

FINAL SYNTHESIS REPORT OF THE PHASE DIOCESAN SYNOD IN MADRID

A look of faith on the journey travelled in the synodal process

On October 17, the people of God that walked in Madrid, presided over by our Cardinal Archbishop Mr. Carlos Osoro, we inaugurated the diocesan phase of the Synodal journey with a Eucharist celebrated in the Almudena Cathedral. In it, we asked the Spirit, guide our steps.

The consultation already had some antecedents in our diocese those carried out with occasion of the Diocesan Synod of 2005, on the occasion of the Diocesan Plan of Evangelization (2015-2018) and the Diocesan Missionary Plan (2019-2022). To perform the present consultation, the Lord Cardinal constituted a commission made up of seven people: the delegate couple of laity, family and life, the director of the secretariat lay apostolate, a nun, a young member of the YCW, the priest delegate of the evangelization commission, and the coordinator of the group a diocesan priest (cf. Vademecum 4.4.2)

The coordination team set itself the following objectives:

1. That the consultation reaches the largest possible number of members of the people of God that walks in Madrid (V. 2.1);
2. That include the experiences and contributions of the marginalized, vulnerable and excluded people (V. 2.1);
3. That all participants had the appropriate channels and material for said participation (V. 5);
4. That everyone who wanted to participate could do so with the greatest degree of freedom.

To this end and to achieve the proposed objectives:

1. An easily accessible digital platform was enabled: <https://sinodo.archimadrid.es> in which the materials and the guidelines were included so that the participants could join and carry out appropriately their participation and an Instagram account

was created: @madridencamino in order to get closer to young people.

2. Two forms of participation were offered, one shorter, in order to interfere as little as possible with the progress of communities and diocesan life in general (V. 3.1) and in which it was proposed to address only the fundamental question (DP. 26); and a broader one, in which, in addition to that question, participants were asked to address at least three of the ten thematic nuclei (DP. 30).
3. **Cardinal Osoro convened the consultation of the diocesan representative bodies, Presbyterian and Pastoral Council, and held meetings with different groups: politicians of all parties (11-1-2022); university professors and teachers (21-1-2022); entrepreneurs (2-2-2022); unions and associations of workers (28-2-2022); artists and athletes (10-3-2022); discarded, poors and excluded (14-3-2022); and rectors of Madrid universities (3-5-2022).**
4. An expanded team was formed to coordinate the consultation with representatives of each of the territorial and sectoral vicarages.
5. And the maximum diffusion was given to the different diocesan realities (vicarages, seminary, parishes, movements...) through synod presentations and the synodal consultation and group meetings.

The synodal consultation has already been in itself an expression of a way of being church as People of God who walk together, and a practical exercise of synodality in which many have participated: the Pastoral and Presbyteral Council of the Diocese, the Councils of the Vicariates, Delegations, Cathedral Chapter, 173 parishes, movements and ecclesial communities, seminarians, occasional practitioners, practitioners usual... And they wanted to join the query, too, Indifferent, distant, poor and excluded, popular movements and associations, NGOs, academic centers and cultural, believers of other Christian confessions and other religions...

The contributions have reached us through very different channels (responses to the form included in the platform, emails, handwritten

letters...). I know they have collected 654 contributions. Some individual (V. 5.1), most of synodal groups, but also syntheses carried out in some parishes from the contributions of the groups constituted in them, parish assemblies, etc. All this represents 11,765 persons.

Among which we find people of all ages:

- Under 16 years (1.68%).
- From 16 to 25 years old (4.89%).
- From 25 to 40 years old (9.79%).
- From 40 to 60 years old (54.44%).
- And over 60 years old (29.20%).

Of different situations ecclesially speaking:

- Engaged in some action of the Church (60.11%)
- Regular practitioners (32.87%)
- Occasional practitioners (4.89%)
- Distant (1.38%)
- Indifferent (0.46%)

Members of social, religious and cultural groups very different: old and sick, poor and excluded, former addicts, mentally ill seriously homeless, migrants and asylum seekers, prisoners, simple people from the neighborhood... Members of other religions (Muslims) and other Christian denominations (Evangelical and Orthodox). As well as representatives and participants of centers academic and cultural associations, popular movements and associations; non-governmental organizations, political parties, businesspersons...

A large enough sample to reflect the plurality of the Church in Madrid and its different sensitivities, and which also tries to collect the sensitivity, the hopes and concerns of our society. But, above all, a sample which very clearly collects the main proposals that the Church of Madrid wants present to the Synod of Bishops.

The diocesan phase of the process closed on May 7th with a meeting at the Almudena esplanade in which around 1,600 people participated face-to-

face, and with a live or recorded YouTube follow-up of more than 4,000 tickets. This concluding act had three main objectives:

1. Festively celebrate the lived process.
2. Make known the main lines of the contributions to the consultation. For all we use four videos, which we attach as a contribution complementary, and three interviews.
3. After discernment and participation in the consultation, give thanks to the Father for the road travelled celebrating thanksgiving sitting like brothers at the table of the Lord Jesus, and ready to resume the mission; that beautiful task of the proclamation of the Gospel and of service to our city and our world.

An evaluation of the entire process lived up to now; allow us to recognize some difficulties and strengths, as well as some surprises.

[A discernment about the themes or issues that have resonated more strongly](#)

As we have already pointed out before, all the participants in the consultation addressed the fundamental question, while only part of the groups chose to contribute on the thematic nuclei. Regarding the fundamental question 63% of the contributions made reference to the first part of the question: "How is this walk together carried out in the particular Church itself with the Holy Spirit?", and a 73% referred to the second part: "What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take to grow in our walk together?"

Regarding how this "walking together" is carried out today, the aspects of positive (29%) than negative (18%), although that does not mean that there is not a critical look at our own reality (17%). In addition, regarding the second, "What steps invites us to give the Spirit...?" the contributions indicate among others and following the Order of priorities:

- Promote welcoming and listening (47%).
- Foster community spirit (25%).
- Be flexible and evolve over time (24%).

- Go out to the peripheries and build bridges (24%).
- Discern and live in coherence with the Gospel (23%).
- Strengthen our spiritual life thanks to prayer, sacramental life and the personal encounter with God (21%).
- And a preferential option for the poor and justice (14%)

However, in addition to the explicit content of the contributions, a careful reading of these also allow us to recognize some interesting aspects:

- One of the probably most significant features of all contributions is lack of awareness of belonging to the local Church. Most understand by such and focus their attention on their own parish, group or community base, the movement, ignoring belonging to the Diocesan Church, the neighbouring parishes, the vicarage, or the existence of other movements.
- And another characteristic feature, not only of the contributions to the question fundamental but also to the ten thematic nuclei, it is a very widespread in many of the issues that we must address, but not so in the way to do it or in the objectives to be achieved.

Regarding the ten thematic nuclei, the first thing that jumps out at you is the difference of the interest they have aroused, which guides us on the sensitivity, or lack thereof, of our People of God on some aspects or others. On “dialogue with the other Christian confessions” is only reflected in 15% of the contributions, while that “taking the floor and speaking clearly” attracts the attention of 48% of the contributions.

Beyond the interest attracted by the different thematic nuclei, there are the contributions that are made from them. We are aware that the Church and society we are on the same path, we are fellow travellers side by side (3.4%). For this to be true and not wishful thinking, a significant number of contributions of those who address this topic (28%) consider it necessary to propose and participate in vicarage and diocesan activities. An important number we consider those who took this thematic nuclei as the object of their discernment, but not thus if we refer to the total contributions (only 8%).

As we have already pointed out above when referring to the contributions of the question fundamental, the need to welcome and listen is one of the aspects that has elicited more unanimity. In order to be able to carry out the contributions that have addressed these thematic nuclei, which in this case reaches 51%, point out that it is necessary that such listening be a hallmark in our way of relating to each other of us and to relate to the world, and consider that:

- We must overcome the prejudices and stereotypes that hinder it (21%),
- In addition, listen carefully to the voice of minorities and the excluded (31%), in order to that they also have a voice in the Church.

A listening that dignifies, and that includes and does not mark distances. A whole process, which leads us to act accordingly (10%). We need them to be heard laity (69%) and consecrated men and women (7%), as well as the voice of minorities, of those discarded and excluded (31%). In addition, we need to lend a listening ear to the social and cultural context in which we live (11%). In this last sense, it is very a single contribution claiming to listen to the rural world is significant. A contribution that makes us realize the danger we have in this macro diocese, predominantly urban, that the rural is ignored.

However, not only the need to listen is underlined, but also the need to speak clear (topic addressed by 48% of the contributions). They go in two directions: how to speak and what to say. Regarding the first, it is split, as a piece fundamental, of the need for personal and community testimony (22%), with a current language (13%), which makes the message of the Gospel more understandable and accessible (7%), and that the voice of the Pope and the hierarchy be heard (8%); using the media and networks (26%); regardless of what is politically correct and without fear of what they will say (16%), and independently, also, of the ideologies, the political parties and the powers of this world (6%). And regarding the second: the content, we must say that the contributions indicate the need for our

speech to defend the dignity of the human being and life (6%), makes known and proposes the social doctrine of the Church (4%), denounce injustice and inequality (3%), and publicly value the action Church charity (3%).

On the other hand, (42% of) the contributions address the issue of co-responsibility on mission:

- They consider it necessary to promote participation, co-responsibility and role of the laity (48%).
- They invite to overcome clericalism, both of the priests and of the laity (33%).
- And value the plurality of charisms and ministries (24%)

In addition, 41% of the total contributions focus their attention on the issue of authority and the participation. They dream of a participatory and co-responsible Church, as follows from synodality, in which, according to the opinion of those who have approached this topic, listening cues must be created, in order to be able to share and participate in the interior of the Church (60%); and demand that the exercise of the priestly ministry value and respect synodality, and be exercised as a service to communion and participation of the entire People of God (39%). The fact is that some contributions spontaneously express gratitude for the same query.

All of this presupposes discernment for decision-making (a topic that has interested to 37% of the participants). They consider that it is necessary to strengthen the organs of participation (60%) and caring for communion (30%), aware of the role that in everything This is what our pastors play (27%). And in order to advance in this "walk together" the participants in the consultation consider it necessary to train us in synodality (according to indicate 25% of their contributions) in response to the tenth thematic nuclei.

Finally, 33% of the contributions point out the need to rethink our way of celebrating the faith, and they want it to be more alive, simpler and closer, more participatory, and deeper.

In a prophetic key, where is the Holy Spirit taking us? (What steps do we have to take together to be a people of God going forth, in dialogue with society)

If we focus our careful reading on the contributions, paying attention to what is referred to the steps that we have to take together as God's people going forth, in dialogue with society, we must point out, once again, that, although there is a wide consensus on the issues that we must face, there is not the same agreement regarding how far we must go even in those who enjoy greater unanimity.

On the other hand, it is true that from the contributions to the consultation, we can recognize a number of shared lines that enjoy majority agreement, but it is no less true that it is precisely here that they have manifested themselves with greater clarity resistance to addressing some issues. Resisters that do not appear so much in the participants in the consultation, but in those who have abstained at the time of do it. A resistance that we believe is not only to consultation but to synodality itself, which goes beyond ignorance or skepticism, since it uses means outside the consultation to express their disagreement.

Well, in an attempt to present these aspects in which the Spirit seems guide our discernment and our journeying together, we will group them into three sections: urgencies and challenges addressed to the interior of the Church, challenges in relation to our way of situating ourselves in today's society, and some substantive issues to address.

Regarding the first, the challenges referred to within the Church, we can see that the Spirit invites us to take decisive steps in pastoral conversion. A conversion that, in addition to being a global attitude and putting everything at the service of the advertisement of the gospel, it also supposes some tasks that the contributions of the groups have considered higher priority. Thus, reading the total of the contributions, we find that in addition to the above, they point out the need to:

- Thoroughly address the role of women in the church (35%).
- Make a priority option to get closer to the world of young people and create spaces and ways in which they can feel comfortable in the Church (35%).
- Caring for married life and promoting a new pastoral care for families vulnerable (5%).
- And promote ecumenism (15%). A theme that, even as part of one of the proposed thematic nuclei, has elicited few contributions, something surprising in a diocese as cosmopolitan and plural as Madrid is today.

As for the second, our relationship with today's society and culture, participants who, as we have already mentioned above, point out the need for let us be flexible and evolve over time. In addition, they have considered overwhelming need to be consistent, transparent and speak out (48%).

Maintaining an open dialogue not only within the Church, but also with society (22%). A dialogue that should be addressed to:

- The civil society
- The culture
- And the other religions.

Finally, throughout all the contributions some issues of background on which the participants have indicated the need to reflect, discern and act accordingly. Background themes such as:

- The reception by the Christian community of the divorced, LGBTI... (15%).
- Courageously address the issue of sexual abuse within the Church (6%).
- Austerity and transparency in the financial management of the Church (4%).
- Caring for nature (1%).