



## Metanoia

The Christian is one who accepts Jesus' call to discipleship and whose whole life is shaped by that call. The process by which one moves to Christian discipleship is called conversion.<sup>1</sup> Conversion is not a one-off event but is a journey that may take a lifetime. Such a journey will require of the disciple a change of heart and mind that realigns their life to the heart and mind of God. The word that best captures this change is *metanoia*. Metanoia is an essential element of discipleship; what Pope Benedict VI calls the "fundamental datum of Christian existence."<sup>2</sup> Metanoia is commonly used in the Greek New Testament, especially in the preaching of the Apostles. It comprises two Greek words: *meta*, a preposition meaning "with" or "after," or even "beyond," and *noieo*, "I think." This word suggests thinking beyond a narrow perception of one's life to embrace a broader understanding and direction reflective of the God of abundance. This may entail a change in direction of one's life or moving "outside the square", but it is a faith-filled response to Jesus' declaration: "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

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<sup>1</sup> McBrien, R. (1994). *Catholicism*. North Blackburn, Vic.: CollinsDove, p. 923

<sup>2</sup> Benedict VI and Miller, M. (2009). *Credo for today*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, p.153.