The unquenchable flame

Why would you say I am ‘too young’?
No one says food is ‘too fresh’,
News ‘too current’,
Grass ‘too green’!
How, then, can I be ‘too young’?
Too young to understand?
Too young to lead?
Too inexperienced in the ways of life and faith?

Youth is my gift; my brightly-burning sword of the Spirit.
Where others become jaded, worn, dulled and cynical,
I brim with energy, shiny optimism, hope!

Not for me a comfy chair in my Father’s house.
Guided by his Spirit I run with my faith:
To the streets;
To my friends;
To my neighbours;
To people I am yet to learn to avoid or fear.

Where you say ‘It won’t work’, I say ‘Let’s try it!’
When you say ‘But how?’ I say ‘Why not?’
You may be too busy, but I’m ready to go –
Ready to shine my bright light into the dark corners of this world.
I appear to be small, but my mustard-seed faith can move mountains.

So please, embrace my God-given shiny newness,
Listen to my fresh ideas and accept my willing spirit.
Let me lead, even as I learn ... 
But never, ever tell me I am ‘too young’.

by Kevin Sims

Sixteen-year-old Anabela is the worship leader at Craiova Corps (Salvation Army church) in Romania and plays an active role in community outreach ministry. Having met Anabela in Romania, David Giles (Communications Manager, International Headquarters) described her as ‘The Salvation Army’s Greta Thunberg’ – comparing her with the 16-year-old Swedish student who mobilised more than 1.6 million young people around the world to protest about the lack of action being taken to fight climate change.

This poem was inspired by Anabela but also by Greta and the growing wave of young people worldwide who are stepping up and raising their voices in protest at society’s injustices.

From All The World, The Salvation Army’s international magazine. 
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