



Some news from the synod around the world

We can see that many Christians from all corners of the ecclesial horizon share the enthusiasm and the challenges we are facing in the preparatory phase of the synod. This first assessment makes us feel that we are in communion with the whole Church in the search for a competent and authentic listening in a true effort of discernment. We realize that these are places of learning for conversion and mission: two inseparable dimensions for the missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2022-02/synod-bishops-synodality-first-stage-initial-assessment.html>

Synodal process: a first assessment with enthusiasm and challenges

- As many as 98% of the world's bishops' conferences and synods of the Eastern Churches have appointed a person or an entire team to implement the synodal process
- The Synod of Bishops refers to the "great enthusiasm" emanating from the many testimonies received from all over the world as "a sign that the Holy Spirit is at work".

Joy and enthusiasm in Africa, Latin America and Asia

- In general, it is clear that the timing, mode of consultation and participation of the people of God vary from one region of the world to another. The synodal process is particularly welcomed with joy and enthusiasm in several countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia.
- The extension of the listening phase to the People of God was particularly appreciated.
- The ecumenical dimension is rather well integrated. On the side of the other Christian confessions, there is also a certain enthusiasm and desire to contribute to the path taken by the Catholic Church.
- As far as the interreligious dimension is concerned, it is naturally imposed in countries where Christians are a minority. Here too, an important contribution is expected.



Removing certain distrusters

- If the synodal process is perceived by many of the faithful as a crucial moment for the Church, a process of learning, conversion and renewal of Church life, certain difficulties also appear such as "fear and reticence among certain groups of the faithful and among the clergy". "There is also a certain mistrust among some lay people who doubt that their contribution is really taken into account"
- The consultation of the people of God cannot be reduced to a simple questionnaire, because the real challenge of synodality is precisely mutual listening and community discernment.

Challenges

- The synodal process also shows some recurring challenges, such as:
 - 1) the need for formation, especially in listening and discernment, so that the Synod is authentically a spiritual process and not reduced to a parliamentary debate;
 - 2) avoiding self-referentiality (navel-gazing) in group meetings;
 - 3) the need to find new ways to improve the participation of young people;
 - 4) the involvement of those who live on the margins of the Church's institutions;
 - 5) the disorientation expressed by some of the clergy.