



Synod 2021-2023

*"For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission."*

## **National summary of the diocesan phase**

### **1. Listening to the People of God**

The convening of the Universal Synod was an opportunity for the Churches in Italy to follow up on some of the indications offered by Pope Francis in recent years. Already in 2015, at the National Ecclesial Convention in Florence, he spoke of a "synodal style," while in 2019 he returned to the theme of synodality, recommending that a process be initiated "from the bottom up, and from the top down." Thus, responding to his repeated appeals, picked up and taken up by the 74th General Assembly of the Italian Bishops' Conference, the Synodal Way of the Churches in Italy was launched in May 2021, officially opened in all dioceses on October 17, 2021 and aimed at lending an ear to "what the Spirit is saying to the Churches" (cf. Rev. 2- 3). It will be developed over five years, divided into three phases: narrative (2021-2022; 2022-2023), sapiential (2023-2024) and prophetic (2024-2025). The pastoral year 2021-2022, in keeping with the request of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, has been dedicated to listening to and consulting extensively with the People of God, fitting fully into the outline of the universal synod *"For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission."* a consultation was initiated even beyond the perimeter of those who feel themselves members of the ecclesial community, through the proposal of a spiritual journey of mutual listening and a lived synodality on which to leverage for that reform that the Lord continually asks of his Church. Of the path taken in this first year, a brief account is given here.

The involvement was broad and heterogeneous: from the local Churches in their articulations (dioceses, parishes, pastoral zones or foranies...) and in all their components, with the effort to reach out also to the worlds of politics, professions, schools and universities, to the places of suffering and care, to situations of loneliness and marginalization.

There has been no shortage of uncertainties and perplexities, especially in the early stages, to slow down the journey, especially in a season marked by anxiety and bewilderment, from the flare-up of the pandemic with its burden of mourning, suffering and hardship, to the outbreak of war in Ukraine, which rekindled wounds, fears and resentments. In the midst of these crises, the People of God sought to overcome individualism, skepticism and fences, and set out on their journey.

A National Coordination Group was formed, about 50,000 synod groups were formed, with their facilitators, with a total participation of half a million

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of people. More than 400 diocesan referents have coordinated the work, together with their teams, consistently and convincingly supporting initiatives, producing subsidies and collecting narratives. A network of co-responsibles has been created that is a first, unexpected fruit of the Way and a valuable resource for its continuation. The liaison among the contact persons has been important in sustaining a rich and challenging work that has also had to confront resistance due to fear of activating a process destined simply to leave things as they are.

Two hundred diocesan summaries and 19 summaries prepared by other groups - totaling more than 1,500 pages - reached the CEI General Secretariat at the end of June. In some local Churches the journey has been grafted onto diocesan Synods in progress, just started or recently concluded, with the attention of interweaving the diocesan journey with the national and universal ones and with the readiness to read the diocesan Synod as a gift for other Churches as well, with a new spirit and a broader vision that can help to get out of the logic of document Synods.

The breath of the Spirit has put communities, sometimes tired and folded in on themselves, back in motion, opened their eyes and hearts allowing them to see and recognize the "fellow travelers" and the debt of listening that has matured over time. Several people, sometimes confined to invisibility, were reached by the Synod's invitation and involved in a listening journey that finally saw them as protagonists. After all, it immediately became clear that there is nothing that is foreign to the life of the Church and, therefore, that the Church can truly be everyone's home. It should, however, be pointed out that the path taken during the first year mainly intercepted the part of the Italian ecclesial community that in some way gravitates or pertains to parish circuits, albeit with exceptions that are also important and a lot of creativity. The parish remains the structuring paradigm of the pastoral and missionary imaginary, although the presence and action of Italian Catholics also takes place in circuits that have less parish anchorage. This is a fact to be taken into account in order to have a full perception of the articulation, variety and richness of the forms of the Churches' walking in Italy.

The method of spiritual conversation helped to live the synodal process: listening to life made it possible not to get bogged down in a sterile confrontation of ideas, but to foster an authentic exchange in which to grasp "the signs of the times." Starting again from listening to lived experiences has enabled Italian communities, sometimes entrenched in positions of defense and resignation, to discover themselves capable of welcoming and loving. This methodology, which promotes a dynamic that helps to move from "I" to "we," from an individual to a communitarian perspective, has been particularly appreciated so much so that requests have been raised from several quarters to maintain, deepen and enhance it as an ordinary practice.

The spiritual conversation allowed the labors and limitations of ecclesial realities to

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emerge, but always from a purposeful and hopeful perspective. With regard to the dynamics

internal to the life of the community and its structural form, for example, some long-standing issues that fatigue the step were recorded with lucidity: clericalism, the disconnect between pastoral care and the real lives of people, the sense of fatigue and loneliness of part of priests and other people engaged in community life, the lack of organicity in the formative proposal, the aphasia of some liturgies. Such an examination was not, however, connoted by a sense of resignation or even by the heated tones of vindication. On the contrary, because of the way it was conducted, the synod process has opened up spaces and opportunities for rethinking and profound reform of these dynamics, starting from the synergies it has activated and the taste for working together. Synodality has not simply been spoken of, but it has been lived out, reckoning with the inevitable labors as well: in the work of the diocesan team - presbyters, deacons, laity, religious men and women together, young people and adults, and with the participatory presence of the bishop -, in the discreet and solicitous accompaniment of the parishes and realities involved, in the pastoral creativity set in motion, in the ability to plan, verify, collect, and give back to the community. The experience made was exciting and generative for those who accepted to run the risk of engaging in it: in many contexts it contributed to revitalize the bodies of ecclesial participation, helped to rediscover the co-responsibility that comes from baptismal dignity, and let emerge the possibility of overcoming a vision of Church built around ordained ministry to move toward an "all ministerial" Church, which is a communion of different charisms and ministries. In this regard, the difficulty in eliciting cordial involvement from a not insignificant portion of the clergy, who viewed the Synodal Way with a certain diffidence, should not be underestimated. In some passages, moreover, the harmony between the ordinary ways of exercising episcopal ministry and the assumption of a fully synodal style, to which the Way aims, has not been taken for granted.

The diocesan referents met a few times *online* and twice in presence in Rome: March 18-19 and May 13-15, 2022. This last residential meeting, with the participation of the bishops representing the Regional Bishops' Conferences, allowed a first national synthesis to be drafted together; subsequently, during the 76th General Assembly of the CEI (May 23-27), in which 32 diocesan referents, i.e., two from each ecclesiastical Region, took part on May 24 and 25, 2022, further reflection was held, in a synodal way, arriving at the definition of some priorities that emerged from listening to the People of God.

## **2. In ten cores the variety of accents and sensibilities of the Churches in Italy**

Listening, welcoming, relationships, celebrating, communication, sharing, dialogue, home, life steps, and method are the ten cores around which the reflections that emerged from the diocesan syntheses were organized: these are not abstract, predetermined categories, but ways to engage, collect, and present the experience

lived of the walk together of the Churches in Italy, in their articulations and specificities. This basic choice also represents an attempt to resume the path taken between the last two National Ecclesial Conferences, celebrated in Verona (Oct. 16-20, 2006) and Florence (Nov. 9-13, 2015), with the intention of moving from the usual structuring by sectors of action or according to the missions of pastoral offices (at different levels) to a vision that always attempts to embrace the whole of people's existence and grasp the interconnections of life.

Each core should be understood as a dimension, declension or domain of walking together. In this sense, the ten cores are not alternative, but complementary; some expressed as verbs, others as nouns, precisely to respect the resonances with which they were expressed. Their plurality does not represent a limitation to be overcome, through an operation of homogenization or hierarchy, but contributes to guarding the fundamental pluralism of the experience of the Churches in Italy, with all the variety of accents and sensitivities by which they are traversed and of which they are bearers.

## **2.1 Listen to**

Listening and feeling heard are certainly the great rediscovery of the synod process and its first priceless fruit, along with discernment. One of the most evident data is the recognition of the debt of listening as Church and in the Church, to a multiplicity of subjects. The diocesan syntheses and others that have come directly to the Secretariat of the IEC have highlighted the need to grow in listening to each person in his or her concrete life situation. With clarity, the Churches that are in Italy have highlighted the need to listen to young people, who are not asking for something to be done for them, but to be listened to; to the victims of sexual abuse and abuse of conscience, crimes for which the Church feels shame and repentance and is determined to promote safe relationships and environments in the present and future; of the victims of all forms of injustice, particularly organized crime; of the territories, whose cries we must learn to welcome, thanks to the contribution of specific skills and the commitment to "being inside" a place and its history. Listening asks to drop prejudices, to give up the pretense of always knowing what to say, to learn to recognize and welcome complexity and plurality.

Authentic listening is already a proclamation of the good news of the Gospel, because it is a way of recognizing the value of the other, his or her being precious. Listening is then one with the mission entrusted to the Church and is the principle and style of an assumption of responsibility for the world and for history. Special attention in this listening must be given to situations of poverty: it is from here and it is with the poor of the world that our communities must be able to outline the path for the Third Millennium. It remains clear that the fineness of hearing is slowly shaped by the Word of the Lord that opens the ear and

opens wide the heart. Authentic listening to the Word is the antidote against withdrawal into oneself, the way to an incisive presence in social reality and to increasing sharing. At root, listening to the Word and listening to life are the same listening, because the Lord allows himself to be encountered in the ordinary life and existence of each person, and it is there that he asks to be recognized. Hence the unanimously felt need to put the Word back at the center, imagining paths of growth in this dimension and investing in figures who know how to accompany them.

## **2.2 Embrace**

The synod consultation highlighted the importance of living proximity in the plurality of life situations and conditions that inhabit an area: people constitute the true wealth of communities, each with its unique and infinite value. This is not to think that those who are part of the ecclesial community should make an effort to be open to those who remain on the threshold. Rather, welcoming is a path of conversion to shape in reciprocity a fraternal and inclusive community that knows how to accompany and value everyone. This awareness makes it possible to overcome the "inside"/"outside" distinction.

Living the welcome means harmonizing the desire for an "outgoing Church" with that of a "Church that knows how to let in," starting with the celebration of the Eucharist. The creation of a "ministry of proximity" for lay people dedicated to listening to situations of fragility could support the renewal process with a view to more open, less judgmental communities capable of leaving no one behind. The need for an overall rethinking is grasped: numerous emphases point to shortcomings in the capacity for inclusion. In particular, there is recognition of the need to touch wounds and give voice to issues that are often avoided. So many differences today call for acceptance: generational (young people who say they feel judged, poorly understood, poorly welcomed for their ideas and little freedom to express them; the elderly to be cherished and valued); generated by wounded histories (people separated, divorced, victims of scandals, incarcerated); gender (women and their valorization in decision-making processes) and sexual orientation (Lgbt+ people with their parents); cultural (e.g., related to migration phenomena, domestic and international) and social (inequalities, exacerbated by the pandemic; disability and marginalization).

## **2.3 Reports**

People come before things to be done and roles: this principle resonated repeatedly in the synod consultation, along with the recognition of how often it comes

disregarded. Caring for relationships calls for not allowing oneself to be caged by roles and functions - while necessary - and not using them as enclosures in which to enclose oneself. Everyone in the ecclesial community needs to learn to live in relationships that are more attentive to the other, especially when ministering and serving: priests, for one, are called to be "relationship masters," capable of being and walking with others. Moreover, concern about the sense of loneliness that priests also sometimes experience and the need for communities capable of accompanying them also emerge.

Relationships need time and constant care: they are a fragile asset in need of individual energies, community synergies, and acceptance of struggles and defeats. Communities need paths of reconciliation to inhabit and overcome conflict and fragmentation. This requires recognizing that the relational dimension does not grow automatically, but day by day by giving space for encounter, confrontation and dialogue, and knowing how to walk with others without wanting to impose one's own pace at all costs.

The encounter with people should not be experienced as a corollary, but as the center of pastoral action. Therefore, it is important to review from a more communitarian perspective the issue of functions and tasks currently performed by presbyters. To cherish relationships in the community means recognizing and caring for the different forms of loneliness and those who experience situations of fragility and marginality.

## **2.4 Celebrate**

Despite the diversity of situations, the synod process has been marked by a strong spiritual tension. The Word of God is recognized as the key to becoming credible again, and there is a strong desire for a deeper knowledge of it through modalities such as *Lectio Divina*, Liturgy of the Word, and biblical formation. Being able to be led by trained deacons, religious or lay people (men and women) would allow more opportunities to encounter the Word and respond to the thirst for life in the Spirit.

The Eucharistic celebration is and remains the "source and summit" of Christian life and, for the majority of people, is the only time of participation in the community. However, there is a gap between the communication of the Word and life, poor care of celebrations and low emotional and existential involvement.

In the face of "dull liturgies" or those reduced to spectacle, there is a need to restore sobriety and decorum to the liturgy in order to rediscover all its beauty and to live it as mystagogy, education for an encounter with the mystery of salvation that touches our lives in depth, and as an action of the whole People of God. In this sense, an updating of the linguistic and gestural register is urgently needed. Also to be rediscovered is the value of popular piety (often linked to the

shrines and to Marian devotion) that continues to bear fruit in favor of building the Christian and community identity of parishes and territories, and which, if rightly lived, can be an occasion of proclamation and proposal for the so-called distant, provided that potential ambiguities are discerned and an effort is made to make it an occasion for the growth of a civil conscience, sensitive to the social and economic problems of families and the poor.

## **2.5 Communication**

Communication and language are two key words that emerge from the materials from the dioceses. There appears to be a widespread perception of a Church that conveys the image of a judging God rather than the merciful Father. A non-discriminatory language, less marked by rigidity but more open to questions of meaning, seems to be the key to speak to so many people in search, to make the Church more accessible, more understandable and more attractive to the young and the "distant," more capable of transmitting the joy of the Gospel. A *makeup* operation is not enough: the conversion of language requires getting back in touch with the beating heart of the experience of faith within the concreteness of the lives of men and women today. Clear, courageous and competent language on the issues of our time is expected from the Church and in the Church, careful to choose terms that express respect and are non-judgmental, without concessions to superficiality.

As for the digital environment, if it is necessary for the Church to be where people spend part of their time, it is equally essential to invest in care and formation, so as to learn the new languages and open paths of meaning without assuming the logic of *influencers*, but aiming to shape open communities and not "bubbles" of faith. The wise use of new media can also allow for a better narrative of ecclesial activities, which are often little known to the outside world also due to fatigue, inability and fear in communicating them.

Participation and co-responsibility need the lifeblood of transparent communication, information sharing, and care in involving different parties in the processes. It is precisely the lack of transparency, according to some, that has fostered cover-ups and omissions on crucial issues such as the management of economic resources and conscience and sexual abuse.

## **2.6 Share**

In the synod narratives there is a strong desire for recognition of the value of co-responsibility, which develops where people feel valued, not perceived as betrayed, violated, abandoned. Coresponsibility appears as the true

antidote to the presbyterian-laity dichotomy. The Church appears too "pretocentric" and this deresponsibilizes, becoming an alibi for delegations or refusals on the part of the laity, often relegated to a merely executive and functional role, instead of protagonist subjects, builders of a "we." But this does not exempt them from the risk of developing forms of clericalism in the management of the small spaces of power entrusted to them.

The marginalization of the laity predominantly affects women: what is universally lacking is a real sharing of responsibilities that allows the female voice to express itself and count. Particular attention should be paid to women religious and consecrated women, who often feel they are used only as "pastoral labor."

Regarding co-responsibility, there is then the lack of or ineffective functioning of participatory bodies: several communities lack them, while in many cases they are reduced to a formality, justifying already defined choices. Therefore, their revitalization as spaces of concrete experience of ecclesial co-responsibility, the development of enlarged leadership and the acquisition of a synodal style in which decisions are made together, based on the contribution of each person to understand the voice of the Spirit, in the key of discernment and not of representative democracy, is called for.

It may also help in this regard to initiate an integrated pastoral care among parishes and of parishes with those who live the proclamation in their living environments. What is required in any case is the valorization of the common baptismal dignity that, beyond any purely functional logic, leads to the recognition of the responsibility of all believers, each with the gift that is proper to him, in the edification and mission of the ecclesial community.

Movements, associations and ecclesial groups can contribute to the richness of communion and the effectiveness of the evangelization effort, as places of education in co-responsibility and valuable experiences for evangelization, when they are open to collaboration among themselves and participation in the life of the local Church.

## **2.7 Dialogue**

The Church lives the faith immersed in today, confronting daily the world of work, school and education, social and cultural environments, and the crucial aspects of globalization. Thanks to this confrontation, there is an awareness that faith is no longer the central reference point for the lives of many people: for many, the Gospel is not for living. Yet even this time calls us to take up, with *parousia* and humility, the challenge of allowing ourselves to be surprised by the seeds of the Word present in every context, discerning them in the most unexpected places and forms, as signs of the Spirit's creativity.

Caring for the common home, intergenerational dialogue, the encounter between

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different cultures, the crisis of the family, justice, politics, economics, lifestyles, peace and disarmament...

The Christian community is called to have its say, but it often appears aphonic, closed, judgmental, fragmented and unskilled. The places and modes of dialogue in the Church are still few, especially between the local Church and civil society: often parallel paths are taken where each lives its own reality without interfering, without questioning. The synodal process has revealed that many social, administrative and cultural realities nurture a desire for more assiduous confrontation and more systematic collaboration with ecclesial realities. A synodal Church is aware that it must learn to walk together with everyone, including those who do not recognize themselves in it, those who belong to other faiths, and those who do not believe, learning to decentralize and to cross conflicts. From today's culture it can learn greater capacity for dialogue and confrontation, while respecting different competencies and areas, knowing how to question itself as well, just as from the poor it can learn greater humility and tenacity. A particular resource for dialogue is the wealth of art and history preserved in so many communities, which can become a meeting ground for all.

## **2.8 Home**

Feeling or not feeling at home constitutes the criterion for individuals' judgment of the Church. Home is a welcoming space that you do not have to deserve, a place of freedom and not of constraint. For many, the parish, group, movement are contexts of true encounter, friendship and sharing. Those who perceive themselves outside the Christian community often observe instead dynamics more akin to those of a sectarian context or a "fan club." One feels alienated from areas of pastoral specialization, which easily translate into areas of power. Rather than a home, the community is thought of as a service delivery center, more or less organized, the meaning of which we struggle to grasp. Therefore, there is an urgent need to rethink the style and priorities of the home. If welcoming and accompanying become preeminent, everything must be made more essential, starting with structures and bureaucratic aspects. The Church-home does not have doors that close, but a perimeter that continually widens.

Ecclesial communities also risk self-referentiality and closure, or the creation of "bubbles": groups in which intense faith and life journeys are lived, but with little willingness to welcome newness, of people and proposals. So many separate "bubbles" make communities fragmented, spaces in which there is a risk of dividing powers and roles, of being exclusive and exclusionary toward those who knock. To counter the challenge of fragmentation, at the parish and diocesan level, we need to invest in building fraternal relationships, valuing the plurality of sensitivities and backgrounds as a resource. In particular, the witness of charity is a measure of the ability to be open.

## **2.9 Life transitions**

A Christian community that wants to walk together is called to question its ability to stand by people throughout their lives, and to accompany them to live their humanity and faith in authenticity in relation to different ages and situations. Called into question here is the formative action of communities, but also how far they are able to offer themselves as a reference point for the increasingly complex life trajectories of today's men and women. Accompaniment of people's lives is far broader than formation, because it is about being alongside, supporting, so as to give people the opportunity to cultivate their believing consciousness, to increase their relational, cognitive, affective, spiritual resources, through shared experiences.

In local churches and parishes, associative experiences (oratories, groups, associations and movements) represent a formative patrimony that, if properly cultivated, enables communities to accompany the growth in humanity and in the faith of people, in the different ages and conditions of life, in intergenerational dialogue and in supporting the vocational dimension.

A shared request is to rethink accompaniment paths so that they are tailored to everyone: families, the most fragile, people with disabilities, and those who feel marginalized or excluded. The Christian initiation walk also needs to transition to the logic of accompaniment, integrating the cognitive, affective, relational, and aesthetic dimensions through a plurality of tools and languages.

It also turns out to be imperative to review the initial and ongoing formation of presbyters both in content and in form, as well as to strengthen the skills of laymen and women engaged in the various ministries, starting with catechetical service, also by making the most of the Institutes of Religious Sciences, Schools of Theology and Theological Faculties. In this sense, also the need highlighted by many to make families the subject and not the recipient of pastoral action, as a paradigm of the relationships that accompany people's lives. It is time to walk together with families, priests and consecrated men and women.

## **2.10 Method**

To give shape and concreteness to the synod process, a method of listening outlined according to the principles of spiritual conversation was proposed. This was not the only path taken; alongside the small synod groups, there were also assembly meetings and confrontations, interviews with individuals; administration of questionnaires, and realization of documents by some groups. The variety of methods and tools represents a richness, but on condition that the consistency of the means with the end, which is

Promote relationships and bond building.

The returns indicated a widespread and cordial appreciation for the spiritual conversation around the Word of God, with its three steps: the taking of the floor by each of the participants, so that no one is left on the sidelines; the listening to each other's word and the resonances it produces; and the identification of the fruits of listening and the steps to be taken together. This method made it possible to initiate or reconstruct community paths, thanks to the attention to deep resonances with the exclusion of forms of debate or discussion, which allowed people to tell their stories without feeling judged. It also prompted people to get in touch with the plane of emotions and feelings, which is deeper than the plane of logic and rational argumentation, and for this reason less frequented, but of great importance in anthropological and faith terms: it is on this plane that people decide to truly put themselves on the line and trust. This explains the widespread request to take it on as ordinary practice, particularly to activate listening and discernment groups. Equally highlighted was the fear that the enthusiasm and desire for participation that the experience of synod groups has generated may soon die out if it is not given continuity and if the synod process initiated does not lead to concrete changes (practices and institutions) in the life of communities.

### **3. From priorities to "synod sites" to continue walking together**

The discernment on the diocesan syntheses and the elaboration of the ten cores have made it possible to identify some priorities, on which the continuation of the synodal process will focus. Always in tune with the universal synod, in fact, the Churches in Italy will deepen the listening phase, paying particular attention to growing in the synodal style and care for relationships, developing and integrating the method of spiritual conversation, promoting the co-responsibility of all the baptized, and streamlining structures for a more effective proclamation of the Gospel.

With this in mind, it will be decisive to listen to the different "worlds" in which Christians live and work, that is, walk together with all those who make up society, with special attention to those areas that often remain silent or unheard: the vast world of poverty (destitution, hardship, abandonment, fragility, disability, marginalization, exploitation, exclusion or discrimination in society as well as in the Christian community), the spheres of culture (school, university and research), religions and faiths, the arts and sports, economics and finance, labor, business and the professions, political and social engagement, civil and military institutions, volunteer work and the Third Sector. These are spaces in which the Church lives and works, through the personal and organized action of so many Christians, and listening would not be complete if it failed to capture their voices as well. To foster broad and authentic listening, it will be necessary to reshape ecclesial languages, to

learn new ones, to attend less usual channels and also to creatively adapt the method of "spiritual conversation," so as to reach out to those who do not frequent Christian communities. In this sense, it will be important to strengthen and make stable over time the listening to young people that the world of school and university has made possible, in order to enter into relationships with people whom the Church would not otherwise meet.

Another instance that emerged is that of verifying the actual quality of community relations and the dynamic tension between the experience of fraternity and the drive for mission, which also examines the functioning of structures, so that they are at the service of mission and do not absorb energy for mere self-maintenance. The reflection, which will help verify their sustainability, functionality and environmental impact, will also have to address the issue of pastoral decentralization and contribute to the revitalization of participatory bodies (especially the Pastoral and Economic Affairs Councils), so that they may be places of authentic community discernment and real co-responsibility. The theme of structures will bring with it the need to continue reflecting on what it means to concretely realize a style of ecclesial leadership animated by synodality.

The pastoral year 2022-2023 will then be an opportunity to focus on ecclesial services and ministries, in order to overcome weariness and better root action in listening to the Word of God and our brothers and sisters: indeed, this is what can distinguish Christian diakonia from professional and humanitarian commitment. Often the heaviness in serving, in communities and their leaders, stems from the logic of "it has always been done this way" (cf. *Evangelii gaudium* 33), from the piling up of things to be done, from the looming ecclesiastical and civil bureaucracies, neglecting the centrality of listening and relationships. In the face of the great thirst for listening to the Word of God and to our brothers and sisters, it is crucial to reconnect diakonia with its spiritual root, to live the "mystical, contemplative fraternity that knows how to look at the sacred greatness of our neighbor, that knows how to discover God in every human being" (*Evangelii gaudium* 92). Within this reflection on the style of being Church, it will be possible to address issues related to the formation of the laity, ordained ministers, consecrated men and women; women's co-responsibility within the Christian community; instituted ministries, other vocations and ecclesial services grafted into the common baptismal vocation of the People of God "priestly, prophetic and royal."

In order to nourish and sustain the Synodal Way of the Churches in Italy in communion with the process underway at the universal level, it was decided to group the priorities that emerged along three axes, termed "synodal yards": that of the street and the village (listening to the vital worlds), that of hospitality and the home (the quality of relationships and ecclesial structures), and that of diakonia and spiritual formation. These sites can be freely adapted and each local church can add a fourth one that enhances a priority resulting from the journey made along the first year.

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That of the construction site is an image that indicates the need for work that lasts,

that is not limited to the organization of events, but aims at the realization of listening paths and experiences of lived synodality, the reinterpretation of which will be a starting point for the subsequent stages of the National Synodal Way. The workshop and experiential character of the workshops will be able to adapt the method of "spiritual conversation" and open the synodal process also to those who have not been involved so far.