



The synod in Europe : experiences of synodality and challenges

Zagreb, July 1st 2022

Sr Nathalie Becquart, *xmcj*,
Under-Secretary
to the General Secretariat for the Synod



Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

The background features three light gray, torn-edge paper shapes. One shape is at the top right, another is on the left side, and a larger one is at the bottom right. The edges of these shapes are irregular and frayed, giving them a hand-cut appearance.

Thank you!

Listening to your experience of synodality

When you think of your experience of the synod in your Bishops' Conference, what word or image come to your mind?

- universal,
- collaboration,
- listening,
- diversity,
- openness,
- meeting
- horizon
- joy of the meeting
- respect
- condivisione,
- appartenenza cristiana,
- dialogo
- preparazione,
- rinnovamento,
- desiderio,
- conversione
- conoscenza



“Synodality is the way of being the Church today according to the will of God, in a dynamic of discerning and listening together to the voice of the Holy Spirit.”

Pope Francis

Synodality, a dynamic vision of the Church in history

“Synodality is the dynamic dimension, the historical dimension of ecclesial communion founded by Trinitarian communion, which, appreciating simultaneously the *sensus fidei* of all God's holy faithful people, apostolic collegiality and unity with the Successor of Peter, must animate the conversion and reform of the Church at every level.”

Pope Francis,

Message for the Plenary Assembly of the Commission for Latin America, May 26 2022

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2022/05/26/0398/00830.html>

***With Pope Francis “synodality now means not some of the bishops
some of the time but all of the Church all of the time”***



Ormond Rush,
“Inverting the
Pyramid: The
Sensus Fidelium
in a Synodal
Church,” *TS*
(March 2017)

Pope Francis' insistence : a Church for everyone

- **A Church without chains and walls, in which everyone can feel welcomed and accompanied, one where listening, dialogue and participation are cultivated under the sole authority of the Holy Spirit.** The Church that is free and humble, that “gets up quickly” and does not temporize or dilly-dally before the challenges of the present time. A Church that does not linger in its sacred precincts, but is driven by enthusiasm for the preaching of the Gospel and the desire to encounter and accept everyone. **Let us not forget that word: everyone. Everyone!** Go to crossroads and bring everyone, the blind, the deaf, the lame, the sick, the righteous and the sinner: everyone! This word of the Lord should continue to echo in our hearts and minds: **in the Church there is a place for everyone.**
- Paul's exhortation is also a word of life for us; it makes us realize that, **in the Church, all of us are called to be missionary disciples and to make our own contribution.** Here two questions come to my mind. The first is: *What can I do for the Church?* Not complaining about the Church, but committing myself to the Church. Participating with passion and humility: with passion, because we must not remain passive spectators; with humility, because being committed within the community must never mean taking centre stage, considering ourselves better and keeping others from drawing near. That is what a synodal Church means: everyone has a part to play, no individual in the place of others or above others. There are no first or second class Christians; everyone has been called.

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2022/06/29/0500/01021.html#en>



“The **purpose of the Synod**, and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but “to plant dreams, **draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to be nourished**, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another, and **create a bright resourcefulness** that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands.”” (PD, 32)



Reflecting back as we are on the synodal path in Europe

The aim of the Synod 2021-2023

To (re)learn synodality

Reread and Practice

→ The Synodal conversion of the Church

- *Putting into practice the Synodal nature of the entire Church*
- *Towards a “synodalization” of the whole Church at all levels*

**Walking together as a people of missionary pilgrims
to learn and practice synodality**
to reread and practice exercises of synodality

➤ Learning by doing

“Through this process we have discovered that synodality is a way of being Church,
in fact, it is the way of being Church”.

“The Holy Spirit is asking us to be more synodal.”

The synod as a school of synodality, a transformative process



Symbolic image of the Youth Synod " Emmaüs "

"Walking together, like Christ with the pilgrims of Emmaüs"

See/Listening/Recognizing - Judge/Interpreting - Act/Discerning/Choosing



The road to Emmaus, paradigm of a synodal journey

The synodal style of Jesus

- Jesus goes to them
- Jesus asks them a question
- Jesus begins a dialogue
- Jesus reaches deep within them
- Jesus walks with them, even in the wrong direction!
- Jesus leads them to an encounter with him.
- This encounter sends them on mission, united with the Christian community.

On the road

- **Synodality manifests the ‘pilgrim’ character of the Church.** The image of the People of God, gathered from among the nations (*Acts* 2,1-9; 15,14), expresses its social, historical and missionary character, which corresponds to **the condition and vocation of each human person as *homo viator***. The path is the image that clarifies our understanding of the mystery of Christ as the Way that leads to the Father. **Jesus is the way from God to man and from man to God.** The grace-filled event whereby He made Himself a pilgrim by pitching His tent among us (*John* 1,14), goes on in the synodal path of the Church (SYN, n. 49).

ITC Synodality in the life and mission of the Church

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20180302_sinodalita_en.html

A Church, people of God on the way

- **A new step of the reception on the Second Vatican Council by giving centrality to Chapter II of *Lumen Gentium* on “the People of God”**
- Pope Francis recalls that “**to be Church is to be People of God**” (*EG 114*). It is an opportunity for what it means to be Church to be deepened. The notion of the People of God led to the understanding of the Church as a *totality* (*EG 17*) that lives in a “multiform harmony” (*EG 220*). All its members, or *christifideles*, women and men, are empowered by the Spirit to be subjects of rights and action. One of the great fruits of this way of being Church is that it emphasizes the participation and co-responsibility of all equally, and strengthens the bond between the *communio fidelium, episcoporum et ecclesiarum*.
- **One of the central elements of this ecclesiology is found in the theology and practice of the *sensus fidei fidelium* (LG 12).** The Holy Spirit empowers each *christifideles* to contribute what is proper to the edification of the whole body. The voice of the faithful taken in isolation or that of the bishop alone is not sufficient to manifest the will of God (1 Thess 2:13; LG 35). It is necessary to enter into the dynamics of the *consensus omnium fidelium*

Synodality relating to the vision of the Church as People of God

"Everything that has been said about the People of God is **addressed equally to laity, religious and clergy**"
(LG 30)

"Each member is **at the service of the other members** ... [so that] the Pastors and the other faithful are linked to each other ***by mutual need***" (LG 32)

"In the People of God, functions, tasks, ministries, states of life and charisms are organically united in a **multiform network of structural ties and vital relationships**
(LG 13)"

Rediscovering the primacy of the ecclesial "we" to serve the common good

- QA 20 "**Life is a community journey** in which tasks and responsibilities are distributed and shared according to the common good.
- Synodality awakens and strengthens the **ecclesial "we"**.
- Synodality aims at and produces **communion** at the service of the "**common home**".

Synodality is passing from the « I » to the « us »



Synodality is a process that "ecclesializes" us.

- "This stimulates the generation and implementation of **processes that build us as the People of God** rather than the search for immediate results with quick consequences. "

Letter of Pope Francis to the Church in Germany on the synod's journey

The two dimensions of synodality

PD 29. **“journeying together”** can be understood from two different perspectives, which are strongly interconnected.

1. **The first perspective looks at the internal life of the particular Churches (...)**
2. **The second perspective considers how the People of God journeys together with the entire human family.** Thus, our gaze will focus on the state of relations, dialogue, and possible common initiatives with believers of other religions, with people who are distant from the faith, as well as with specific social environments and groups, with their institutions (the world of politics, culture, economics, finance, labor, trade unions, and business associations, non-governmental and civil society organizations, popular movements, minorities of various kinds, the poor and the excluded, etc.).

A european context reinforcing the urgency of synodality

- A time of crisis, a time of *Kairos*
- The experience of multiple « earthquakes », the need to rebuild the church and the society
- The war in Ukraine and the powerful testimony of the Church in Ukraine
- **To be a synodal Church is to be a Church attentive to the signs of the times and in permanent reform**
- A CHURCH WOUNDED IN A WOUNDED EUROPE, CALLED TO CONVERSION
- “Despite the many obstacles and resistances which the synod has faced at all levels of the Church, and notwithstanding the low levels of participation, it has been a *kairós* for the people who have engaged in the process, allowing them to dream of a better future and a renewed understanding of the Church. What emerges is a dream of a loving, merciful, familial and missionary Church in which all are involved, a synodal Church open to the guidance of the Spirit that is better able to build the Kingdom of God in these islands.”
“Shared vulnerability called forth a new consciousness of mutual dependence and belonging, expressed in charity and gratitude” *Synthesis England and Wales*

Part I. The call to walk together

Discerning the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel

“The synodal journey unfolds within a historical context marked by epochal changes in society and by a crucial transition in the life of the Church, which cannot be ignored: it is within the folds of the complexity of this context, in its tensions and contradictions, that we are called to “scrutinize the **signs of the times** and interpret them in the **light of the Gospel**” (GS, 4).” (PD, 4)

1. The global tragedy of the **COVID-19 pandemic**

1. **Inequalities and injustices:** massification, fragmentation, the conditions faced by migrants, divisions across the family of humanity

1. The cry of the **poor** and the cry of the **earth**

We are all in the same boat...

*We are one human family living in our common home.
(Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti)*



Preparatory Document Part II. A constitutively synodal Church

Communion, participation, mission : the pillars of a synodal church

“Within this context,
synodality represents the main road for the Church,
called to renew herself under the action of the Spirit and
by listening to the Word.” (*PD*, 9)

- Imagining a different future for the Church
- **Being a prophetic witness to the human family, which needs to be united around a common goal**

A learning church, learning a new way to be Church

Synodality as a style, a *modus vivendi et operandi*

- **Learning to become a listening church with the style of discernment** : "in a synodal style, decisions are made by discernment, on the basis of a *consensus* born of common obedience to the Spirit" (DP 30).
- **A new way of proceeding in the Church** with new communicative/relational dynamics based on equality and reciprocity
- Integrating that "It is in **the profound bond between the *sensus fidei* of the People of God and the magisterial function of the Pastors** that the unanimous consensus of the whole Church in the same faith is realized. Every synodal process, in which the Bishops are called to discern what the Spirit is saying to the Church, not by themselves but by listening to the People of God, who shares also in Christ's prophetic office (LG 12)" (DP 14).
- **Learning from each other**, <https://www.synodresources.org/>
- Learning best practices from the local churches to draft the Vademecum, the document on suggestions for the diocesan and national synthesis, the methodology for the next steps

A learning church, "becoming synodal"

"The Second Vatican Council gives an ideal of synodal and episcopal communion. We still have to make it grow, including at the parish level with regard to what is prescribed. There are parishes that have neither a pastoral council nor a council for economic affairs even though the Code of Canon Law obliges them to do so. Synodality is also at stake here."

Entretien exclusif de la Croix (Guillaume Goubert et Sébastien Maillard) avec le Pape François, 17 mai 2016 <https://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Pape/Entretien-exclusif-avec-pape-Francois-integralite-2016-05-17-1200760636>

- "To prayer and closeness, I would like to add a third word, which is very familiar to you: synodality. To be Church is to be a community that walks together. **It is not enough to have a synod, it is necessary to be a synod. The Church needs an intense inner sharing: a living dialogue between pastors and between pastors and the faithful.**"

Discours du pape François aux responsables de l'Église gréco-catholique ukrainienne, 5 juillet 2019 www.synod.va 25

Discernment as the heart of synodality

- **113. Exercising discernment is at the heart of synodal processes and events. That is the way it has always been in the synodal life of the Church.** The ecclesiology of communion and the specific spirituality and praxis that follow on from it involve the mission of the entire People of God, so that it becomes "necessary today more than ever (...) to be formed in the principles and methods of a way of discernment that is not only personal but also communitarian"[\[151\]](#). It is a matter of the Church, **by means of the theological interpretation of the signs of the times under the guidance of the Holy Spirit**, travelling the path that is to be followed in service of God's plan brought to eschatological fulfilment in Christ[\[152\]](#), which also has to be fulfilled in every *kairós* throughout history[\[153\]](#). **Communal discernment allows us to discover God's call in a particular historical situation**[\[154\]](#).

ITC Synodality in the life and mission of the Church

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20180302_sinodalita_en.html

The path of discernment

- **114.** Communal discernment implies carefully and courageously listening to "the groans" of the Spirit (*cf. Romans 8,26*) which emerge through the explicit or sometimes silent cry that goes up from the People of God: "to listen to God, so that with Him we may hear the cry of His People; to listen to His People until we are in harmony with the will to which God calls us" [\[155\]](#). A disciple of Christ must be like a preacher, who "has to contemplate the Word, but he also has to contemplate his people" [\[156\]](#). **Discernment must be carried out in a space of prayer, meditation, reflection and study, which we need to hear the voice of the Spirit; by means of sincere, serene and objective dialogue with our brothers and sisters; by paying attention to the real experiences and challenges of every community and every situation; in the exchange of gifts and in the convergence of all energies in view of building up the Body of Christ and proclaiming the Gospel; in the melting-pot of feelings and thoughts that enable us to understand the Lord's will; by searching to be set free by the Gospel from any obstacle that might weaken our openness to the Spirit.**

ITC Synodality in the life and mission of the Church

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20180302_sinodalita_en.html

The whole Church is convoked in synod (PD1)

"The most important historical event since Vatican II

"For the first time in two thousand years the whole People of God is involved".

- "the most important ecclesial event after the Second Vatican Council".
- "For the first time in two thousand years of Church history, a Synod is called to involve the entire People of God.
- Therefore, making a Synod on synodality does not mean doing it on a theme like so many others, but on the deeper identity of the Church as communion and mission that becomes concrete, historically incisive when it is participated by all. **The Church is such, in fact, only when it is carried on its shoulders by all and shared in its heart by all, at the service of its brothers and sisters, especially beginning with the last, the discarded and the existential and spiritual peripheries of our time."**

Monsignor Piero Coda, member of the Theological Commission of Synod 2021-2023, recently appointed Secretary General of the International Theological Commission

Situating episcopal collegiality in ecclesial synodality

- It is synodality that "offers us the most adequate interpretative framework for understanding the hierarchical ministry itself" (International Theological Commission, *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, 9),
- It is a matter of situating episcopal collegiality in the greater framework of a *synodal ecclesiality* that has at its center all the faithful who make up the People of God: Pope, bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated life and laity.

Reinserting episcopal collegiality within synodality

→ Articulating primacy, collegiality, synodality

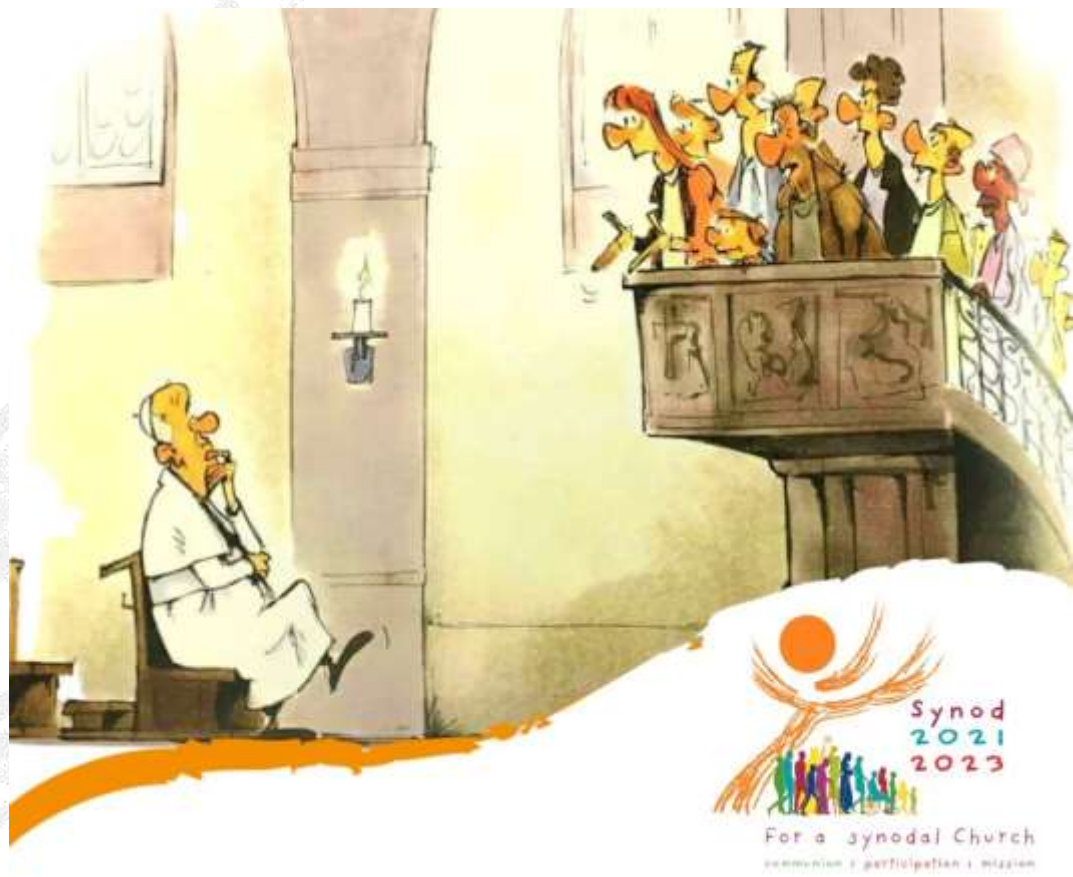


The Church in Europe on a the synodal path

What we have seen, what we have learned



A response to the call of Pope Francis to take part to the synod



A common journey with different starting points

- Starting from the reality
 - A diversity of situations and former experiences of synodality
 - Step by step
 - An apprehension of synodality linked to the culture
-
- Different rhythms
 - The synodal process has grown over time



Translation and local adaptation

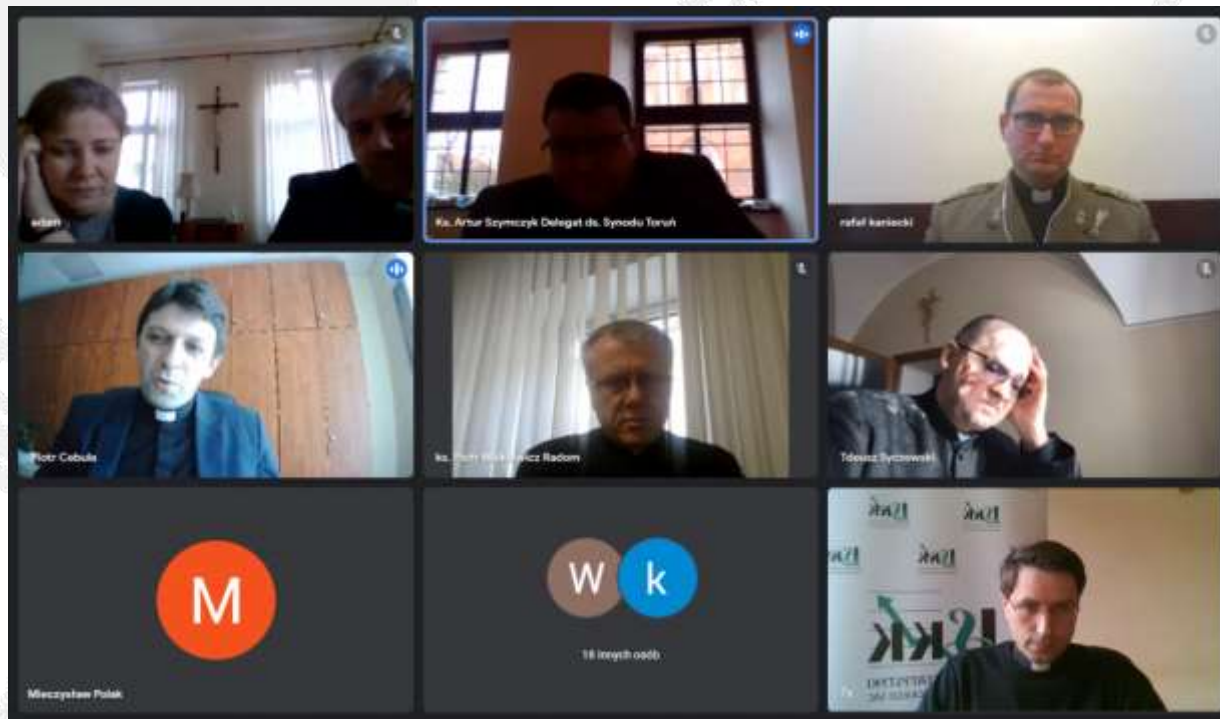


Finding ways to explain the synodal process



Meetings of diocesan synodal referents

the importance of building community of practice and sharing best practices



Webinars, conferences, formation

Chcete vedieť?



→ čo je to synoda?

→ kedy a ako bude prebiehať synoda?

→ ako sa dá zapojiť do synody?

→ aký výstup zo synodálnych stretnutí sa očakáva?

→ kedy a ako možno urobiť synodálne stretnutie?

- * Na tieto a mnohé ďalšie otázky dostanete odpoveď na webinári o synode, ktorý pre Vás pripravujeme v sobotu 29. januára 2022.
- * Webinár je pomôckou pre tých, ktorí sa zapájajú do organizácie synody vo svojom spoločenstve.
- * Ak ste zaregistrovaný ako kňaz, rehoľníčka alebo koordinátor (farnosti, spoločenstva, rehole), obdržíte od nás link na webinár emailom na Vami zaregistrovanú adresu.
- * Ak ste Vaše spoločenstvo ešte nezaregistrovali a chcete sa v sobotu zúčastniť webinára, môžete sa ešte obratom zaregistrovať na stránke: <https://synoda.abuba.sk/>.
- * Bližšie info dostanete na kontaktný email uvedený v registrácii.

The importance of communication to be integrated at the core of the process

Réflechir
Ensemble



A l'avenir !

Synode
2021
2023

DIMANCHE 30 JANVIER (15H-17H) ■
MARDI 1ER FÉVRIER (20H30-22H) ■
JEUDI 24 FÉVRIER (20H30-22H) ■

Inscris-toi : <https://vu.fr/Khkf>



An experience to live

Synode sur la synodalité

*En parler, c'est bien ;
le vivre, c'est mieux !*



Interaction between the synod 2021-2023 and diocesan/national synodal processes



The leading role of bishops and priests

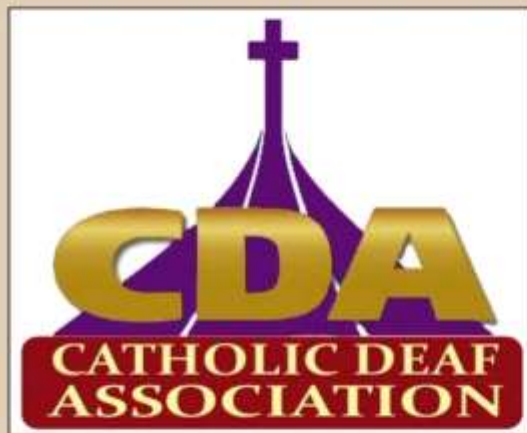
- The synod as a topic for the assemblies of bishops
- The mobilisation of lay people, the need to form and empower lay people
- The involvement of religious life : The role of consecrated life « icon/parabole of synodality » and driving-force of the synod in many places



The mobilization of movements, communities, network



Reaching out a diversity of people



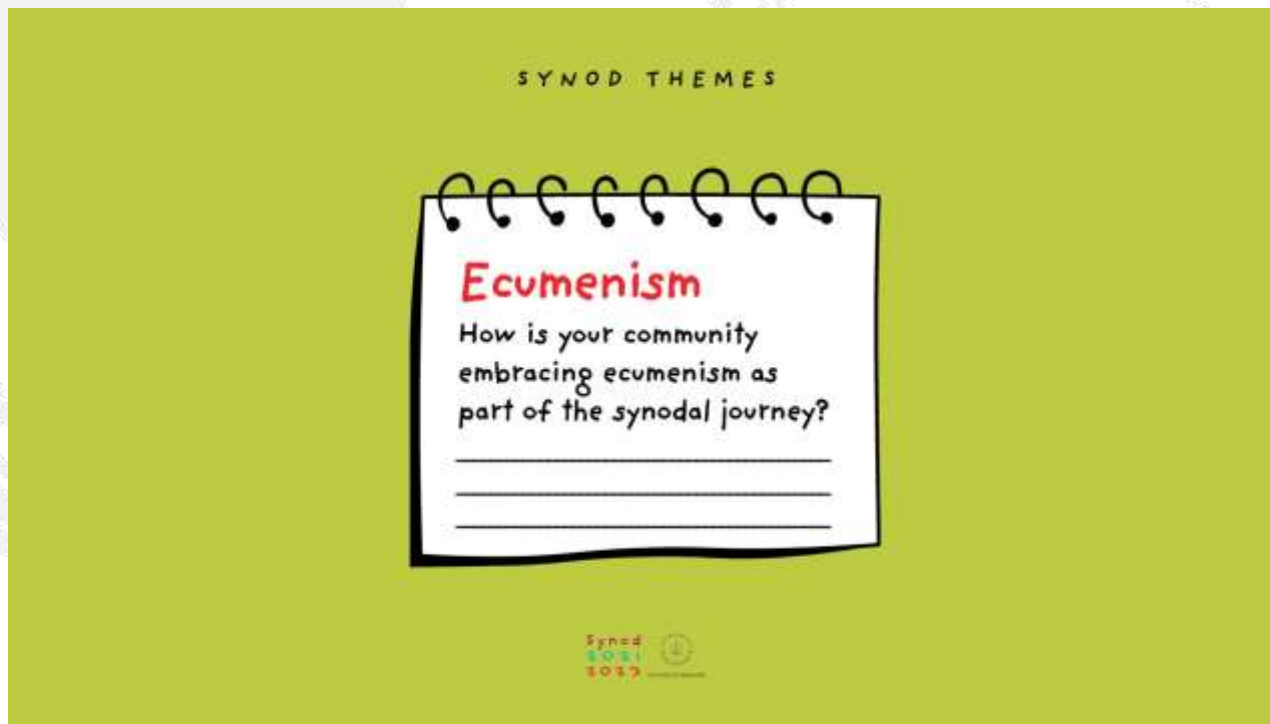
Responses from the Catholic Deaf community
United Kingdom

Involving kids and young people

Barcelona (Spain): How do you dream the Church?



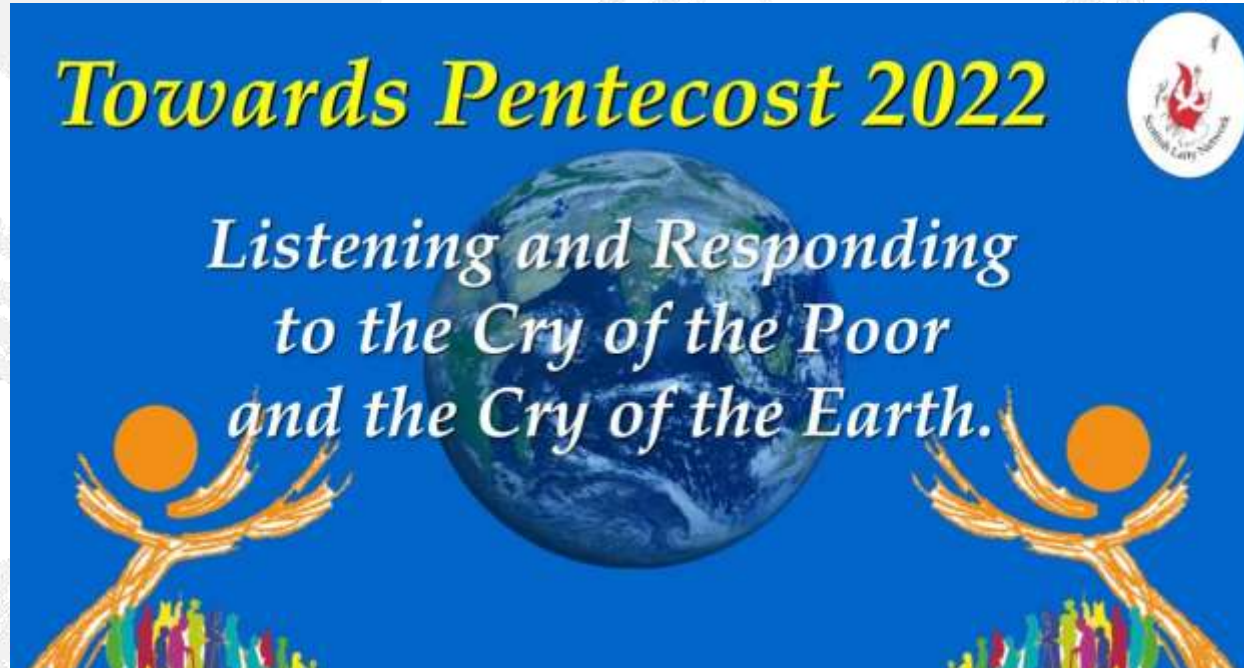
The ecumenical dimension of the synod



Connecting Synodality with different aspects

Synodality and Laudato Si

- The *Scottish Laity Network* has organized a programme 'Towards Pentecost 2022', focusing on listening and responding to the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth. From 28 April to 2 June there will be six sessions with different speakers. In a world brutally divided between rich and poor, suffering wars and violence, and failing to take radical action to prevent climate devastation, they seek to discern how the Spirit is calling for a response.



Diocesan and national (pre-)synodal assemblies

Predsynodálne zhromaždenie Bratislavskej arcidiecézy
24. - 25. júna 2022 | Bratislava

Platná 24. jún: 30.11 | **Kancel Najvyššieho Spasiteľa (Prezidentskej národnosti)**
Talár modlitba za Synodu 2021 - 2023

Šobota 25. jún 9.00 - 11.30 | **Atizkájske spomienky svätých Cyrila a Metoda (Kajucholá 26)**
Predsynodálne zhromaždenie
9.00 - 10.30 | **Atizkájske spomienky**
Otvorenie - Benedikt Gálčík, Danka arcidiecézneho synodálneho tímu
Modlitba k Duchu Svätému Adumar
Príhovor Marek, Stanislava Želenského, bratstvá archiepiske-metropolitu
Zbieranie gloriolných listov Synody - Juraj Viliak, arcidiecézny synodálny koordinátor
Spas chvilu 9.45 |
Predstavenie umeločského stvárnenia Synody - Dorota Šakovská, výtvarná umelkyňa
9.50 - 10.15 | **Atizkájske spomienky**
Svedectvo účastníkov konzultácií v arcidiecéze
Predlžka 10.15 - 10.30 |
Občerstvenie, káva 10.30 - 11.30 | **Atizkájske spomienky**
Zbieranie v skupinách na rozličné témy. Môže sa brať počas konzultácií
8.30 - 11.30, 13.30 - 14.30 | **Kapitula veľkej Argy v Katedrále svätého Martina**
Modlitbové služby dobrovoľníkov: archiepiskopálna služba počas celého stretnutia
Príhovor do katedrály 11.30 - 11.50 |
11.50 - 13.00 | **Kapitula veľkej Argy**
Prezidentská slávnostná svätá arca za Synodu
Hlavný celebrant Mons. Stanislav Zelenský, arcibiskup-metropolita (online stream)
Na záver slávnosti symbolické postavenie účastníkov synodálneho procesu
do evanjelizačnej misie
11.30 - 11.50 | **Atizkájske spomienky**
Spoločné zápal, odpočinok, bratstvo spoločnosti

BRATISLAVSKÁ ARCIDIECÉZA
synoda arcidiecézy

Synoda 2021 2023
Za Synodálnu Ľudskosť
synodálna služba

Many dioceses and BC have released their synthesis

Syntéza výstupů
presynodálních skupin
v Arcidiecézi pražské



The challenge: to live a new Pentecost !

an aggiornamento for a new impetus, "an event of grace"

"The Holy Spirit is a gift, He does not act by taking away but by giving, moving, innovating.

The Holy Spirit is not a force of the past, but Pentecost is still happening in our time." Pope Francis, CAL May 26 2022



If we have to begin anew, it must always be from the least of our brothers and sisters.
Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 235

The positive impact of the synodal experience

- Joy and desire to continue the synodal process
- Deepening one's identity : empowerment, reassurance, confirmation and/or encouragement of one's vocation and ministry
- A new vision of the church and/or a greater love for and commitment to the church
- A change of approach in ministry and the endorsement of synodality
- A new way to lead in a more collaborative style

Echoes of the synod as a joyful and promising experience

- **“The synodal process has generated generous participation in many places, with a sense of a promising experience, a community process of listening and discernment.** This consultation has also met with resistance of various kinds. First, the difficulty of hearing the voices of the most vulnerable; second, the difficulty of reaching and mobilizing youth and young adults; third, the fear of some Catholics that this process will serve to impose changes on the Church to which they are attached; and finally, the difficulty for many priests to recognize the value of this synod. (...) **The common denominator of the contributions is undoubtedly the joy of the meeting:** the joy of being asked, the joy of being able to respond to the call of Pope Francis, the joy of being able to discuss important and profound topics during a convivial time, the joy of fraternal and sometimes prayerful meetings with people who are strangers or with long-time friends.” *French Bishops' Conference : National collection of local synthesis on Synod 2023 on synodality*
<https://eglise.catholique.fr/le-synode-2023/synode-des- eveques-sur-la-synodalite-2021-2023/527445-collecte-nationale-des-syntheses-locales-sur-le-synode-2023-sur-la-synodalite/>
- **“Finally, the groups wanted to express their deep gratitude for the time they had lived lived: a moment of grace,** built on mutual listening, active and respectful mutual listening, openness to speak frankly, sharing rewarding experiences experiences and constructive exchanges.**Fraternal dialogue and shared reflection have given us hope and enthusiasm, and have been an opportunity to energize the community. an opportunity to energize the community, which expresses its desire to continue walking together.** “ *Spanish Bishops' Conference*
<https://www.conferenciaepiscopal.es/asamblea-final-del-sinodo-junio-2022>

The spiritual experience of synodality

- A path of metanoïa/conversion
- A path of kenosis
- A path of reconciliation



Key attitudes for synodality

- Faith and trust in God
- Listening
- Humility
- Prayer
- Dialogue and sharing.
- Confidence in others
- Inner freedom

→ A spirituality of synodality

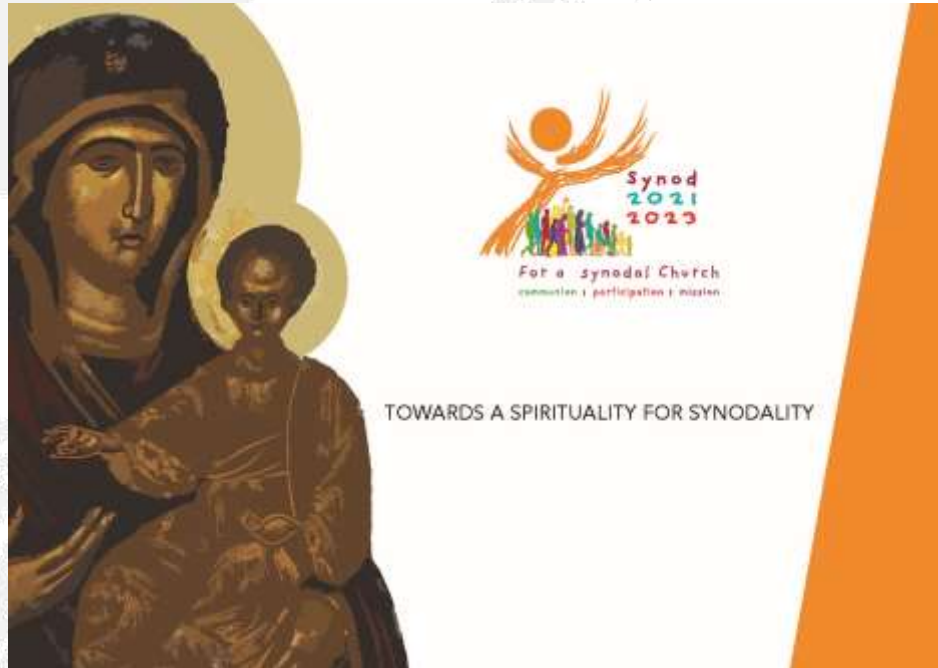
Jesus, model of synodality

CV 29. (...), when he returned from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, his parents readily thought that, as a twelve-year-old boy (cf. *Lk* 2:42), he was wandering freely among the crowd, even though they did not see him for an entire day: “supposing him to be in the group of travellers, they went a day’s journey” (*Lk* 2:44). Surely, they assumed, **Jesus was there, mingling with the others**, joking with other young people, listening to the adults tell stories and sharing the joys and sorrows of the group. Indeed, **the Greek word that Luke uses to describe the group – *synodía* – clearly evokes a larger “community on a journey” of which the Holy Family is a part.** Thanks to the trust of his parents, **Jesus can move freely and learn to journey with others.”**

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Spirituality of Synodality : a path of reconciliation

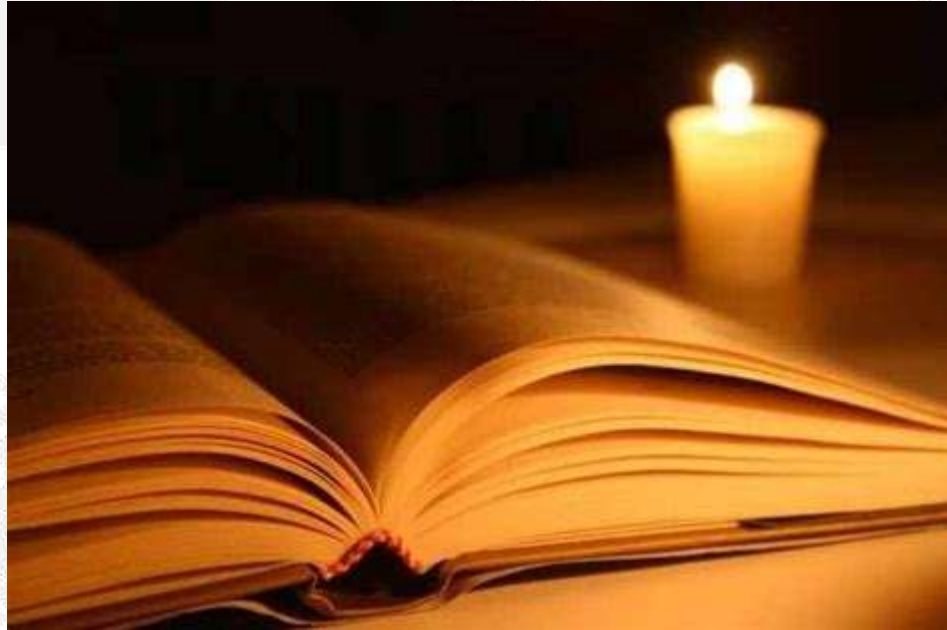
- Feedback and deepening on the Document just published https://www.synodresources.org/resource_post/249643/



The centrality of the World of God

Biblical resources for synodality and other resources

<https://www.synod.va/en/resources/spiritual-and-liturgical-resources.html>



Becoming a synodal church in Europe

Some key issues



A pastoral care that is synodal

- 206. **Youth ministry has to be synodal**; it should involve a “journeying together” that values “the charisms that the Spirit bestows in accordance with the vocation and role of each of the Church’s members, through a process of co-responsibility... Motivated by this spirit, **we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church**, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, as well as groups, associations and movements. No one should be excluded or exclude themselves”.[\[111\]](#)
- 207. In this way, by learning from one another, we can better reflect that wonderful multifaceted reality that Christ’s Church is meant to be. She will be able to attract young people, for **her unity is not monolithic, but rather a network of varied gifts that the Spirit ceaselessly pours out upon her, renewing her and lifting her up from her poverty.**

Christus Vivit

Journeying together : Relationships at the center

- Pastoral ministry today requires that relationships be placed at the center, because faith is only transmitted through and in encounters. Chapter II of Part III of the FD, entitled "Journeying together in daily life", translates this into the subtitle "**From structures to relationships**". It is the quality and authenticity of relationships and the life itself of fraternal communities that evangelize more than structures.

Relationships at the center, a dialogal Church

- **FD 122. It is in relationships – with Christ, with others, in the community – that faith is handed on.** For the sake of mission, too, **the Church is called to adopt a relational manner that places emphasis on listening, welcoming, dialogue and common discernment in a process that transforms the lives of those taking part.** “A synodal Church is a Church which listens, which realizes that listening ‘is more than simply hearing’. It is a mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the college of bishops, the Bishop of Rome: all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the ‘Spirit of truth’ (Jn 14:17), in order to know what he ‘says to the Churches’ (Rev 2:7)” (Francis, [Address for the Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops](#), 17 October 2015). In this way **the Church presents herself as the “tent of meeting” in which the Ark of the Covenant is preserved (cf. Ex 25): a dynamic Church, in movement, which accompanies while journeying, strengthened by many charisms and ministries.** Thus does God make himself present in this world.

Participation and co-responsability, teamwork

- FD103 - It is worth noting, finally, that among the characteristics of our “being Church” that the young particularly appreciate are a **readiness and a capacity for working collaboratively**: in this way the formation of the young can be more significant, effective and incisive. The skill required for working collaboratively involves **cultivating specific relational virtues**: the discipline of listening and the capacity to give the other person space, readiness to forgive and willingness to “put oneself on the line”, according to a genuine spirituality of communion.

A new style of leadership

- Co-responsability and participation
- Accompaniement and empowerment
- A new relationship to the power
- An exercise of the authority as an empowerment to liberate the liberty.
- ➔ Cf FD 71 on ***The true sense of authority*** :
« A generative force to activate and liberate the freedom. »

Women in a synodal Church

→ The need to listen to the clamour of women

- The synods as a process of listening to the cries of the victims, the cries of the women → A sound box for women's voice
- A call for a greater recognition and greater valuing of women in society and in the Church.
« The Synod recommends that everyone be made more aware of **the urgency of an inevitable change**, not least on the basis of anthropological and theological reflection on **the reciprocity between men and women**” Synod of Youth FD §55
- DF Synod on Youth 148. **A Church that seeks to live a synodal style cannot fail to reflect on the condition and role of women within it, and consequently in society more generally.** Young men and women ask this question forcefully. The fruits of such reflection need to be implemented through a courageous change of culture and through change in daily pastoral practice.
- §148 (...) A sphere of particular importance in this regard is **the female presence in ecclesial bodies at all levels, including positions of responsibility, as well as female participation in ecclesial decision-making processes**, respecting the role of the ordained minister. This is **a duty of justice**, which draws inspiration both from the way Jesus related to men and women of his day, and from the importance of the role of certain female figures in the Bible, in the history of salvation and in the life of the Church.
- CV42- A living Church can react by being attentive to **the legitimate claims of those women who seek greater justice and equality.** A living Church can look back on history and acknowledge a fair share of male authoritarianism, domination, various forms of enslavement, abuse and sexist violence. With this outlook, **she can support the call to respect women's rights, and offer convinced support for greater reciprocity between males and females**, while not agreeing with everything some feminist groups propose. Along these lines, **the Synod sought to renew the Church's commitment “against all discrimination and violence on sexual grounds”.**[17] That is the response of a Church that stays young and lets herself be challenged and spurred by the sensitivities of young people.

Involving the youth, implementing *Christus Vivit*

Learning from the synod on youth

Young people suffering

First victims of the "culture of waste"

- Migration, violence, unemployment, exploitation, abuse, discrimination, marginalization
- Wounded, often marginalized and voiceless...
- Desire to be heard, recognized and accompanied

Protagonists... with resources and resilience

- Demand for social justice, solidarity and peace
- Social engagement and volunteerism
- Great sensitivity to Laudato Si'
- Capacity for diversity, intercultural and interreligious dialogue
- Demand for the advancement of women

Discernment of one's vocation-with the need to be accompanied

- Vocation is liberation of freedom
- Vocation is mission and social commitment

The Missionary Synodality of the Church

A call from the youth, now understood from all

- *The young ask us to walk together*
- 119. The Church as a whole, when choosing through this Synod to concern herself with the young, took a very definite option: she considers this mission a pastoral priority of epoch-making significance, in which to invest time, energy and resources. From the start of the journey of preparation, **young people have expressed the desire to be involved and appreciated and to feel themselves as having a key role in the life and mission of the Church.** In this Synod we have experienced how co-responsibility lived with young Christians is a source of profound joy for bishops too. We recognize in this experience a fruit of **the Spirit which continually renews the Church and calls her to practise synodality as a way of being and acting, promoting the participation of all the baptized and of people of good will, each according to his age, state of life and vocation.** In this Synod, we have experienced how the collegiality that unites the bishops *cum Petro et sub Petro* in care for the people of God is called to express itself and enrich itself through the practice of synodality at all levels.

Final document of the youth synod, October 2018

www.synod.va

Some key outcomes from the youth synod

Young people want to be heard → Listening

Young people want to be protagonists → Participation

Young people need guidance → Accompaniment

Young people are engines of synodality → Fraternity, Church as a family

Young people are a gift : They can wake up the world, They can rejuvenate the church!

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Listening to People on the Margins and reaching out the peripheries

- **Christ hears the Voices of the Poor** In the Gospel of Mark (10:46-52), Bartimaeus – a beggar standing by the roadside – calls out to Jesus. The crowd wants to silence Bartimaeus, but Jesus knows how to hear his call, to recognize his faith, and to experience an authentic encounter with him. For Bartimaeus, it is an experience of liberation and belonging: he lifted up to walk among the disciples. These encounters occur often throughout the Gospels.
- **People on the Margins bring us Back to the Essentials** : Listening to people on the margins can guide the Church towards the essential: how do our communities truly witness to the fact that Christ saves our lives and renews our relationships?
- **Listening to People on the Margins Ensures that we are Listening to Everyone** : Striving to encounter them, to hear their voices, and to receive their input, is a compass for a synodal process that involves all members of the Church in a genuine way.

Cf tools “listening to the poorest in a synodal process” https://www.synodresources.org/resource_post/239089/

Synodality, inculturation and interculturality

- **A synodal Church is a church of local churches**
- **The first level of synodality: the particular Church**
- « In order to become this inculturated Church according to the key vision of synodality, a path of reform is necessary which passes through processes of cultural conversion and structural reconfiguration. The final document of the Synod for the Amazon explains it in this way: "Our conversion must also be cultural, to be the other, to learn from the other. To be present, to respect and recognize their values, to live and practice inculturation and interculturality in our proclamation of the Good News" (FD 41).

Rafael Luciani et Nathalie Becquart, synodalité et cultures <https://www.cairn.info/revue-lumen-vitae-2021-4-page-421.htm>

- **Inculturation and interculturality, a path of conversion through a necessary synodal dialogue**
- **Inculturation progresses through synodal dialogue**
- «The inculturation of the Gospel does not proceed from an analysis conducted in the abstract, by objectification of the structuring elements of a context. On the contrary, it advances only through dialogue with the recipients of the Church's mission. These are, of course, the disciples of Christ who, as listeners to the word of God, are still recipients of the mission: their own evangelization is never finished.»

François Odinet <https://www.cairn.info/revue-nouvelle-revue-theologique-2022-2-page-232.htm>

The challenge to be a synodal church in Europe

- An open path, a creative path to be discerned
- through an on-going process of conversion
- to answer the call to be a synodal Church, missionary, fraternal and merciful



Questions for the working groups

- What did you learn from the synodal experience in your Bishops' Conference/Local Church?
 - *2 or 3 key learning points*
- What could you suggest for the continental phase and the on-going synodal process to be continued?
 - *1 or 2 recommendations for a follow-up*

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