

Continental Stage Consultation

All the Synod feedback from parishes, dioceses, and national Bishops' Conferences around the world has been gathered, considered, discerned, and distilled into a Report which is now being given to each continent to consider in light of their own tradition, history, experience, and religious perspective. Within Europe we now have the opportunity to consider the Synodal feedback from around the world and to report on:



- a) What we feel resonates with our own experiences – list the top three priorities from the headings below
- b) Consider what are the challenges and tensions in each of those three areas
- c) Define the next steps which move us (parish, deanery, diocese, the Church) forward

The headings and brief summaries below are taken from the Continental Stage Document, and the numbers refer to the specific paragraphs in the document. If you have time consider reading the whole document, if not, simply use the summaries below to help inform your answers to the questions posed in the three boxes on page two.

The timetable is very tight – responses must be received by Monday 9th January 2023

32. **Listening that becomes welcoming** When we listen to others, we recognise them as subjects of their own journey ... and people then feel welcomed, not judged ... this is particularly important for those who do not feel sufficiently recognised in the Church.

35. **An option for young people, people with disabilities and the defence of life** A renewed focus on young people in the life of the Church is an urgent need ... there need to be new ways of welcoming and promoting the participation of persons with disabilities ... and to defend fragile and threatened life at all stages.

38. **Listening to Those who Feel Neglected and Excluded** Women, young people, those who do not feel at ease with the liturgical developments of the Second Vatican Council, remarried divorcees, single parents, LGBTQ people are just some of the groups identified ... the demand to welcome challenges many local Churches.

41. **Sisters and brothers for mission** Enlarging our tent is at the heart of the missionary activity of the Church; to make Christ present in the midst of His People ... dream of such a Church capable of responding to these [challenges]

43. **The Church's mission in today's world** Christians live in the midst of people of other faiths and non-believers ... there is still a long way to go in terms of social, cultural, spiritual and intellectual exchange and collaboration ... the Church has a role in the public sphere particularly in relation to processes of peace-building and reconciliation.

48. **Walking together with all Christians** There is a call for closer communion ... with greater attention paid to divisive realities such as sharing the Eucharist ... and closer accompaniment for inter-faith families ...

50. **Cultural contexts** The Church proclaims the Gospel within specific cultural contexts ... these shape the reality of the Church's mission ... and present specific challenges such as trust and credibility being eroded through the abuse crisis, individualism and consumerism, historical entanglements between Church and political power ...

53. **Cultures, religions and dialogue** The synodal approach begins with walking together with others, appreciating cultural differences, understanding those particularities as elements which help us to grow ... an enriching diversity allows us to find our deeper unity and the opportunity to cooperate with God's grace.

57. **Communion, participation and co-responsibility** The Church's mission is realised through the lives of all the baptised ... this common dignity is the basis for the renewal of the Church.

58. **Beyond clericalism** There is deep appreciation and affection for faithful and dedicated priests and concern for the many demands they face ... there is a desire for better formed, accompanied and less isolated priests ... clericalism is a spiritual impoverishment ... there is a desire for renewed forms of leadership – priestly, episcopal, religious and lay – that are relational and collaborative.

60. **Rethinking women's participation** The conversion of the Church's culture is linked to the need for new practices and structures ... the role of women and their full participation in the life of the Church is a critical and urgent area ... the reports do not agree on a single or complete response to the question ... the Church needs to further discern women's active role in the governing structures of Church bodies, possibility for women to preach in parish settings and a female diaconate ...

66. **Charisms, vocations and ministries** Responsibility for the synodal life of the Church cannot be delegated ... Co-responsibility is grounded in common mission ... consider the variety of charisms and ministries that emerge.

71. **Synodality takes shape** We should not be afraid of tensions that have emerged in the synodal journey ... they are a source of energy ... for there to be Synodality, the presence of the Spirit is necessary ... and there is no Spirit without prayer ...

73. **Structures and institutions** The Church lacks synodal practices at the continental level ... the dynamic of ... transparency is essential in synodality ... all Church institutions are called to be synodal ...

82. **Formation** We all need formation in synodality ... formation in listening and dialogue ... particularly for those in leadership, especially priests. The perspective of synodality will converge with catechesis and pastoral care.

84. **Spirituality** A culture of synodality needs to be nurtured by familiarity with the Lord and the capacity to listen to the voice of the Spirit ... this welcomes difference and promotes harmony ...

88. **Synodal life and liturgy** There is a deep link between synodality and liturgy.

89. **Roots that reach deep** The Eucharist is the source and summit of synodal dynamism ... the unity of the community and the joy of life ...

91. **Managing tensions: renewal and reconciliation** There are knots of conflict that need to be addressed in a synodal manner, such as discerning the relationship to pre-conciliar rites ... the quality of homilies is almost unanimously reported as a problem ... ecumenical tensions, access to the Eucharist and other sacraments ...

95. **A synodal style of celebrating** The synod presents an opportunity to experience the diversity of forms of prayer and celebration ... the variety of ritual traditions of liturgical prayer ... is considered by all to be an asset ...

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Name (optional):	Parish or Community (optional):
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Please continue on a separate page if you wish
Responses can be given on-line – use the QR Code