# North American Final Document for Continental Phase of the 2021-2024 Synod

Released April 12, 2023

https://www.usccb.org/resources/North%20American%20Final%20Document%20-%20English.pdf

# Who helped discern the final document?

Each bishop selected 4-5 delegates



Each delegate registered for 1 of 12 virtual assemblies



Followed by small group listening circles (147n)



Then large group sharing and reflection

- •931 delegates
  - •50.2% women
  - •49.8% men
- Vocations
  - •391 lay women
  - •235 lay men
  - 76 deacons
  - 148 priests
  - 77 women religious
  - 4 male religious (non ordained)
  - 146 bishops
- 90% dioceses represented



## John Stowe recounts meetings

- direction of the synod
- questions about whether the synod was trying to change doctrine -- opposition to that possibility
- calls for greater precision about what inclusivity might mean and who it might involve
- discussions of liturgical tensions and the loss of the Latin Mass
- Bishops alone-- even more alarmed

## The Final N.A. Document

What is retained?



## North American Synod Committee The U.S. part of the writing team

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- Alexandra Carroll, USCCB
- Richard Coll, USCCB
- Sr. Chantal Desmarais, SCSM, Joliette Diocese
- Barbara Dowding, Vancouver Archdiocese
- Patrick Fletcher, CCCB
- Archbishop Richard Gagnon, Winnipeg Archdiocese
- Bishop Daniel E. Flores, Brownsville Diocese
- Fr. Michael J.K. Fuller, USCCB
- Julia McStravog, USCCB
- Bishop Raymond Poisson, Saint-Jerome-Mont-Laurier Diocese

- Fr. Gilles Routhier, Quebec Diocese
- Sr. Leticia Salazar, ODN. San Bernardino Diocese
- Bishop John Stowe, OFM Cap, Lexington Diocese
- Bishop Joseph Tyson, Yakima Diocese
- Fr. Jean Vezina, CCCB
- Bishop David Walkowiak, Grand Rapids Diocese
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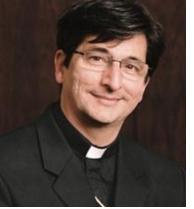
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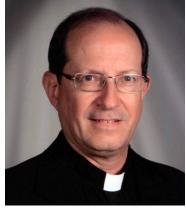
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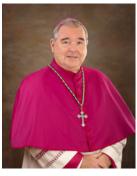
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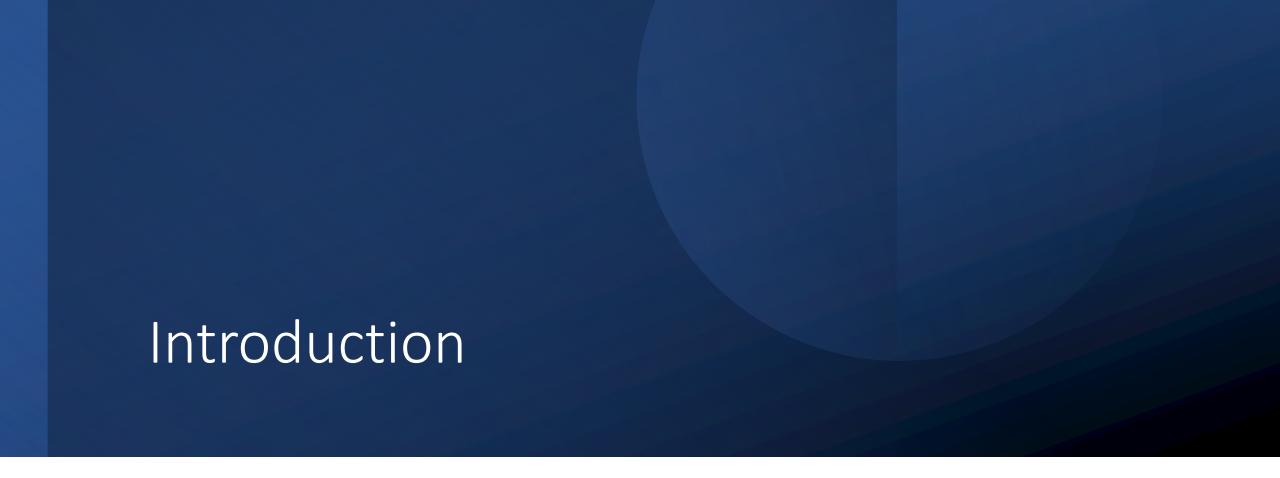
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Three Key Themes
Bishops' Reflections
Priorities for October
Conclusion



The process

When there were moments of uncertainty, the Synod Team chose to trust the Holy Spirit and each other.

Page 6,7

## Three Key Themes

Called and Gifted Through Baptism

Communion with Christ and One Another

Sent Forth in Mission

## 1<sup>st</sup> Key Theme

Called and
Gifted
Through
Baptism

- The dignity of Baptism: No inequality
- Expanded Galatians 3:28 all are one in Christ Jesus

"Walking together and expanding the tent envelops everyone. All the baptized have a right to be there."

## Called and Gifted Through Baptism

Co-Responsibility

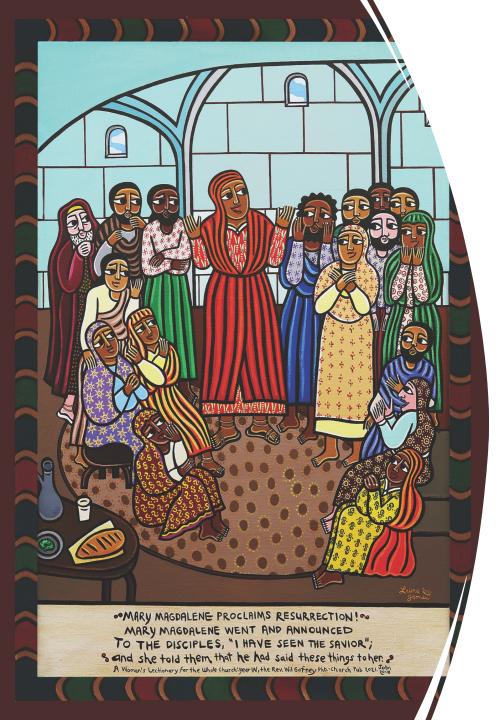
#### Co-Responsibility

Laity and ordained are co-responsible, have equal dignity in baptism.



We need to ground ourselves in the equality dignity of baptism. This is an entry point for co-responsibility.

This is a real space where we can allow women and some of the more marginalized folks in the Church to really take up leadership roles.



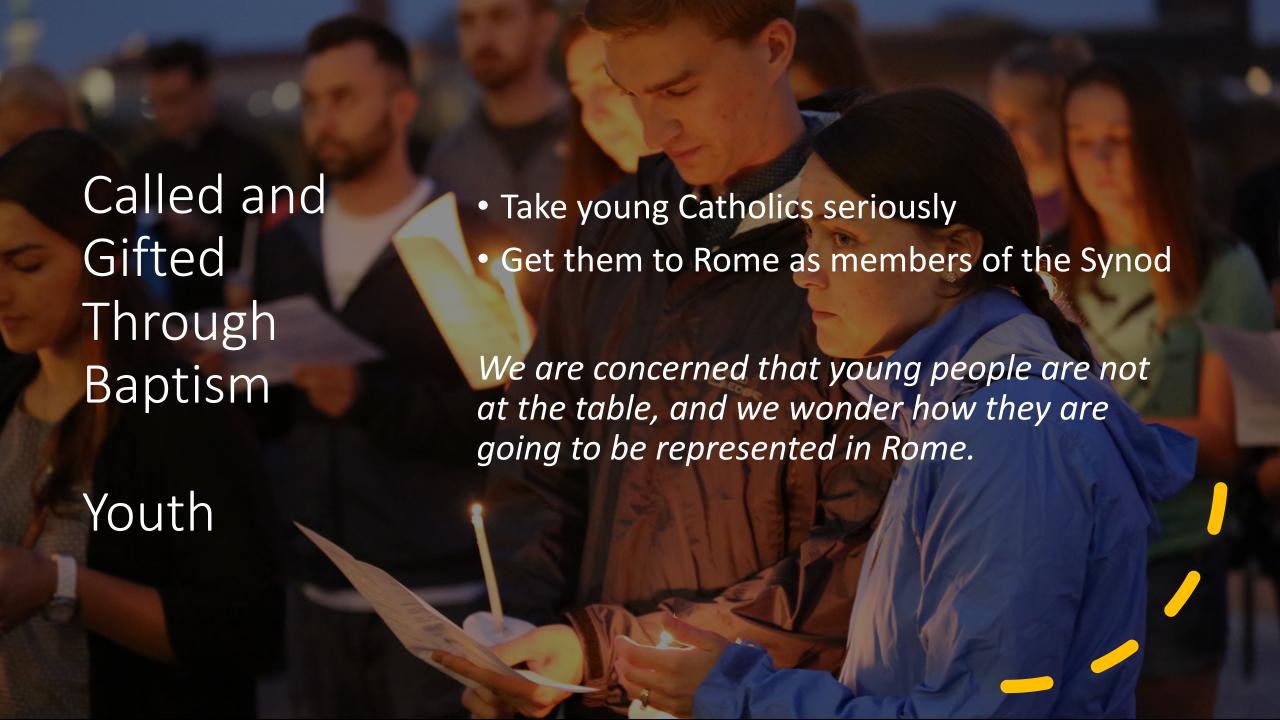
#### Called and Gifted Through Baptism

#### Women

- There can be no true co-responsibility without fully honoring the inherent dignity of women.
- Women are a marginalized group
- Must examine
  - Decision making roles
  - Leadership
  - ordination

We have come a long way, but we deplore the fact that women cannot invest themselves fully.

More space needs to be opened, especially at decision making tables.



## Called and Gifted Through Baptism

#### Formation

- Formation for all baptized
  - In synodality
  - Listening deeply
  - Stretching, widening the tent
  - Life long





Trust and Credibility
Greater Inclusivity
Listening
Formation in Synodality

## Trust and Credibility

Clergy sex abuse

The loss of trust cannot be overstated.

 Abuse of all kinds at residential boarding schools for indigenous people

We need to build trust and healing.

- We need a cultural change in the Church
  - transparency,
  - accountability,
  - co-responsibility

Synodality is a beautiful way to build trust through dialogue.

## Greater Inclusivity

### People/groups feel unwelcome

Women Young people *Immigrants* Racial or linguistic minorities LGBTQ+ persons Divorced and remarried w/o annulment Disabled There is a profound suffering Limitations placed on pre-conciliar Latin rite – liturgy is divisive

# Listening

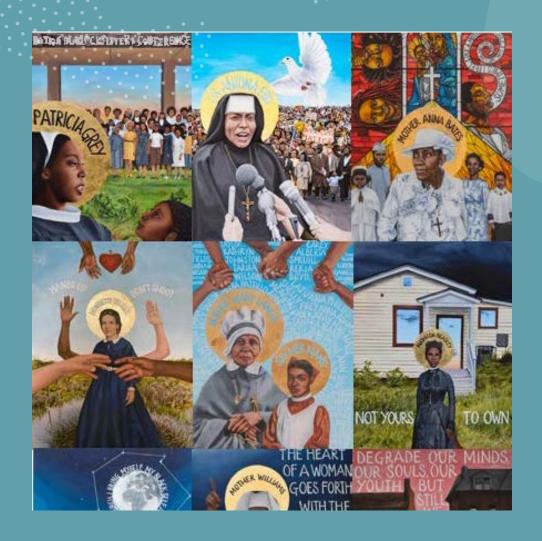
There is a tension between listening and formation in Church teaching.

## Formation in Synodality

To create safe places where people can ask their real questions about Church teaching without judgement or punishment.

## 3rd Key Theme Sent Forth on Mission

- Moving Out of the Tent
- A Church in the World
- Formation for Mission And Catholic Social Teaching



#### Moving Out of the Tent

#### Synodality = Mission in the World

- We need to seek people where they are
- Caring for the downtrodden and wounded
- Reaching out in times of disaster
- Being a place of compassion and care
- Walking alongside those forced to the margins
- Going out to the peripheries
- We must be united in order to proclaim Christ effectively and clearly

#### For those marginalized:

These people have not left the Church, but the Church has left them.



## A Church in the World

#### Tensions present:

- Consumerism and secularism
- Economic and political upheaval

There are tensions between letting the popular culture enter into the life of the parish.

There is a tsunami of culture threatening to overwhelm us!

We don't live in Christendom anymore! We need to partner with other people of faith.

## Formation for Mission And Catholic Social Teaching

We need formation in the social mission of the Church at all levels.

Both Clergy and laity

There is a duty to know Catholic Social Teaching.

Requires intentional formation

## Bishops' Reflections on the Experience of Synodality in North America

- 146 participated in at least one of twelve sessions
  - Most participated in small groups with other bishops
- Bishops met at the end "to reread the lived synodal experience from the perspective of their specific charism and role."

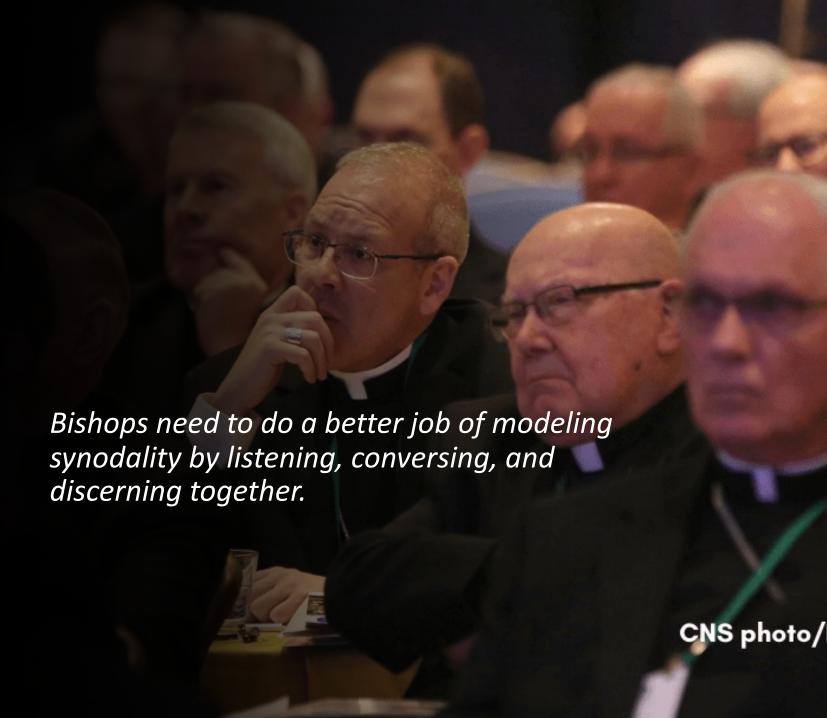
## Comments

- The bishops should have been randomly placed in small groups – mix it up
- Some bishops said it was rare to get to listen and talk to other bishops
- Synodality great grace, challenging, a learning experience, not an easy way
- Ambiguity about "where is this all going?"
- Local church not structured for synodality difficult to speak "to it."
- Need to care beyond diocesan walls
- Relative absence of priests needs to addressed
- Danger of unrealistic or false expections
- Don't give up



#### We are recalibrating

 We must do better in consulting those who are poor, migrant communities, Indigenous peoples, and racial minorities in our communities, and the many others who are wounded in the Church and in society.



# Priorities Directed to October Gathering

- Integration of synodal consultation in local Church. Formation in synodality and in the spirituality of discernment
- The challenging of welcoming those who feel excluded in a manner that is authentic and faithful to the Gospel and the Catholic faith.
- Co-responsibility
- Addressing unity and community in the midst of polarization
- A Church that goes out to the peripheries



FINAL
DOCUMENTS
of the
CONTINENTAL
ASSEMBLIES



**Europe** 

North America http

Latin America
and Caribbean
https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-continentalstage/final\_document.html

Middle East



Asia



Reps from 5 continents evaluating the priorities in all 7 continental stage documents

- Cardinal Mario Grech
- · Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich
- H.E. Msgr. Luis Marín de San Martín
- Rev. Sr. Nathalie Becquart
- H.E. Msgr. Timothy Costelloe
- H.E. Msgr. Lucio Andrice Muandula
- H.E. Msgr. Daniel Flores

- Rev. Monsignor Pierangelo Sequeri
- Rev. Monsignor Piero Coda
- Rev. Monsignor Tomasz Trafny
- Rev. Father Giacomo Costa
- Rev. Dario Vitali
- Rev. Sr. Shizue Hirota
- Rev. Giuseppe Bonfrate
- Prof. Myriam Wijlens

- Prof. Anna Rowlands
- Rev. Pasquale Bua
- Rev. Sr. Marie-Kolbe Zamora
- Mr Paolo Foglizzo
- Mr Thierry Bonaventura
- Ms Susan Pascoe (online)
- Mr Mauricio López Oropeza (online)

#### April 20<sup>th</sup> Press Conference

- The conclusion of the meeting of the reps from the continents
- Archbishop Timothy John Costelloe
  - Each continental assembly was quite unique
  - There is more than one way to be Church and cultural context is key
    - Subsidiarity
    - The wisdom of the local church





#### The Instrumentum Laboris

- This document sets the agenda for the October meeting
- It is being written as we speak
- Who will write it?
- After it is written it will be released to the bishops for reflection and released to the public
  - Typically 3 sections for each of the 3 weeks in Rome
    - Communion
    - Participation
    - Mission







The April 26 Annoucement! Good News!



## What you can do to help

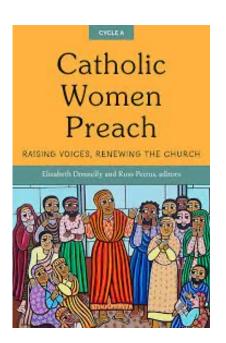
Consider contacting people on the N.A. Synod Committee asking them to ensure a diverse group of representatives are chosen. Tell them why it is important to you.

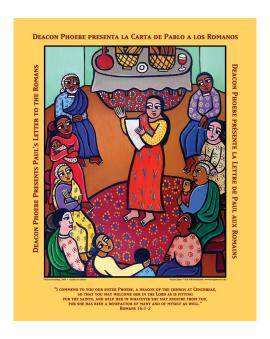
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## Our Campaigns Leading Up to the Synod

- Reporting from Rome
- Catholic Women Preach book
- Hidden Sisters Lectionary Project







## Thank you!

Russ & Deb & Everyone at FutureChurch