

## “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” (Is 43:19)

The exile in Babylon and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem had created in the people of Israel a collective trauma and posed a theological question: is God still with us or has he abandoned us? The purpose of this part of the book of Isaiah<sup>1</sup> is to help the people understand what God is doing, to trust him and thus be able to return to their homeland. And it is precisely in the experience of exile that the face of God, the creator and savior, is revealed.

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Isaiah reminds them of God’s faithful love for his people. His faithfulness remains constant even during the dramatic period of exile. Even though the promises made to Abraham seem unattainable and the pact of the Covenant itself seems in crisis, the people of Israel are still the nation particularly privileged to experience God’s presence in human history.

The prophetic book of Isaiah addresses existential questions, questions that are fundamental not only for people of that time, but always. “Who directs the unfolding of history and gives it meaning?” This question can also be expressed on a personal level: “Who holds the fate of my life? What is the meaning of all that I am experiencing or have experienced?”

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God works in each person’s life, constantly doing “new things.” If we don’t always notice them or understand their meaning and scope, it’s because they are still sprouting or because we are not ready to recognize how God is working.

Distracted by events around us, by a thousand worries that grip our souls, by thoughts that trouble us, perhaps we don’t stop long enough to observe these new sprouts of life that guarantee his presence. He has never forsaken us and is continually creating and recreating our lives.

“We are the ‘*new thing*’, the ‘new creation’ that God generated. [...] Let’s not look at the past or long for the good things we once had, or cry over our failures. Let’s believe firmly that God is at work and will continue bringing about ‘new things.’”<sup>2</sup>

1. Cf. Is 42-45.

2. Chiara Lubich, commentary to the Word of Life of March 2004, published in *Words of Life*, New City London, 2022.

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Together with those who share the journey of life with us—our community, our family and friends, our co-workers—let’s try to work together, to discuss things with one another, and not lose faith that things can change for the better.

The year 2025 is a special year. A year in which Pope Francis calls us to be “Pilgrims of Hope.” In the midst the wars and moral decay that exists in the world today, we can lose the sense of hope. But he challenges us to “...reflect on this fundamental and decisive Christian virtue [Hope], especially in times like the ones we are living in...” “I invite everyone to a simple concrete gesture: In the evening, before going to bed, retrace the events experienced and the encounters had; go in search of a sign of hope in the day just gone by; an unexpected smile, an act of kindness observed at school or at work, a gesture of help, even a small one: Hope is a ‘childlike virtue’ as Charles Péuy wrote. We need to become children again with our eyes amazed at the world, to meet it, know it, and appreciate it. Let’s train ourselves to recognize hope. We’ll be amazed at how much good exists in the world.”<sup>3</sup>

Let’s prepare, therefore, to live this Easter season full of joy, faith and hope. Just as Christ rose from the dead, let’s allow ourselves, after crossing our ‘deserts,’ to be accompanied on this journey by the One who guides history and also our individual lives.

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and the Word of Life team

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3. Pope Francis, *A Light in the Night: Meditations on Hope*, New City Press December 2024

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Each month the Focolare chooses a Scripture passage as a guide and inspiration for daily living. The commentary on it was originally written by founder, Chiara Lubich (1920–2008). Today this Word of Life, written by an international commission and translated into 96 different languages, reaches several million people worldwide. For audio and videos resources about the WoL, visit [focolaremedia.com](https://focolaremedia.com)

