



Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church
communio | participatio | missio

Reflection 4

FOLLOWING CLELIA'S FOOTSTEPS
TOWARD THE HEART OF JESUS

Participation and Baptismal Faith

From the Gospel of Matthew, 3: 13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

The Synod – Journeying together

"Participation is a requirement of the faith received in baptism. As the Apostle Paul says, "in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor 12:13). In the Church, everything starts with baptism."

The Pope hopes that this Synod will be a Spirit-filled moment: "For we need the Spirit, the ever new breath of God, who sets us free from every form of self-absorption, revives what is moribund, loosens shackles and spreads joy. The Holy Spirit guides us where God wants us to be, not to where our own ideas and personal tastes would lead us."

We need to listen to the Holy Spirit, who like the wind “blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes” (John 3: 8). We must remain open to the surprises that will certainly come our way along our journey.

Baptism is not our point of arrival. **It is the beginning of a faith journey** that must be made, day after day, with enthusiasm, strength, courage, determination, and the greatest openness to the action of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is an extraordinary gift, but a gift that **calls us to the responsibility** to be “light of the world and salt of the earth” for the salvation of all. It is a particular expression of the love God has for us, but at the same time it is a **vocation to love in truth and justice**, at every moment of our lives.

As adopted sons and daughters of the heavenly Father, the baptized must choose each day to live in obedience to Him in order to become living instruments of the Holy Spirit and perfect manifestations of Christ to the whole world.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church also speaks of the unique bond between Baptism and the Paschal Mystery:

“In his Passover Christ opened to all men the fountain of Baptism. He had already spoken of his Passion, which he was about to suffer in Jerusalem, as a “Baptism” with which he had to be baptized. The blood and water that flowed from the pierced side of the crucified Jesus are types of Baptism and the Eucharist, the sacraments of new life. From then on, it is possible ‘to be born of water and the Spirit’ in order to enter the Kingdom of God. (John 3:5). ‘See where you are baptized, see where Baptism comes from, if not from the cross of Christ, from his death. There is the whole mystery: he died for you. In him you are redeemed, in him you are saved.’” (CCC 1225).

If anything characterizes this Synod it is participation. Pope Francis desired a listening phase that would involve the entire People of God. Each of us has been called to be protagonists in this Synod, to participate personally. Participation is the style of a synodal Church but also, as Pope Francis stated, “an essential ecclesial duty.”

“Participation is a requirement of the faith received in baptism. In the Church, everything starts with baptism.” It is baptism, the Pope adds, that “gives rise to the equal dignity of the children of God, albeit in the diversity of ministries and charisms. Consequently, all the baptized are called to take part in the Church’s life and mission. Without real participation by the People of God, talk about communion risks remaining a devout wish.” The participation of all: it is, once again in the Pope’s words, “an essential ecclesial duty!”

REFLECTION

- How do I live my Baptism? Do I witness to my faith?
- Do I participate in the Church actively or do I prefer to remain closed in my own plans?
- Do I call on the Holy Spirit in all I do?

SHARING-TESTIMONIES

IN MOTHER CLELIA'S WORDS

“The voice of God requires from you simplicity, trust, and submission. Beg the Holy Spirit; entreat Him to fill your poor heart with his divine grace. ...



We must do everything in the best way possible. ‘Do everything you do with great perfection,’ the Holy Spirit tells us.

To do things negligently and imperfectly when we’ve promised to do them to please God is lack of respect for Him; since the more outstanding a person is, the more what one does for him must be perfect in all ways.” (Spiritual Anthology 2.5, pp. 44, 46)

PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit! You inspire new tongues and place words of life on our lips: keep us from becoming a “museum Church”, beautiful but mute, with much past and little future. Come among us, so that in this synodal experience we will not lose our enthusiasm, dilute the power of prophecy, or descend into useless and unproductive discussions. Come, Spirit of love, open our hearts to hear your voice! Come, Holy Spirit of holiness, renew the holy and faithful People of God! Come, Creator Spirit, renew the face of the earth! Amen.
