

*Movimiento internacional*  
**Somos-Iglesia**

*Movimento Internacional*  
**Nós somos Igreja**

*Movimento Internazionale*  
**Noi siamo Chiesa**

*Mouvement international*  
**Nous sommes Eglise**

*Internationale Bewegung*  
**Wir sind Kirche**

# *International Movement* **We are Church**

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## **10 Years On: Hope and Resolve are Still Strong**

On its 10th Anniversary *the International Movement We Are Church* has sent a letter to the Pope seeking dialogue to discuss encouraging strategies for the new century.

For the third time, and on the date of the 10th Anniversary of its founding in Rome - 25 November 1996 - *the International Movement We Are Church* asks Pope Benedict XVI for a personal meeting to launch an open, broad, constructive, and mutual dialogue on the current questions and problems in the Church

There was no reply to the first letter.

The reply to the second letter, on instruction from the Vatican's Secretary of State, recommended dialogue with local bishops and priests.

In today's third letter to the Pope *We Are Church* **points out the necessity of dialogue with the Vatican**, because many dialogues with local bishops during the last 10 years made it clear that the questions and pastoral problems discussed in these dialogues were not their responsibility but that of the Vatican.

"If the Pope demands dialogue with Islam there should also be an open and substantial dialogue within the Church", says Raquel Mallavibarrena, Chair of the *International Movement We Are Church*.

In a discussion paper "**Perspectives of Church Reform Under Pope Benedict XVI**" *We Are Church* summarizes what was achieved in the first decade of its existence and analysis of the Roman Catholic Church at a turning point. **The document also encourages strategies for a second decade.**

*We Are Church* evolved from the **Church Referendum in Austria in 1995** and is based on **Article 37 of the Vatican II document "Lumen Gentium"** and on **Canon 212 (3) of**

**Church Law.** As a world-wide reform movement within the Roman Catholic Church *We Are Church* is committed to the renewal of the Church on the basis of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the theological spirit developed from it.

As a "**voice of the people in the pews**" *We Are Church* has proved that its five goals are theologically sound and are **supported by the vast majority of faithful Christians in all parts of the world:**

- creation of a Church of brothers and sisters;
- full participation of women in all aspects of Church life;
- removal of the obligation of clerical celibacy;
- a positive attitude towards sexuality and recognition of the primacy of an informed moral conscience;
- a message of joy and not threat or discrimination.

In 1997 *We Are Church* presented the "Petition of the People of God" to Pope John Paul II.

In 1998 *We Are Church* initiated the appeal "A Pope for the Time to Come" that was endorsed by more than 145 reform-orientated groups around the world.

*We Are Church* shadowed the Bishops' Synods in Rome 1999, 2001 and 2005.

In 2005, after the death of Pope John Paul II and before the Conclave started *We Are Church* presented "Visions of a New Church" in a series of seminars in Rome.

Today the institutional Church is far more conservative than it was in the times of the Council, but there is still deep yearning for change. **The entire Church is confronted with severe pastoral problems which are deeply connected with the five goals of *We Are Church*.**

In the Synods for Asia, Africa and America as well as during the Synod on the Eucharist in 2005 more and more bishops demonstrated that they are moving in a reform-orientated direction. But until now the Pope and the Roman Curia have not taken any action to face the huge pastoral problems in all parts of the world.

*We Are Church* has not yet obtained concrete reforms by the Vatican strong structure but the opinions of *We Are Church* always founded on the Gospel are more and more agreed in the Church and in the future will be accepted.

*We Are Church* focuses on the Church as the People of God as laid down in Vatican II. *We Are Church* as a global movement and its national voices will go on speaking out on the occasions of major Church events, documents or meetings.

With the **50th Anniversary of Vatican II in 2012** in mind *We Are Church* will deepen its spiritual resources for the long lasting process of reform.

**"Our faith and hope continues to be strong!"**

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