



January 20, 2022

Synodality is Not New, but a Tradition That Has Drifted

~ Dan Stockman, *Global Sisters Report*

Synodality, where the church hierarchy listens to those in the pews, may seem like a new concept – but only because the Catholic Church has drifted away from this ancient tradition, a professor says.

Boston College School of Theology and Ministry professor Rafael Luciani told a webinar with 1200 registrants that synodality dates back to the first millennia of the church, and that through the Synod of Bishops on synodality, Pope Francis is simply reviving the practice in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65).

And synodality is especially important now because “the church is in the midst of a clericalist crisis,” Luciani said. “Synodality is rooted in the tradition of the church, Francis is rescuing this value of our tradition.”



Boston College School of Theology and Ministry professor Rafael Luciani and Sacred Heart Sr. Maria Cimperman speak during a webinar on the synod on synodality on January 12th hosted by the Center for the Study of Consecrated Life. Photo credit: GSR screenshot

The webinar, focused on how consecrated religious can engage in synodality was hosted on January 12 by the Center of the Study of Consecrated Life at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Luciani is an expert on the Theological Commission of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops.

Sacred Heart Sr. Maria Cimperman, Director of the Center for the Study of Consecrated Life and the moderator of the discussion, said Luciani has previously noted that “if you’re only listening, it’s a survey,” but that synodality calls us to much more.

“When I am being listened to, it is the Spirit speaking through my life,” he said. “We have to find a consensus, and this is new. To build a consensus means to discern together, to share time together – it’s a process.”



Luciani said synodality is much more than just the bishops of the church listening to the people – which they should be doing anyway. Rather, they should participate in dialogue “as just one more among the faithful,” noting that the roots of the word *synod* come from Greek words meaning “to journey together.”

“This changes the whole way we relate to each other as a church and as the people of God,” he said.

The church is not the hierarchy, the church is the people of God, Luciani said, and being people of God demands that everyone is part of the dialogue.

The synodal process is supposed to begin in the dioceses and parishes, but those on the panel said that is not happening in many areas.

Sr. Cimperman said that while men and women religious are often on the margins of the church, this is a chance for them to be the catalyst that makes the synodal process work.

Organizers said a recording of the webinar should be available in a few days on the Center for the Study of Consecrated Life’s [media channel](#).

Synodality and Ecumenism Require Walking Together

~ by Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY - All Christians are invited to pray for unity and continue to journey together said Cardinals Mario Grech, General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops, and Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Toward that end the two offices came together to offer a prayer, which could be added to the other intentions during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18 – 25.



Pope Francis and Maltese Cardinal Mario Grech.

Here is the prayer:

“Heavenly Father, as the Magi journeyed toward Bethlehem led by the star, so by your heavenly light, guide the Catholic Church to walk together with all Christians during this time of synod. As the Magi were united in their worship of Christ, lead us closer to your Son and so to one another, so that we become a sign of the unity that you desire for your church and the whole creation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Catholic Church inaugurated the synodal process in October of 2021. It will lead to a general assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023.

Laudato Si' Institute on a Mission to Better the World

~ by Jonathan Luxmore, *EarthBeat*, *National Catholic Report*

Since the Laudato Si' Research Institute was set in 2019, it has been on a mission to reconcile intellectual insight with the wisdom from religious traditions to produce multidisciplinary research capable of transforming society around the most pressing ecological and social issues facing the world, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, land use, inequality and the post COVID-19 world.

Just three years on, acting in the spirit of Pope Francis' 2015 social encyclical "*Laudato Si'*, On Care for Our Common Home," the Laudato Si' Research Institute is already having an impact.

"Though socially grounded, the Jesuit tradition also has an intellectual dimension, and one of our main aims is to develop a reordering of society," said the director Celia Deane-Drummond.



Celia Deane-Drummond

Though cautious about her institute's involvement in activist campaigns, Deane-Drummond concedes that the "most dynamic energy" at the recent Glasgow summit COP 26 came from civil society groups, rather than official negotiators. It's in the interface between theory and practice that the new Laudato Si' Research Institute seeks its place.

"There's clearly been a thawing of attitudes towards the marginalized and vulnerable, in recognition that they need to be heard – and religious organizations are now providing a strong voice for them," Deane-Drummond told *EarthBeat*.

[Pope Francis'] encyclical has provided inspiration by laying out a vision of integral ecology – the idea that humans are part of an interconnected, created world and environmental challenges involve both social and ecological issues that require multidimensional solutions – "which [are] open to the world," she added. "Though our work is still in its infancy, we're trying to reflect this by integrating different scientific disciplines and faith traditions and drawing them into dialogue."



In addition to Francis' encyclical, the Laudato Si' Research Institute is guided by the Jesuits' four [universal apostolic preferences](#), including "caring for the common home," that the Society of Jesus adopted in the months before the institute was formed.

Deane-Drummond [thinks hopes for ecological change] will now be pinned on the U.N. biodiversity conference rescheduled for April 25 – May 8 in Kunming, China. A key task there will be to overcome any latent tension between biodiversity and climate and bring them together in line with the overriding principle of integral ecology.

And it's one in which the voice of the Catholic Church – powerful, articulate, and ever-present – will be central, backed by increasing influential new actors like Oxford's Laudato Si' Research Institute. To read the complete article please click [here](#)



Awareness and Advocacy re: **Human Trafficking**

Cabrini High School, New Orleans, took the week of January 10-14 to highlight National Human Trafficking Awareness Month. In solidarity with Mother Cabrini's Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, each day began with prayers for an end to this sinful tragedy. Facts about human trafficking and how we can advocate and fight against it were highlighted daily. The week culminated in a dress-up day, where students raised funds for the anti-trafficking efforts of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Cabrini Mission Foundation.

~ submitted by Madeline LeBlanc, Cabrini High School



Photos above and below: The culminating event of the Awareness Week regarding human trafficking at Cabrini High School was a dress-up day which raised funds for the anti-trafficking efforts of the MSCs and the Cabrini Mission Foundation. We are grateful to the students for their enthusiastic involvement.



This week we conclude our focus on the attraction to religious life based on the research conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA).

From the Guadalupe Province Vocation Promotion Team...

Key Findings about Catholic Youth and Young Adults

~ from HORIZON, the journal of the National Religious Vocations Conference

Ten Recommendations Emerged

The recommendations, based on the National Dialogue data and conversations include the following:

1. More intentionally connect the life of faith with the lived experiences of young people.

The National Dialogue observed that even active young people feel the Catholic Church does not show how faith is relevant to their daily lives, transitions, and lived experiences.

2. We all need to do more synodal listening to one another.

The recent experiences of the Synod, the V Encuentro, and the National Dialogue show that synodality is essential, especially listening to those from the peripheries and bringing in the voices of those who are not around the table.



3. Address the “Authenticity Gap”

The National Dialogue revealed that the church needs to show more empathy and authentic engagement with the young, rather than empty platitudes or impatient judgment of the young and disaffiliated.

4. Increase the investment in accompaniment

We do not walk alone, and we need each other. The National Dialogue, echoing *Christus Vivit*, saw that the church must train more people in “the art of accompaniment” with youth and young adults, especially in the area of mental health.

5. Expand ministry with young adults

All age groups and conversations with the National Dialogue noted the church’s significant lack of attention to young adults (ages 18 – 39) and expressed a strong recommendation to increase, invest in, and expand this ministerial area.

6. Reimagine faith formation

There was regular encouragement in the National Dialogue to move away from a classroom model and toward more relevant learning models featuring mentorship, small groups, accompaniment, faith sharing, and authentic witness.

7. Reconsider preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation

There was a clear call to reexamine and reconsider how the church prepares young people for Confirmation.

8. Partner with parents and enhance family ministry

Due to the concerns of ministry leaders and parents expressed in the National Dialogue, there must be increased dialogue and collaboration with families and the domestic church, including the growth of intergenerational/family ministries.

9. Transform ministry leadership

It was evident in the National Dialogue feedback that the church needs to seriously address the formation, support, and resourcing of ministry leaders and create a culture of collaboration and unity across ministerial and ecclesial lines.

10. Embrace complexity

Because of the plethora of findings from the data, and recognizing the needs of young people, families and leaders are so vast, there is no “one size fits all” approach that can be taken; rather, leaning into this complexity is highly recommended.



About guidance and accompaniment

As young adulthood is a time of great transition, young adults want to know – from the church – how best to discern God’s call. The young adults themselves noted that discernment needs to be deeply enmeshed in the church’s ministry with their age demographic, and not just regarding priesthood or consecrated religious life.; rather, discernment was called for in a broader sense. The call for a cultivation of friendship and accompaniment pointed toward fostering peer relationships of support and accountability within church settings. This was echoed by the youth and ministry leader participants in the National Dialogue but was heard strongest from the young adults.

Read the full report [here](#)

Prayer Requests

Grace Griffin

Lisa Nolan, a Cabrini (College) University alumna, asks for prayers for her daughter, Grace, who is suffering with an autoimmune problem. Lisa and her family would be grateful for the prayers of the Missionary Sisters and the Cabrinian community.

Pat Nowry

Kindly unite in prayer for Pat Nowry, the sister of Sr. Arlene Van Dusen, MSC, who has been hospitalized with pneumonia. Please pray that her hospitalization will be brief and that she will soon regain full health



favorable outcome of the tests.

Prayers requested...

Prayers are requested for a friend's brother who is suffering with an addiction to drugs. This has caused disruption and polarization in his close-knit family.

Prayers requested...

Prayers are requested by a Cabrini (College) University alumna who will be undergoing medical tests on Monday. This person has a deep devotion to Mother Cabrini and asks Mother's intercession for a

Sr. Lucille Souza, MSC

Please unite in prayer for Sr. Lucille who is having knee surgery today, January 20th. Let us pray for a successful procedure and a swift recovery.

Don Wingerter

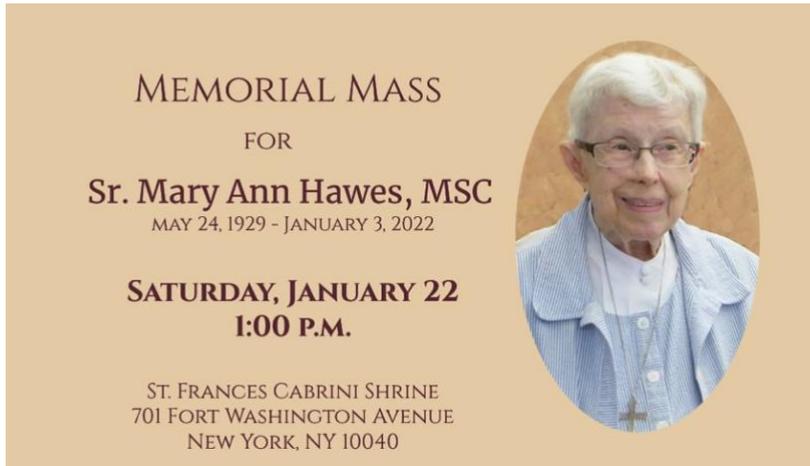
Your prayers are asked for Don Wingerter, the husband of Cabrini High School alumna and trustee, Florence Wingerter, who is undergoing surgery today, January 20th. Please pray that all will be well.

In Loving Memory

Marilyn Girard

It is with sadness that the Cabrini University community marks the passing of Marilyn Girard, the wife of Cabrini University Professor Emeritus Dr. Jolyon Girard. Mrs. Girard passed quietly on January 10th following a long illness. The Cabrini community joins with the University community in offering condolences to Dr. Girard and his family. May she rest in God's eternal peace.

Sr. Mary Ann Hawes, MSC



The Mass will be live-streamed on the Shrine Facebook page. The stream will be accessible on the Shrine Facebook page after the Mass has ended, so if viewing the Mass live is not possible, it can be accessed there at a later time.

To access a visual memento of Sr. Mary Ann's life in service to God please click [here](#)

Kelly Onstad

Kindly pray for the repose of the soul of Kelly Onstad, who passed away on January 19th after a massive heart attack. She is the sister-in-law of Florence Wingerter, Cabrini High School trustee, and an alumna (Class of 1981) of Cabrini High School in New Orleans. Please keep the Onstad and Wingerter Families in your prayers at this most difficult time.

