

## “See, I am making all things new.” (Rev 21:5)

The Book of Revelation, from which this Word of Life is taken, closes the collection of New Testament writings. The title, “Revelation” indicates Saint John’s intent to help us understand Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell which are the last four stages of the soul in life and the afterlife, often referred to as “the last things,”<sup>1</sup> the return of Christ on earth, the final defeat of evil, and the birth of a new heaven and a new earth.

It was written during the years 81-96 AD when Christians were brutally persecuted. The atmosphere in Christian communities was one of fear. People wondered: “What will become of us and the message entrusted to us? Why doesn’t God intervene?”

During that period John was exiled by the Romans to the island of Patmos. This is where he began to have a series of visions, and was given the command to write them down.

### “See, I am making all things new.”

The Book of Revelation was intended to give hope to persecuted communities. Despite the difficult and violent times, despite the uncertain future, good would ultimately triumph and God would make all things new.

“Even today, when we watch the news or read the daily headlines, we see so many tragedies, so much sad news that we risk becoming desensitized. (...) And yet, we have a Father who weeps with us — a Father who weeps tears of infinite compassion for His children, a Father who waits for us to console us, because He knows our sufferings and has prepared a different future for us. This is the great vision of Christian hope, which embraces every day of our lives and seeks to raise us up.”<sup>2</sup>

### “See, I am making all things new.”

We cannot know how and when God will “make all things new. What is certain is that it will happen.

“The closing pages of the Bible show us the ultimate horizon of our journey as believers: the heavenly Jerusalem, the celestial Jerusalem. It is envisioned first as an immense tent, where God will welcome all mankind to dwell with them forever (21:3). This is our hope. And what will God do when we are with him at last? He will be infinitely tender in our regard, as a father who welcomes his children who have long toiled and suffered. (...) ‘See, the home of God is among mortals! (...) he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away. (...) See, I am making all things new!’ (21:3-5). He is the God of newness!”<sup>3</sup>

1. In Christian eschatology, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell are the four last stages of the soul in life and the afterlife, often referred to as “the last things.”
2. Cf. Pope Francis, General Audience, August 23, 2017. Catechesis on Christian Hope.
3. Ibid.

## “See, I am making all things new.”

How can we live this month’s Word of Life?

“It assures us that we have embarked on the journey towards a new world, which we are preparing and building up even now. This is totally the opposite of the idea that Christians should not engage with the world, or worse, should flee from it. In fact, God wants to renew all things: our personal life, friendships, conjugal love, the family. He wants to renew life in society under every aspect: work, education, culture, entertainment, health, economics and politics. In short, God wants to transform every sector of life on earth.

“But to do so, he needs us. He needs people who allow his Word to live in them, people who are his living Word, people who are another Jesus in their own environment.”<sup>4</sup>

Alice, a young Christian, understood that following her vocation required her to make a profound change to allow God to act fully in her life and make it new. In what she called “an immense gift,” she had the opportunity to live an experience in India. There, she experienced true joy and felt immersed in God’s grace, even in difficult moments. She dedicated her days to prayer, community life, and volunteer service. The children in the orphanage touched her deeply because even though they had nothing materially, they showed incredible enthusiasm and taught her a lot about life. It was not just a trip, but a pilgrimage, a journey of “ups and downs,” where she had to “empty her backpack,” but found herself enriched and liberated.

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4. Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement, commentary on the Word of Life of April 1989.

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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 video resources about the WoL, visit [focolaremedia.com](http://focolaremedia.com)

