

SYNOD PRAYER

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

Do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path

nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life

and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time,

in the communion the Creator and the Liberator, forever and ever. Amen.

The background features a solid blue gradient with a series of thin, white, wavy lines that flow from the left side towards the right, creating a sense of movement and depth. The lines are most concentrated in the upper right quadrant, where they form a large, rounded peak.

SYNODALITY
A NEW WAY OF BEING CHURCH



PART II: SYNODALITY AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

- Lumen Gentium is the road map for synodality.
- Cardinal Josef Suenens was one of the architects of LUMEN GENTIUM. (There are others like Gerard Philips)
- "...it is the rediscovery of the people of God as a *whole*...and then by way of consequence, the *co-responsibility* thus implied for every member of the church."



LUMEN GENTIUM: PUTTING ON THE BRAKES

Mid-80s - New shift

- John Paul II gave priority to the category of hierarchical communion and subordinated the sense of the faithful to the magisterium.
- Discarded the *sensus fidelium* and lay responsibility became ancillary



NON- ACCEPTANCE OF VATICAN II

Luciani argues that the problem we face today when talking about synodality has to do with an incomplete or selective reception of the ecclesiology of the texts and the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.



POPE FRANCIS

From the beginning of his papacy, Pope Francis has been recovering the meaning and import of *Lumen Gentium* – the Church as the people of God – accentuating the Second Vatican Council’s ecclesiological architecture (47).

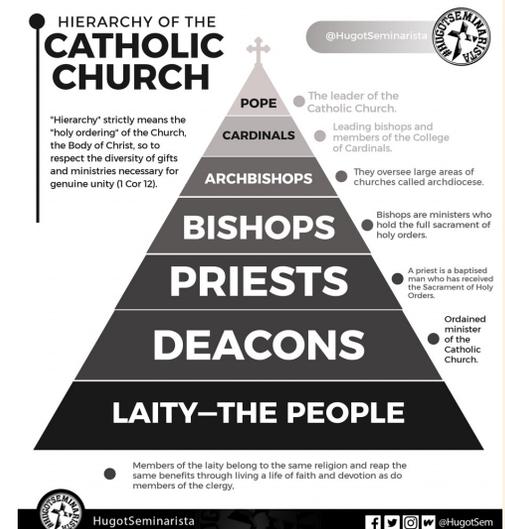
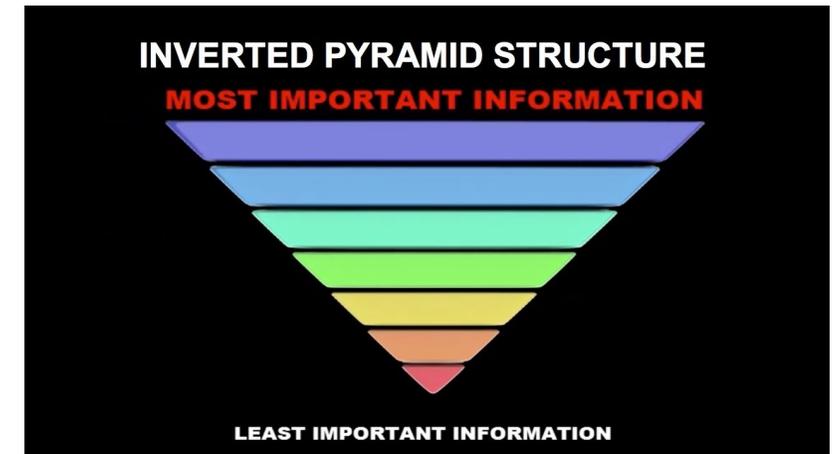


VATICAN II'S INVERTED PYRAMID

Luciani credits Bishop Joseph De Smedt with breaking the pyramidal model. His 1962 book, **The Priesthood of the Faithful** was influential.

- The hierarchy is called to express not the view of the bishops but the 'sensus ecclesiae totius populi.'
- "In the Church, as an inverted pyramid, the top is below the base. That is why those who exercise authority are called 'ministers.' according to the original meaning of the word, they are the least of all." ~Pope Francis

Even though an inverted pyramid is incomplete for our understanding today, it was a radical change at the time of Vatican II.





WHAT DOES A SYNODAL CHURCH LOOK LIKE?

- It is not a pyramid.
- It is not an inverted pyramid.
- It is a dynamic circle of prophecy and discernment with ALL the People of God. ~ Cardinal Grech



CHAPTER 6 – RECIPROCITY AND RESPECTIVITY

AN EVOLVING NOTION OF PRIESTHOOD

There are two priesthoods:

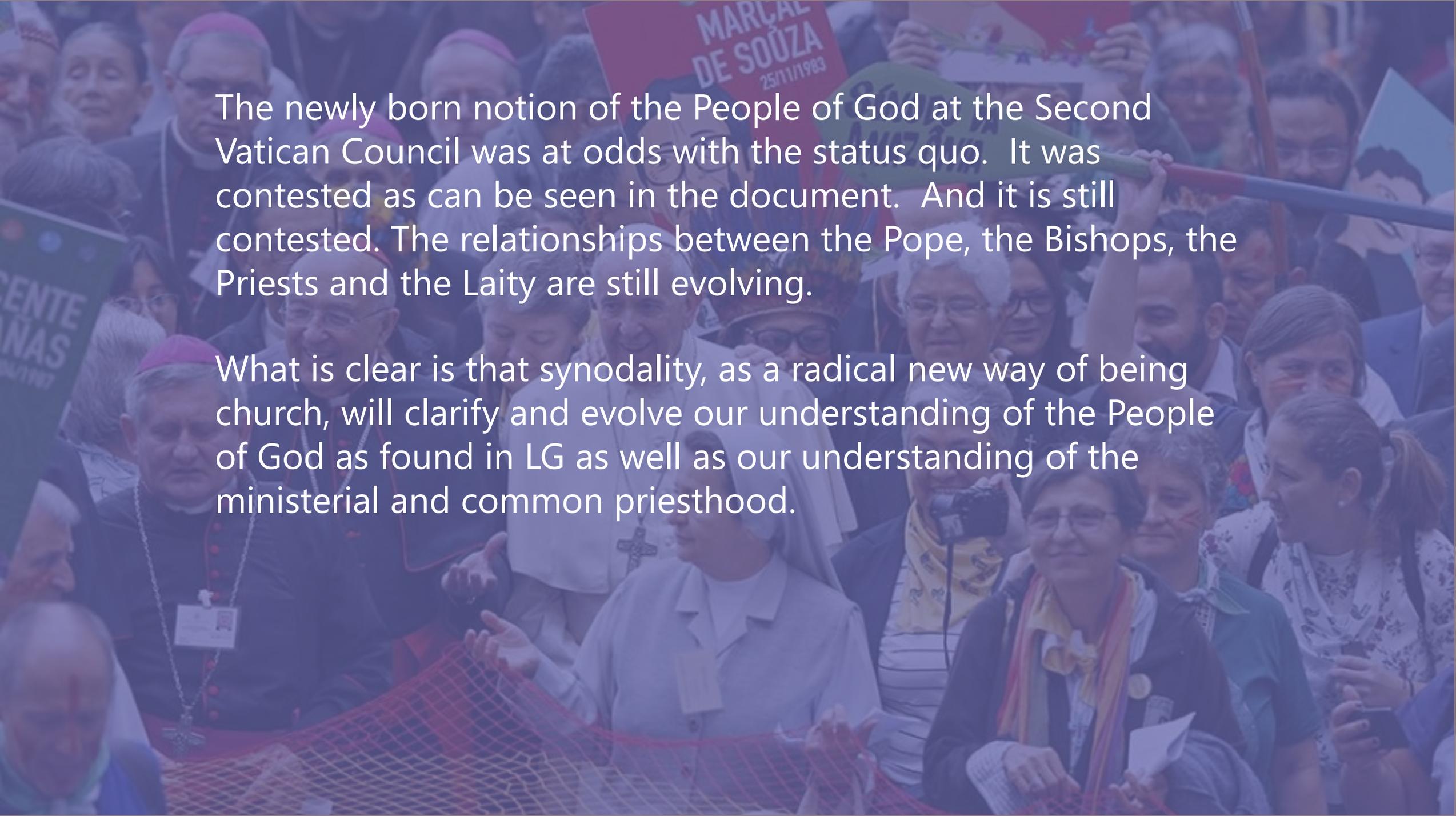
- The Common Priesthood
- The Ministerial Priesthood

Luciani argues that the council tried to overcome wording that the ministerial and universal priesthood differed in essence and degree.

- Used "common" instead of "universal"
- Put CH 2 of LG ahead of CH 3
- "in essence and not merely degree" was meant to avoid any attribution of superiority to ministerial priesthood and refers to the common priesthood...but admits the language remains controversial.

10. Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men, made the new people "a kingdom and priests to God the Father". **The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood**, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light....

Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ.(2*) **The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people;** acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist.(3*) They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.



The newly born notion of the People of God at the Second Vatican Council was at odds with the status quo. It was contested as can be seen in the document. And it is still contested. The relationships between the Pope, the Bishops, the Priests and the Laity are still evolving.

What is clear is that synodality, as a radical new way of being church, will clarify and evolve our understanding of the People of God as found in LG as well as our understanding of the ministerial and common priesthood.

CHAPTER 7 – ECCLESIOGENESIS

HOW TO GET THERE

To advance a synodal reception of Vatican II, we must

- reform the identity and vocation of the ordained ministry and the hierarchy.
- Recognize laity as a fully ecclesial subject...more than participation in synods or councils...





A synodal reconfiguration means recognizing the primacy of CH 2 of LG and accepting the binding character of the *sensus fidei fidelium* (the sense of the faithful) for establish the *consensus ominium fidelium* (the consensus belonging to all the faithful).

THE SENSUS FIDEI IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

International Theological
Commission, 2014

The *sensus fidei* refers to a communal and ecclesial reality: the instinct of faith of the Church herself, by which she recognises her Lord and proclaims his word. The ***sensus fidei*** in this sense is reflected in the convergence of the baptised in a lived adhesion to a doctrine of faith or to an element of Christian praxis. This convergence (consensus) plays a vital role in the Church: the ***consensus fidelium*** is a sure criterion for determining whether a particular doctrine or practice belongs to the apostolic faith.[4].

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_sensus-fidei_en.html

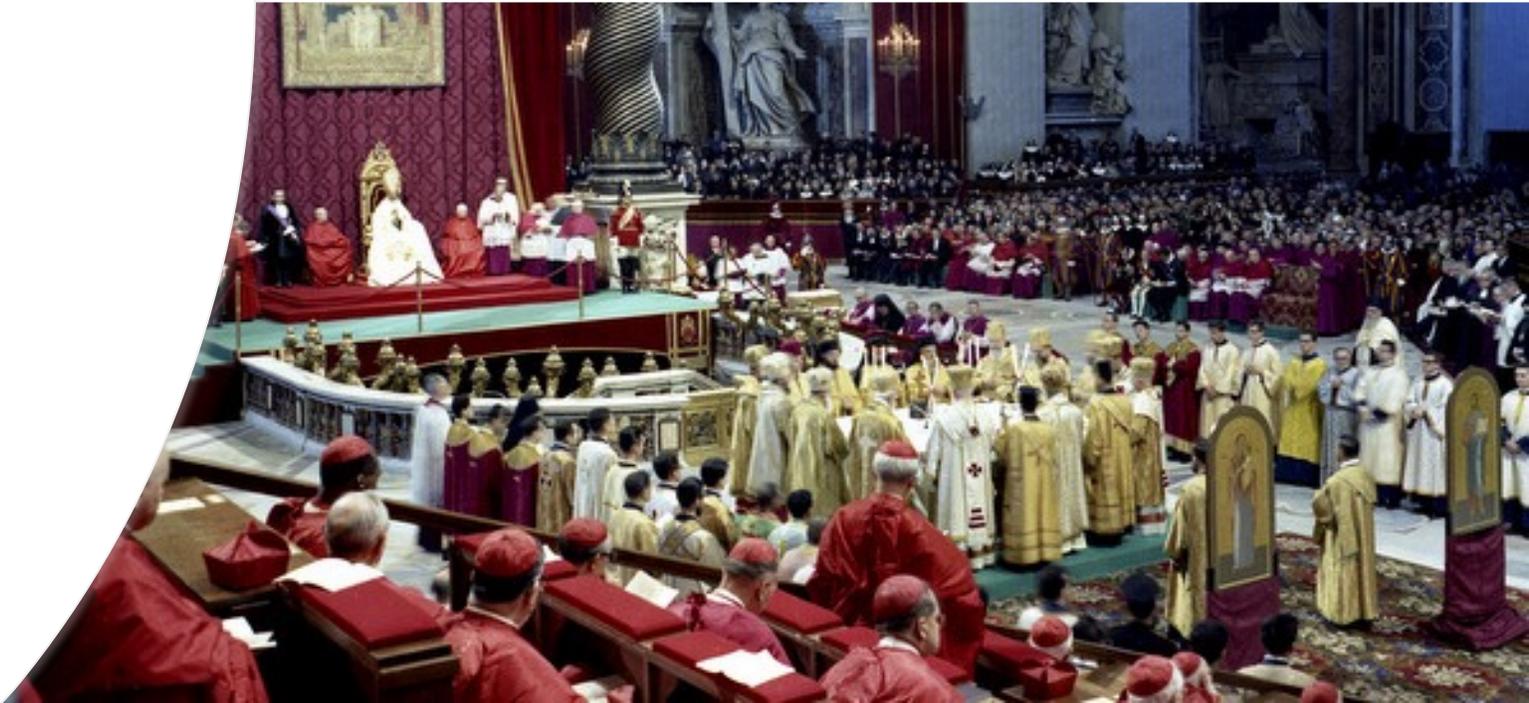
IN SHORT:

The faithful have an instinct for recognizing what is holy and of God.

This collective instinct is a sure sign that a belief belongs to the Church...speaks to us individually and collectively ...contains a truth that rings true and animates the entirety of our being as well as the wider community.

BEYOND EPISCOPAL COLLEGIALLY

- Even though the Synod of Bishops is evolving, we need new synodal structures to implement synodality. We need to move beyond modifying structures to new structures.
- We must move from an episcopal model to an ecclesial model where the ecclesial “WE” is at the center.





THE AMAZON SYNOD AS AN EXAMPLE OF MOVING FORWARD
"ECCLESIOGENESIS"
EPISCOPALIS COMMUNIO



CARDINAL PEDRO BARRETO
"BISHOPS' CONFERENCES WILL HAVE TO TRANSFORM
THEMSELVES INTO ECCLESIAL CONFERENCES...FUTURE SYNODS
WILL BE ECCLESIAL SYNODS"



CHAPTER 8 – SYNODAL ECCLESIALITY

FROM SENSUS FIDEI FIDELIUM TO SENSUS FIDEI TOTIUS POPULI

In ecclesiology this means in principle that the entire body of the faithful cannot err in matters of belief (LG 12). Concretely, this means that church's magisterium (Teaching office of the church) must respect the right of all believers to have a voice in making decisions.



ECCLESIOGENSIS

A new way of being
Ecclesial way of proceeding

- Spiritual
- Pastoral
- Institutional

Make possible multiple and
diverse theological-cultural
institutional models for the
Church according to each
epoch and culture.



THE WAY TO ACHIEVE IT

We need to relearn
practices of
discernment and
consensus
building.”(96)



SR. NATALIE BECQUART

Undersecretary at Synod office

Will be first woman to vote in
October 2023 synod



I am struck in reading all these syntheses by their **very frank style**, which does not hesitate to name not only the good experiences of “walking together” that are already being lived out, but also to **denounce the real obstacles and difficulties without any ambiguity**. All these summaries give us a very rich picture of the concrete life of Christian communities throughout the world who are seeking to be ever more missionary and faithful to the Gospel in order to serve today's world, which is marked by so many fractures and sufferings.

What emerges very strongly is that **this first stage of the Synod constituted a very practical school of synodality**, enabling a large number of people to integrate more personally and communally how much synodality is truly God's call for the Church of the third millennium, and to take up the challenge of becoming ever more a Church of listening and dialogue.

I would like to share my joy that **this synodal experience has allowed many to realise more strongly that the Church is truly the People of God in the diversity of her members, all called to walk together as missionary disciples**. I heard in many ways a very strong desire for a more synodal, more fraternal, more missionary, more welcoming and inclusive Church against the backdrop of a great denunciation of clericalism.

WHAT'S NEXT? THE CONTINENTAL PHASE

- 1. Document for the Continental Stage (by end October)*
- 2. Continental gatherings (7) with ecclesial synodal gathering, not just bishops*
- 3. Each continental region offers a final document.*
- 4. Seven reports are edited to become the Working Document (Instrumentum Laboris) for the October gathering in Rome*



WE ARE CHURCH, TOGETHER

God, in the history of salvation, has saved a people. There is no full identity without belonging to a people....and the Church is the people of God traveling through history, with joys and sorrows.

~Pope Francis, 2013



MS. KELLY MERAW

A Non-traditional Blessing by Sr. Ruth Fox

May God bless you with **discontent** with easy answers, half-truths, superficial relationships, so that you will live from deep within your heart.

May God bless you with **anger** at injustice, oppression, abuse, and exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace.

May God bless you with **tears** to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and to change their pain to joy.

May God bless you with the **foolishness** to think you can make a difference in this world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

If you have the courage to accept these blessings, then God will also bless you with:

happiness—because you will know that you have made life better for others

inner peace—because you will have worked to secure an outer peace for others

laughter—because your heart will be light

faithful friends—because they will recognize your worth as a person.

These blessings are yours—not for the asking, but for the giving—from One who wants to be your companion, our God, who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen.