

# Závěrečná syntéza z konzultací synodálního procesu na Slovensku



Za synodálnu Cirkev  
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## **Home**

1. The invitation of the Holy Father Francis to reflect on the synodal nature of the Church in the context of the worldwide synod was a follow-up to his visit to Slovakia in September 2021. The Church in Slovakia has accepted this invitation.

2. On Sunday, 17 October 2021, in each diocese and eparchy, the bishops opened the first phase of the Synod on the theme "For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission" with a special celebration. During this Sunday liturgy, in all the churches, an invitation was also addressed to the personal involvement of each person.

3. The Bishops' Conference of Slovakia (KBS) appointed a national coordinator and a responsible for the media and each bishop appointed a synodal team in his diocese/eparchy headed by a designated coordinator. These, together with the national coordinator, consulted on the development, progress and mutual cooperation in organising the consultations in each diocese/eparchy in regular online meetings.

4. The first task of the General Secretariat of the CCC was to prepare a translation of the documents and instructions from the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops and to create a website ([www.synoda.sk](http://www.synoda.sk)) where all the necessary information about the meaning, method and process of the Synod can be found. From the very beginning, the Synod was promoted in the traditional ways - that is, through priests, retreats and pastoral letters - but also through the Internet, social networks and Christian media.

5. Consequently, it was necessary to help the facilitators of the consultation meetings to acquire the method of synodal consultations and the necessary communication skills. Some diocesan teams prepared reflections on particular topics based on the Word of God and catechesis, as well as courses and webinars for the facilitators. In some dioceses, training for facilitators and leaders of synodal groups has also taken place. All of this was to help introduce the faithful to the various themes for discernment and to motivate them to get involved.

## **Participation of God's people**

6. Following the recommendation of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, the diocese/eparchy was seen as a fundamental unit of the life of the Church, where it is important to capture the reality and perception of how the capacity for listening, discernment and mutual communication is exercised in the various ecclesial communities. Therefore, in the synodal walk, the coordination team reflected and respected the diversity of the dioceses in the country and the nature of the local communities, leaving the choice of methodology and procedure to their selection and decision.

7. From the beginning, the synodal process was seen as a call for pastoral conversion, but also for conversion in other areas of the Church's life. This call reached out mostly to the active faithful who participated in the synodal consultations. In each diocese, communities were formed in parishes, but also in schools, in charitable organizations or religious communities, or in other, diverse groups. Many people who did not actively participate in synodal discernment prayed and sacrificed for the synod.

8. The enthusiasm for the opportunity to "talk about the Church and in the Church" has not always been equally shared. One part of God's people in Slovakia was eager to express their position and opinion, so they sought ways even where there was no official synodal communion

(e.g., by e-mail). Others, however, were not eager to engage

and therefore, despite the repeated efforts of the shepherds, no community was formed or, after some time, the number of its members decreased.

9. Fear and reluctance to engage or support this new experience was also felt by a significant number of priests. Synodal discernment has also failed to involve to a greater extent those outside the living communion of the Church, that is, those who passively receive only a certain "sacramental service" or those "on the periphery" of the ecclesial communities. People from other Christian churches or other religions or atheists were minimally involved. These were individuals and their involvement required special effort.

10. In terms of the level of participation in the consultation from a diocesan perspective, there was a wide variation, with an average of 40% of parishes taking part, with more groups from different communities in the diocese where fewer parishes took part. Participants were predominantly women and priests (although not everywhere) were on synod coordination teams. Middle-aged people (30-55 years) were most involved, and greater participation was noted in urban areas than in rural areas. Diocesan syntheses show that significant reasons for non-participation were lack of understanding of the issues, skepticism that synodal initiatives would not change anything in the life of the Church anyway, lack of time, fear of the unknown, the conflicting atmosphere in society and in the Church, anti-pandemic measures, and later, paradoxically, the amount of action after the release of the measures. But many of these obstacles were ultimately outweighed by the positive experience for those who became involved and subsequently witnessed the synodal experience for themselves.

11. The groups worked in a prayerful atmosphere using the method of discernment and personal spiritual conversations on 10 (or more) suggested topics, into which the main theme of the synod was broken down. After an opening prayer to the Holy Spirit, the reading of a passage of Holy Scripture and a short meditation, each participant had the opportunity to say how the text and theme resonated with his or her own life. Most of them appreciated the atmosphere of welcome and trust in which everyone felt heard. The ideas and suggestions written down were then sent to the diocesan coordinating teams (in some cases after preliminary synodal processing at a lower level), who worked them into a synthesis and sent them to the national coordinator (by 15 July 2022). Subsequently, the editorial team met to work on the preparation of the national synthesis, with the aim of maintaining the diversity and plurality of the submissions from each diocese/eparchy. This draft was circulated to all bishops and diocesan coordinators, whose insights, discernment, and contributions completed the resulting Synodal Synthesis, which is structured in three parts, corresponding to three key characteristics of the synodal Church.

12. This nationwide synthesis includes the syntheses of the dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church and the eparchies of the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Church *sui iuris*.

## **Community**

### *As we walk together*

13. One of the essential dimensions of the synodal Church, towards which the whole synodal process should be directed, is to form the Church as a communion. Such a desire is also expressed in the syntheses of the diocesan consultations; participants articulated it as a desire for human closeness, personal relationships and open communication, such as they experience in marriage, family, friendship, or as members of a small ecclesial community, for example. The smallest church-government unit is the parish, which is increasingly seen as a community or

'communion of communities'. Therefore, the faithful usually feel themselves to be part of a parish rather than a diocese, part of particular

communities or spiritual families as "the Church". Some even consider "the Church" to be merely an institution that is outside of them. They identify it with the hierarchy or speak of it only in terms of responsibility, in the third person (what the Church should do, what it has done, etc.). Very few feel themselves to be living members of it.

14. Pilgrimages and other expressions of popular piety are considered by many to be important occasions for experiencing synodality as "walking together." The celebration of the liturgy stands out as a place of community formation, but some consider mere participation in the liturgy to be insufficient because it promotes a narrow understanding of the Christian life as limited to acts of worship and some moral duties, apart from ordinary life.

15. Personal relationships, informal meetings and activities, personal interest, spontaneity, the ability to appreciate and thank others for their work, all contribute to a fuller experience of community. Such personal relationships and communication are experienced by the faithful especially in small communities, which in Slovakia are mostly made up of women, but also in smaller parishes, where people know each other personally and meet, or in the military ordinariate, where pastoral care takes place on a personal basis and both the priests and the bishop are closer to the people. A particular desire for a deeper experience of communion was expressed by young people who sometimes feel like outsiders in the parish and therefore welcome being asked their opinion - as in the case of synodal consultations - in an atmosphere of welcome where they can speak openly.

16. The issue of communication is key to building community. The common dialogue must always be kind and constructive. It has been shown that the problems experienced by people in this area are common to both the laity and the ecclesiastical authorities. The skills of active listening and dialogue are underdeveloped, but so is the lack of a relationship or "communication" with God. Several participants in the synodal meetings identified as internal obstacles to communication a focus on oneself and one's problems, an unwillingness to listen, an inability to accept constructive criticism, a lack of critical thinking, superficial communication, an inability to articulate one's desires, elitism and prejudice, a fear of expressing one's opinion (the legacy of communism), or the "learned helplessness syndrome." Communication is also hindered by the attitude 'I have the patent on truth' or 'my dialogue partner is my enemy'. It is also limited by external obstacles such as negative experience of ecclesiastical authority, misunderstanding of power, lack of transparency, lack of information, the gap between clergy and laity, clericalism, communication through commands and intimidation, communicative incomprehensibility and detachment from the reality of life.

17. Some unavailability of bishops and one-way communication is perceived as a problem in some dioceses. Participants would have appreciated a more lively interest from the Bishop in the life of parishes. The absence of canonical visitations was repeatedly noted. They also perceived negatively a certain disunity of the hierarchy. They expect from it clearer public attitudes towards the ethical and social problems of the time. It was said of the priests that 'they are afraid to say out loud what is right and what is wrong because they are afraid of people's reactions' and that they often receive only negative voices from an unrepresentative sample of the faithful or people with a distorted perception of religiosity.

18. Diocesan syntheses have raised up from the communities the long-ignored voice of national and linguistic minorities and other marginalized groups (seniors, divorced, childless couples, the handicapped, persons with homosexual orientation), which is hardly heard anymore. There were also voices that more attention should be paid to the pastoral care of the Roma. There

is a lack of communication with people who have moved away from the Church, we do not ask them why they have left.

*Where the Spirit leads us (in the creation of community)*

19. From the description of the situation of the Church in Slovakia, as perceived by the participants of the consultations, their desires, visions and the way of possible common path to the future emerged. First and foremost is the desire for the Church as a community of welcome and trust. This can be facilitated by the creation of small living communities, especially those of children and young people, but also of men or families, which are often lacking. People are also helped to grow spiritually and mature humanly by membership of ecclesial communities and movements which create a spiritual family, a spiritual home, and teach them an active lifestyle of faith, and it is therefore good that these should be welcomed and supported by the local ecclesial authorities.

20. Communication must be learned first and foremost in the family, so it is important to focus on pastoral work with families, which can be helpful both in developing communication skills and in creating healthy relationships and developing intergenerational dialogue. To deepen communication in parishes, space and time should be purposefully created, e.g. to organise trips, retreats and other joint events of a non-religious nature. Priests would appreciate it if the faithful would invite them to be among themselves (on outings, etc.) or to community meetings, and they would also welcome the opportunity to talk more personally with one another on informal occasions. The aim should be to revive dialogue with God and neighbour. Daily (and communal) prayer should be fostered and the courage to speak and the humility to listen should be strengthened at all levels of dialogue with one another in the Church. The elderly, the handicapped, those on the margins and those excluded from ecclesial communities must not be forgotten. Sensitive attention must also be paid to retired and elderly priests who, for various reasons, are out of pastoral ministry.

21. It was often said that authorities lack active listening and communication skills, so it would be appropriate to include the development of these skills in formation programmes for seminarians, catechists, religious and others responsible in the ministries of the Church.

22. Several were positive about the use of online space and Christian media during the pandemic, which helped them to live through this difficult time in connection with the Church, although it also brought some division due to the presentation of different views by the authorities. The Christian media will not replace personal participation in the celebration of the liturgy, but they have an important formative role to play and should not be afraid of sensitive topics and should do more to spread positive testimonies of Christian life. At the same time, the spread of the Christian message through the secular media should be encouraged.

## **Co-participation**

*How we experience participation in the life of the Church*

23. Awareness of the need for participation varies greatly in different areas of Slovakia. Many participants did not understand what they meant by participation. Often they perceived it only as participation in the liturgy, or they felt that they had enough of their own responsibilities. For them, the spiritual life is only "sacramental service" provided by the Church. Several have not thought about this question at all. The greater part, however, are aware of their responsibility and see it, for example, in prayer for the Church, in obedience to the hierarchy, in exemplary life and witness, in active assistance, or in participation in the ministries and other services of the Church.

24. Even on the part of some authorities, the need for cooperation with the laity is not perceived and its importance for the Church is not appreciated. The laity expects to hear more voices from bishops and priests about the importance of lay witness and apostolate. The habitual model of the relationship between the priest and the faithful is

considered partly dysfunctional by the participants of the meetings, but they do not reject the authority of the priest as such, but only the authoritarian style of behaviour of some.

25. In many places there is a growing awareness of the need to participate in the mission of the Church, and not only because of the declining number of priests. The laity do not want to be merely a source of physical and financial help; they want to dialogue as equal partners in respect. But on the other hand, they often lack spontaneity in their engagement and rather passively wait for an address from the hierarchy, for an invitation and support from a priest. In many parishes, volunteer services (animators, catechists, cleaners, churchwardens, choirs, extraordinary distributors of Holy Communion) are already well established and lay people are also involved in preparation for the sacraments. The formation of lay collaborators in various ministries (catechist, organist) and ministries (lector, acolyte) is also carried out.

26. The synodal syntheses have shown that, despite good examples, the economic and especially the parish pastoral councils are mostly dysfunctional, exist only formally or do not exist at all, both at the parish and diocesan level. Direct participation in decision-making is neither common nor encouraged. Sometimes there is a complete arbitrariness of the priest or bishop in decision-making (e.g. in the management of property or other pastoral decisions).

27. In the Greek-Catholic synodal groups, the question of priests' families and priests' wives was also mentioned, and many practical suggestions were made concerning not only the need for their spiritual formation, but also the special sensitivity towards these families and the need for their material security in the event of the premature death of the husband. The question of adequate remuneration was also raised with regard to Roman Catholic priests.

*Where the Spirit leads us (regarding participation)*

28. The consultations have brought the knowledge that in the People of God (both consecrated and laity) there is no sense of co-responsibility and belonging, and that the principle of subsidiarity is not understood. It has become necessary to become better acquainted with the meaning, the need and the possibilities of participation. Transparency in the functioning of parishes (e.g. by writing and publishing the minutes of the meetings of consultative bodies) and awareness of existing structures and services in the Church (parish and diocesan councils, family centres, etc.) also contribute to strengthening this. Consideration should be given to the professionalisation of some lay ministries. This could be, for example, the creation of a new administrative position or a pastoral assistant. It was also suggested that a community style of parish leadership, with the help of a pastoral council and discernment, would allow for continuity of parish life after the departure of the priest.

29. For a fuller experience of co-responsibility, it is necessary to improve the formation of those responsible in the Church, especially with regard to the understanding and promotion of participation/synodality. To encourage, involve, guide and facilitate participation in the life of the Church in the entrusted part of the People of God and to delegate part of the responsibility is one of the tasks of the authority. In doing so, it is necessary to avoid elitism, familiarity and having the same people do everything all the time, to lead people to commitment and initiative. People expect the priest to be a shepherd rather than a manager. There was a desire to give more space to women, to take seriously their ability to see the concrete, to have their views on life, on the world, on various problems heard and to be given the opportunity to participate in co-decision. In the same way, young people are eager to be given more responsibility, for example

in the organisation of liturgy or programmes for them.

30. Participation is often associated with the celebration of the liturgy, and in some communities this has been expressed very strongly: 'The liturgy is our life'. However, there were also voices that the laity, including children and young people, do not understand the liturgical symbols and gestures, and therefore liturgical formation needs to be strengthened, not only in preparation for the reception of the sacraments. It would be advisable to involve children and young people more in the celebration of the liturgy, to motivate them to serve at the liturgy, and to explain parts of the liturgy to them, also with the help of modern technologies. In many places they are asking for a liturgy with the participation of children and young people, and in some places they are interested in mini-ministries for girls. The celebrations and homilies seem to some to be too long, lacking homilies illuminating current themes, commentaries on the readings, and greater use of the variety of liturgical forms. People would appreciate homilies containing exegesis of Scripture and explanations of Church teaching.

31. The need for deeper liturgical formation - but also for other changes in seminary education, such as a less authoritarian form of teaching - was also echoed by the seminarians themselves, who perceive as a consequence of "liturgical informality" (in the Roman Rite) that "two extremes arise among priests, when one group of priests arbitrarily modifies and manipulates the liturgy" and the other, believing that the proper celebration consists in strict adherence to the norms, leans towards the rigid celebration of the past (meaning the Tridentine liturgy), noting after attending such a liturgy that it was closed to the faithful.

32. Some are more comfortable with traditional singing with organ and others with more modern genres, but in the syntheses it was said that the liturgy should not be about the self-presentation of the organist or cantor, or a concert of the choir, which should not replace, but on the contrary, facilitate the common singing. Some pointed to the outdated texts from the *Uniform Catholic Hymnal*, which they thought should be replaced by a more up-to-date one. Church choirs are a form of service to the community and should therefore be encouraged. The syntheses also suggested that it would be appropriate to celebrate the liturgy specifically for the Roma (or other minorities), taking into account their culture and experience of faith.

33. The syntheses showed the need to introduce and promote parish catechesis, accompaniment after reception of the sacraments (mystagogical catechesis) and ongoing formation of priests and laity, as well as the need for a serious, even multi-year pre-baptismal or baptismal catechumenate for adults. It is important to strengthen the awareness of the parish family through celebrations on various occasions (baptisms included in the celebration of Sunday services) and to make use of the evangelizing character of the celebration of the sacraments (baptism, confirmation or confirmation, marriage, first or solemn communion) and funerals.

34. From the synodal consultations of some artists, a desire for dialogue and respect emerged, because they perceive that contemporary art and the Church are becoming more and more distant from each other, which is negatively manifested in sacred spaces.

## **Mission**

### *How we live the mission of the Church*

35. Like participation, the understanding of mission appeared to be at different levels in different dioceses, and the topic was discussed more or less accordingly. In some places there is a strong consciousness of co-responsibility for mission, but elsewhere mission is associated more with the spread of faith in the world and is not consciously reflected upon as part of religious

experience, personal or family participation in mission.

36. From the point of view of the participants in the Synodal Consultations, there are many missionary activities of the Church that are appreciated by the world. These are in particular concrete work in the fields of education, charity, care for the elderly and the sick, or for marginalised groups. In several outputs

it was said that the mission of a Christian presupposes first of all the necessary human qualities and the willingness to help: "If we do not know how to walk as human beings, we can hardly walk the path of Christianity, and certainly not bear witness to Christ." It was also said that "mission manifests itself in the Christian's keeping his eyes open to the needs of others so that he can help where he can".

37. According to the syntheses, a wider participation in the mission of the Church is hindered by several internal causes (sin, laziness, indifference, fear, lack of a personal relationship with Christ, sadness and anxiety, individualism, "unwillingness to leave one's comfort zone, not to make trouble for ourselves") and also external causes (unclear positions on the part of bishops, disunity between priests and laity, violent ways of evangelizers, ideologization, consumerism, and lack of space to talk to each other with like-minded people). There is also the obstacle of priests who live the priesthood only as an occupation and also the negative experience of pastors whose life does not correspond to what they preach.

38. There is also the problem of a mode of proclamation that is more oriented towards confronting the erroneous attitudes of others, when it is more important to communicate the joy of faith and the witness of living it out in the world. Participants perceive the misuse of religion in political, economic and social issues as harmful. Missionary activity often manifests itself as a defence against various ideologies, and also some Christians succumb to the temptation to ideologically present selected aspects of Christianity. Mission is also hampered by some of the Church's rhetoric, which is little understood, not least by those outside the religious context. People are also distant from the Church's message because they do not understand its relevance to their lives and values. The problem appears to be "a life divorced from reality and lived in an ideological bubble" by some Church leaders as well as by some of its members.

39. It turned out that there was little discussion of faith in families and that many people had difficulty talking about their faith in front of co-workers or other people. People are afraid to talk about faith because they have poor knowledge, they are afraid of being judged and of failure. A number of parents consider it a failure that their children "don't go to church" or are unbelievers. On the contrary, Christian families play a positive role in the mission, witnessing to the faith not only inwardly but also outwardly by their lives.

40. A systematic dialogue between the Church and society needs to be further developed. Humility and the knowledge that we can enrich each other, that persons who are different in opinion, culture or faith are not our enemies, but are people to whom Christ sends us to be his witnesses. We need to enter into dialogue with society without fear and present our point of view with respect. It was also said not to forget to accompany the laity in their professional life and to support people active in society and politics, or to cooperate between the parish and the local council.

#### *Where the Spirit leads us (in mission)*

41. People dream of a Church in which there will be intimate relationships as in a family and where, under the spiritual guidance of priests, they will bear "spiritual responsibility for one another". The laity yearn for a deeper knowledge and living of their faith and need creative offers of how to engage in mission, taking into account their life circumstances (time, family rhythms, etc.). They also lack missionary formation aimed at seeing mission as part of a personal vocation to holiness and accompanying them in discerning God's will and taking responsibility for their

own decisions. It is important, however, not only to accompany the laity in their professional life, but also to respect their expertise in which they contribute to the building up of our common house, carrying out their own mission in the world. The aim of

is to build up the awareness that we are all called to be authentic disciples of Christ, so that the message of faith (kerygma) may be read in our lives.

42. It is seen as especially necessary to increase sensitivity and openness to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, to learn to discern God's will in life and to rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is the main actor in mission and spiritualizes all activities. At the same time, not hindering his action, while respecting the authority of the Church.

43. The criterion of truthfulness and authenticity appears to be important: to describe reality truthfully, not to hide negative phenomena, not to be pharisaical and not to sweep problems under the carpet, but to solve them. To give up presenting the image of a perfect Church, which we are still nourishing externally and internally. This image of perfection obscures the fact that we are all just on a journey and must accept that failures are part of it. It came through powerfully in the statement, "If we don't clean up our own yard, we will get covered with our own garbage, no matter how pretty our facade looks." Also inspiring in this regard was the testimony of the seniors, "In addressing the secular world, we often come across as those who already know everything, know and own the truth. We need to listen, to seek with the seekers, to doubt with the doubters. Witness to the faith, but in a way that is kind, understanding and full of insight. What is important is a personal address, a personal witness that encourages the seekers to ask questions, to reflect and to search."

44. As far as ecumenism is concerned, the syntheses showed that relations with members of other Christian traditions are mostly correct, family-like, friendly (joint community and spiritual events, charitable service). The example of other Christian churches encourages a more thorough study of the biblical texts, the formation of small communities, personal prayer and a more active interest of the pastors in the people entrusted to them. The presence of persons from other Christian churches in their communities (mothers' prayers) was also positively evaluated by the participants in the consultations. Prejudice against non-Catholics, poor knowledge and consciousness of identity among Catholics, also the Church's failure to acknowledge its own faults were mentioned as negatives. Therefore, there is still a great need to deepen ecumenical dialogue, also in view of the large number of mixed marriages.

## **Conclusions**

45. The whole synodal experience has shown that as the people of God we are able to pray together and to form communion in the liturgy, but also in discernment and decision-making in the Church. We are not afraid to open up and communicate about difficult and painful issues. In spite of the initial fear that we would remain at the level of convincing ourselves that all is well, it has become clear that those involved in the Synod are not afraid of the truth and want to live in it. It remains a challenge for the Church in Slovakia to listen to and involve more of the faithful, and also to draw more people from the margins of the ecclesial community into the process.

46. In Slovakia there is a visible desire of the faithful, both laity and clergy, to talk about the life of the Church and about its mission and its own commitment. This Synod seems to have started a new enthusiasm for authentic dialogue. The faithful want their suggestions to be reflected in the practical life of the Church. It was also felt that at all levels of the life of the Church, certain ways of thinking are already so entrenched and imprinted that the Synod was seen by some as a disruption of them and a disturbance of the peaceful *status quo*.

47. The living of faith is still largely understood as a personal spiritual matter, manifested in

participation in the liturgy and focused on the reception of the sacraments. The Church is seen as a separate entity, identified with the hierarchy and the consecrated, with the duty to provide "sacramental service" and, in relation to the world, "interceding for the faithful". Related to this is the living out of faith rather

in a position of obedience to authority. Religious life for many is formal and traditional, clinging to conventionality - "it's always been done that way", lacking creativity and authentic dialogue.

48. Increasingly, however, there are voices for greater participation of the laity in the life of the Church (especially in the cities), manifested not only in relation to material goods, but also in participation in the pastoral and evangelizing mission and in decision-making processes at the parish and diocesan level. They desire the Church as a community of human closeness, acceptance and open communication, which they see as the basis for the formation of small communities. The family can serve as a model for the fusion of faith and life, where, thanks to the sacrament of marriage, the distinction between the profane and the sacred seems to be blurred. In this way, everything that the spouses experience becomes a celebration of the sacrament of marriage. The life of the Church is to be based on the liturgy, but not limited to liturgical celebrations and popular devotions. Therefore, even participation understood especially in the sphere of parish life and liturgy needs to be enriched by a broader awareness of the responsibility towards the whole community of the Church, as well as the responsibility of the Church and of each of its members towards society and those outside the Church.

49. As far as the vision of the Church is concerned, the people of God still regard consecrated men and women as pillars in seeking God's voice and as bearers of God's vision, and turn to them, despite the disappointments of some of its ministers. This commits the consecrated to discerning God's will and seeking to know the realities of life. It is the application of knowledge from faith - not only in the moral realm - in the contemporary context of personal and social life that proves most problematic. Priests do not talk about it regularly, and lay people fail to understand how God's Word relates to practical life. The Holy Spirit invites us to look for ways in which the Gospel can become a light for life.

50. It shows the need to move from a static and closed to a dynamic and open pastoral, to develop the spiritual life, to bring people to a living relationship with Jesus, to learn to abide in the presence of Christ (adoration) and personal prayer. Catechesis and formation are also important, because a misunderstanding of participation and mission results from a lack of understanding and experience of discipleship. The goal is to be missionaries to one another (even in the relationship between laity and priest) and to take responsibility, in a spirit of subsidiarity, not only for our personal lives but also for the life of the Church. In the expression as well as in the life of the faithful, authenticity and truthfulness are shown to be most important.

51. Despite the Holy Father's call for synodality to once again become the everyday style of life of the Church, it is clear from the synodal process that there is a great temptation to conclude the process with a final document. However, those who have been actively involved in the synodal walk know that our Christian life is about an honest search for God's will, about authentic dialogue with one another, and about making decisions according to that method. From many quarters there were desires from individuals and communities to continue the synodal experience. But this requires concrete changes in the understanding and in the practical life of the ecclesial community.

Prepared by the editorial team in Bratislava, 12 August 2022

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