



2. Communion

Communion refers to the common unity of the baptized among themselves and of all with Christ (1 Cor 12:12-14). The most familiar image is that of the ‘body,’ as it denotes solidity, interconnectedness, multifunctionality, the necessary bond between the members, and the need for care and integral growth.

A. SPIRITUAL CONVERSION

The way of being a synodal Church implies a constant process of personal and communal discernment about the missionary journey we are undertaking. The Word and the Spirit always urge us to take steps of renewal, conversion, and evangelical testimony. It is not a theoretical process, but a spiritual journey that pushes us to dwell deeper into the mystery of salvation.



First moment: WORD OF GOD

Opening prayer

In your Name, Lord, we gather and offer our whole selves to welcome your Word. You call us to discern our path, our services, our commitment, our resources. Increase our wisdom to see all things through the lens of the Gospel. Grow our humility to allow ourselves to be shaped by your will. Enlighten our sharing so that we may be guided by your light. We ask for temperance in disagreements, tolerance in differences, and courage in common challenges. We ask you this, Lord, through the intercession of Saint Arnold Janssen.

Proclamation: Rom 12:1-5

I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned. For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.

Resonances of the Word

In the path of spiritual conversion, the Word is our compass. Let us listen to the text again in silence.

- ‘Living sacrifice’ = Offering oneself for the cause of the Gospel
- ‘Inner transformation’ = A deep conversion, not just aesthetic or superficial
- ‘Reasonable esteem’ = Letting go of self-centeredness



Second moment: OUR WORD AS A CHURCH

Spiritual conversion

Scripture is the foundation and the core of the synodal journey. By reading and praying with it, we find ourselves united to Christ and feel connected to our Church and to our world through the eyes of faith. In discernment, what comes from the Holy Spirit leads to more of the Kingdom, fullness, a sense of life, and peace; on the other hand, self-centeredness leads to division, confusion, and unrest.

In this sense, the Synodal process presents us with a danger: to tie the Spirit before discernment has been done, to put limits on it, to try to subjugate it according to our will, to anticipate it and block it with our premises, or rather with our prejudices and attachments, no matter how wise they may seem. It is enough to understand that the Synod and synodality are spaces for discernment, for moving forward, for listening to the voice of the people of God, and for strengthening the path of the Church—an always reformed Church, in short, always on the path of conversion.

Thus, in the reality we call ‘synodality,’ we can locate the point where the Trinity mysteriously but truly converges in history. Therefore, the word ‘synodality’ does not designate a more or less democratic method, and much less a ‘populist’ way of being Church. These are deviations. Synodality is the dynamic, historical dimension of ecclesial communion founded on the Trinitarian communion, which, appreciating simultaneously the *sensus fidei* of the entire holy faithful people of God, apostolic collegiality, and unity with the Successor of Peter, must animate the conversion and reform of the Church at every level.

Resonances

In light of what we heard:

- What aspects of our local ecclesial life need further discernment and attitudes of pastoral conversion?



Third moment: WORDS OF ACTION

Steps of Personal Conversion

Listening to the Word and to my brothers and sisters, I believe it is necessary to grow in...

Steps of Community Conversion

Discerning the path of our ecclesial community in this particular context, we believe it is necessary to grow in..., and we will do so with the help of these concrete steps...

Closing Prayer

What image or symbol helps us express what we have shared in a prayerful way?



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B. BAPTISMAL IDENTITY AND DIGNITY

The common platform shared by all members of the Church is our dignity as baptized. We identify ourselves as children of God, disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, and missionaries sent by the Holy Spirit.



First moment: WORD OF GOD

Opening prayer

We thank you, Lord, for calling us from all eternity to be part of your project of life. Through baptism, you consecrated us as priests, prophets, and kings. We are protagonists in your mission, missionary disciples of the Word, and artisans of this story of salvation. Encourage our steps and help us discern the means that contribute to shaping us ever more as your People. We ask you this, Lord, through the intercession of Saint Arnold Janssen. Amen.

Proclamation: 1 Cor 1:26-31

Consider your own calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord.”

Resonances of the Word

We boast in a God who lovingly gives us life and a purpose of fullness for that life.

- ‘Erudition, power, nobility’ – categories related to a person’s ‘honor’ in society.
- ‘Foolishness, weakness, worthlessness’ – categories that are disregarded in society.



Second moment: OUR WORD AS A CHURCH

Baptismal Identity and Dignity

God, One and Triune, introduces us, through baptism, into a dynamic of communion and mission that moves us from 'I' to 'we', and places us at the service of the world. There is a true equality of dignity and a common responsibility for the mission among all the baptized, according to each person's vocation. It is necessary to recognize ourselves in our baptismal dignity, which has not always been easy to implement in the life and mission of the Church because ordained ministers have seen it as something discretionary or optional. In fact, the bishops themselves in the continental stage admitted that the baptismal theology promoted by the Second Vatican Council, the basis of co-responsibility in mission, has not been sufficiently developed. A synodal Church is grounded in the recognition of the common dignity that comes from baptism, which creates real co-responsibility among the members of the Church that manifests itself in the participation of all, with the charisms of each person, in the mission and building up of the ecclesial community. All of this must be translated into rights and duties that allow for the inclusion and participation of all, for it is not a demand for a redistribution of power but a necessity for the effective exercise of the co-responsibility derived from baptism. Additionally, the theology of baptism allows the exercise of authority to be appreciated as a gift and increasingly configured as a true service or diakonia. Therefore, it is the Spirit who anoints us through baptism and enables us not only to recognize the light in our journey but also to acknowledge that the institutional Church must ask for forgiveness and has much to learn.

Resonances

In light of what we heard:

- In which aspects of the life of our community do we notice a lack of greater understanding and awareness of the significance of the baptism we have received?



Third moment: WORDS OF ACTION

Steps of Personal Conversion

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Steps of Community Conversion

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Closing Prayer

What image or symbol helps us express what we have shared in a prayerful way?



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C. FAMILY AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

The significance of family is the essential core of any community. Conformation, relationships, roles and functions, authority and service, shared spaces, planning, fundamental attitudes of dialogue, listening, mutual correction, understanding, and affective containment, ritual and celebrations, shared horizon, principles and values that govern coexistence; these all form the common dynamics of community life.



First moment: WORD OF GOD

Opening prayer

Lord, willing to listen to your Word, we incline ourselves towards you as members of this community formed by many families. In every time and place, we need, Father, that you enlighten us to walk in the values of the Gospel. May we know how to turn to you when uncertainty and confusion seem to reign in our homes. May we find the path of dialogue and common good in moments of harshness, jealousy, and pettiness. Through the intercession of St. Arnold Janssen, we ask this of you, Lord. Amen.

Proclamation: 1 Cor 13:4-13

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing. For we know partially, and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Resonances of the Word

Our personal and communal life has implications for the life of the Christian community. Each characteristic of love listed here is ingrained in our DNA from the family core and is nurtured and strengthened in a conducive home atmosphere.

□ What characteristic resonates the most in me? Why?



Second moment: OUR WORD AS A CHURCH

Family and Christian Community

Families desire to walk the synodal path as pastoral and ecclesial subjects, bringing their own experiences of joy and suffering to the Church's mission. Therefore, a true synodal path should help the Church be enriched by the evangelizing presence of families and value the experiences and styles they can offer. Co-responsibility in the common mission calls families to cooperate in building the ecclesial fabric. Let us give them space and listen so that they can participate in the synodal path, showing the family face of the Church. In fact, the Church is a home among homes. The family is an active subject in the Church's mission and synodality. The family becomes a subject of pastoral action through the explicit proclamation of the Gospel and the legacy of many forms of testimony, including: solidarity with the poor, openness to the diversity of people, care for creation, moral and material solidarity with other families, especially the most needed, commitment to promoting the common good, even through transforming unjust social structures, starting from the territory where the family lives, practicing both corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The love lived in families is a constant force for the life of the Church. Therefore, the kerygma must resonate in the heart of every family. Only from this experience will family pastoral care succeed in making families both domestic churches and leaven for evangelization in society.

Resonances

In light of what we heard:

- What changes does our community need to make to prioritize families in pastoral care?



Third moment: WORDS OF ACTION

Steps for Personal Conversion

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Steps for Communal Conversion

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Closing Prayer

What image or symbol helps us express what was shared in a prayerful way?