-el-Kamil, in Egypt, which entailed considerable hardship, given Francis' poverty, his scarce resources, the great distances to be travelled and their differences of language, culture and religion. *Fratelli tutti 3*
- Francis did not wage a war of words aimed at imposing doctrines; he simply spread the love of God. He understood that "God is love and those who abide in love abide in God" (1 Jn 4:16). In this way, he became a father to all and inspired the vision of a fraternal society. *Fratelli tutti 4*
- It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity... Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travellers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth, which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all. *Fratelli tutti 8*

**Lord, Father of our human family,  
you created all human beings  
equal in dignity:  
pour forth into our hearts a  
fraternal spirit and inspire in us a  
dream of renewed encounter,  
dialogue, justice and peace.  
Move us to create healthier  
societies and a more dignified  
world, a world without hunger,  
poverty, violence and war.**

