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Catholics For Renewal Inc.

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NEWSLETTER, NOVEMBER 2018

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EDITORIAL

Synodality: the medium is the message

FULL EDITORIAL including Catholics For Renewal concerns expressed to the ACBC President [HERE](#)

EXTRACT ONLY:

For Pope Francis, synodality is *“not some of the bishops some of the time, but all the faithful all of the time”*. In seeking the truth, synods and synodality are clearly Francis’s preferred medium. But to have genuine meaning, synods must tap into the *sensus fidei fidelium* of all the People of God, and those present at them must listen and discern co-responsibly.



Image: synod2018.va

Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan observed that *“the medium is the message”*, for the form of the medium is embedded in the message it transmits, creates a symbiotic relationship with it, and influences how the message is perceived by its own characteristics.

The recent Synod on Youth was a good example of Francis’s medium of synodality at work: a church receiving wisdom from the young People of God -listening, co-responsible, and discerning.

***"not some of the bishops some of the time, but all of the faithful
all of the time"***

From the outset, Pope Francis ensured that the synodal process was open to and inclusive of lay persons, women and men, not just the ordained. Bishops at the synod vowed to listen and seemed to be genuinely inspired by the candour and energy of the youth among them. Stories out of Rome told of bishops and young people hailing the rise of a listening church, an accompanying church, a learning church — a synodal church. It was exciting, inspiring, and hopeful. Who could resist vivacious and faith-filled young people filled with bold ideas about how the church could be renewed? Could young people actually accomplish what their older counterparts could not?

But as the days wore on, there were hints that the promises made were not going to be honoured. Some bishops began to call into question the voices of the young. For them listening was simply a way to discover young people's questions, certain they already had the answers to any problem that the young might present. Fifty-one bishops (20 percent of total) voted against the paragraph encouraging synodality in the church. Could those men, hopelessly lost in their clerical world, deprive the People of God of the renewed, bold, Gospel infused church needed more than ever? Only time will tell.

Time of bold initiatives

Francis has stated that *"synodality is the path that God expects from the Church of the third millennium"* and the International Theological Commission has recently concluded that synodality is the *"constitutive dimension of the Church"*; the specific *modus vivendi et operandi* of the People's Church of God, walking together, gathering together, and all actively participating in its mission of evangelizing.

A synodal church is the indispensable presupposition for a new missionary impulse that involves the entire People of God, but to fulfil its mission, the Church has to refresh its mentalities, attitudes, practices and structures, and intensify the mutual collaboration of everyone in giving witness to the Gospel, starting from the gifts and roles of each person (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 25-33; 102). Old non-synodal paradigms have to go, especially those that over-emphasise clerical ministry, insufficiently appreciate the

charismatic gifts, and undervalue the contribution of lay men and women.

"..faithful people, bishops, pope; each one listening to others, and all listening to the Holy Spirit"

If, as Francis says, a synodal church is "*one that listens ...faithful people, bishops, pope; each one listening to others, and all listening to the Holy Spirit*", then only a genuine communal listening and discernment will allow the Church in Australia to discover the call that God is making of it at this time. It that requires bold and daring decisions in preparation for the 2020/2021 Plenary Council, Catholics for Renewal believes the Australian Faithful are up for them, and want them.

"Unless you speak, no one will listen."

Catholics for Renewal urges all Australian Catholics, whether practising or non-practising, questioning or unquestioning, frustrated, cynical or angry, to write down your thoughts, wishes, feelings and stories, in whatever words you want, and submit them to the Council organizers via the online facility on the Plenary Council [website](#) or via any associated process in your Parish or organization.

In a recent meeting with the Archbishop Mark Coleridge, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC), Catholics for Renewal expressed two concerns.....([HERE](#))



**PLENARY INPUTS:
complementary
resource for online
viewing / downloading.**

As is now widely known, excellent Primary resources explaining the 2020/2021 Australian Plenary Council and its preparatory processes are published on the [Plenary Council 2020 website](#). A new **complementary resource** produced by Catholics for Renewal in collaboration with the Yarra Deanery collates significant short documents on **key issues** highly relevant to what is likely to be considered during the forthcoming Plenary Council.

These **Issue** resources are intended to further assist those preparing inputs to the Plenary Council agenda setting process. They assist by providing background details on a range of important issues to further inform collective discernment, as per the Plenary process guided by the Holy Spirit. Whilst these complementary resources are extensive collectively they comprise individual short documents, very user friendly because of a detailed and self-explanatory index to readily support selective reading. The set of documents need not be read from beginning to end, or in sequence, but simply as required. In a true spirit of Synodality and looking to the future the last documents in this resource comprise a discussion paper "The Rights and Responsibilities of all Catholics", and comments on a potential 'Draft Charter for 'local Churches'".

This complementary resource to support preparation of Plenary inputs may be viewed online or downloaded [HERE](#)



The following recent Catholics For Renewal website News & Opinion items provide a snapshot of current Church issues and may be accessed [HERE](#)
** Note that publication of links to these items does not necessarily indicate editorial support.*

The Catholic Church could be facing its most serious crisis in 500 years".

Panel examines how Church culture enables abuse.

Seeking a Plenary Council fit for purpose.

Catholic women to engage in vision for Church.

NZ Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care will now include churches, PM Jacinda Ardern says.

Turning points on abuse crisis loom in US, Italy.

Cardinal Burke on Viganò testimony: God's law is higher than the pontifical secret.

The calm before the storm.

Open letter to the US Catholic bishops: It's over.

Jesuits to release names of accused priests in the west.
Pope says all citizens morally bound to engage in politics.
(US) Elections Are Over: Leadership Challenge Continues.
New reform group calls for Church to rethink sexuality.
Guam archdiocese files for bankruptcy amid abuse claims.
Catholic agencies closely monitor giving after clergy sex abuse shock.
New bones found on Vatican property as others go for testing.
Pope Francis' struggle to bring forth a synodal Church.
Iowa diocese covered up priest's abuse of 50 boys.
Anti-abuse push still a 'work in progress'.
Dublin Archbishop shocked by the lack of understanding in Rome.
Closing the synod, Pope Francis highlights "the three fundamental steps on the journey of faith".
Synod urges 'rigorous measures' on abuse but stops short of 'zero tolerance'.
Synod ends, calling women's inclusion in Catholic leadership a 'duty of justice'.
Letter From Rome - Something is happening on the way to the 'forum'.
Special Moment at the Youth Synod.
Synod of Bishops: 'Synodality' is the keyword.
Evangelizing the 'digital continent'.
Realising the dream of Vatican II.
What's it like being the only female cleric at the synod on young people?.

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(thanks to those who have responded)



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