

## Summary talks church movements and new communities as contribution to Synod's 2<sup>e</sup> phase on synodality.

Participants:	300
Number of reports:	19
Participating communities:	Focolare, Comunione e Liberazione, Neocatechumenal Way, Emmanuel Community, Cursillo, Samuel Advice, prayer groups KCV, Missionary Parish
Report compiled by:	Gerard van Meel, secretary of the meeting two times a year of Church Movements and New Communities (KB&NG) and Lisette van Oordt, member of the national Synodality Working Group.
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### Introduction

On 19 February last, the leaders of **church movements and new communities** (hereafter KB&NG) were informed about the request for participation in the second phase synodal talks by the National Working Group on Synodality. To this, the above communities responded in groups ranging in size from 3 to 120 (divided into small circles) participants.

To the themes as provided by the national working group, a fifth theme was added specifically targeting the new movements. Called theme 0 in the report. The groups were free to address one or more of the five questions.

There have been synodal discussions both within their own circles and in cross-movements among themselves. This has certainly contributed to growing synodality within the church renewal movements. It should be noted that the synodal way of thinking and working for the aforementioned movements was and is clearly a growth process from an experience that grows in significance precisely by engaging in the synodal process itself independently of the outcomes. For many, this was an important discovery.

On several occasions, it was indicated that KB&NG could work more with each other and put themselves at the service of local faith communities.

The reports are bundled by question.

## Theme 0 New movements and communities: a prophetic sign.

The crowd that had accepted the faith was one in heart and one in soul, and there was no one who called any of his possessions his property; on the contrary, they owned everything in common. With strength and insistence, the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and rich grace rested on them all. Han. 4, 32-33

### *Living faith*

The KB&NG contribute to members living their faith in all facets of their lives. Faith has become alive and personal within the movement and is given hands and feet in all aspects of daily life. Members testify to the important role the Holy Spirit plays in this. They discover the gifts and charisms of the Spirit in their own lives and at the service of Church and society. Propagating the faith, being missionary, comes about from an awareness of each person's responsibility.

### *Communio*

Essential for members is community life. By living the gospel together, living from the Word of God and witnessing to each other about it, they form and strengthen each other in faith. It is felt to be natural to contribute to the parish also being a community of faith, where the complementarity between the life-states - laity and ordained ministers - is experienced as richness. Communion between the life-states and cooperation in trust and respect for each one's grace is missionary in its essence and scrapes away clericalism. In the Missionary Parish, this takes shape in leadership teams.

### *Holy Spirit*

The KB&NG often speak of "living in the Spirit". The experience of the outpouring (sometimes called "baptism in the Spirit") of the Holy Spirit, a personal renewal of the baptismal grace, creates room for the gifts, such as prayer with laying on of hands, prophecy, praise and spontaneous prayer. The Holy Spirit is seen as the protagonist of the Church's mission and gives us vision of how to be Church.

### *Beloved child of God*

The mutual love and service within the movements help to ensure that each person comes to experience God's personal love first and foremost and to understand and live from that basis of a personal relationship with Christ, the Word, the sacraments and Church teaching.

### *As new movements, how do we think we can contribute to the church being more synodal and missional?*

The KB&NG contribute to the formation of the faithful, both lay and ordained ministers. The KB&NG reach young people and form them into mature believers. In particular, this includes formation in prayer and to the sacramental life. In particular, the sacrament of reconciliation can be mentioned here.

## Theme 1 Our baptism as the basis of our Churchhood

As newborn children, be eager for the spiritual, unadulterated milk that will give you growth for salvation. You have already tasted the sweetness of the Lord. Come to Him, the living stone, rejected by men but chosen and precious in the sight of God. Let yourselves also be joined as living stones in the building of the spiritual temple. As a holy priesthood, dedicate spiritual sacrifices, pleasing to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Pet.2, 2-5

### *Rediscovering being baptised*

What emerges above all is baptism as a basis of equality as children of God. Each one finds his individuality and unique vocation through baptism. The new movements help to rekindle the pilot light of baptism. A responsibility is felt to bring home to the Church and to God the many baptised, whose baptismal grace has taken a back seat. For baptism makes us children of God and allows us to be close to Him every moment.

### *Preparation for baptism*

It is important that the choice aspect of initiation (the free will choice for Christ and His Church) is more clearly present in the preparation for the sacrament of adult baptism. Baptism of children is an opportunity to meet parents hospitably and establish a bond with them so that not only the children but also they themselves can be formed.

### *Baptism and mission*

Baptism is experienced as the foundation for being called and proclaiming. Through our baptism, we are connected to God and therefore missionary and outward-looking.

### *Recommendations*

There should be a good offer in diocese and parish for preparation for baptism, focused on the kerygma and mystagogical in nature. Baptism rather during the parish Sunday Mass as a festive admission, can be a richness for the faith community. After baptism and confirmation, continued attention to spiritual development and ingrowth into the faith community is crucial: through catechesis and community service.

The mode of belief and faith transmission that is current among the new movements could be communicated to parishes and to social media. Within the KB&NG, the importance of caring celebration of the Eucharist with great attention to participation is stressed. Along with Eucharistic adoration, this is inseparable from evangelisation.

## Theme 2 Formation in a missional Church

He also gave gifts: some He made apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we all come together to unity in the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to the perfect Man, to the fullness of the fullness of the Christ. Eph. 4, 11-13

### *Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit unites us; bishops, priests, religious and laity, which gives joy. When the Holy Spirit is given a large place in the Church, there is naturally a missionary momentum. This requires everyone's personal dealings with the Lord; prayerful and sacramental living. This opens to the action of the Spirit. On the other hand, clericalism hinders the getting off the ground of a synodal and missionary Church.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, creativity grows and a wide variety of activities develop. The starting point here is to give space to each other from a feeling of being fully loved and accepted by God. This frees us from having to be perfect first in order to contribute to the mission of the church.

### *A church with joy missionary*

Of importance is connecting to what is already on the ground or alive - "inculturation" - to make the transition from "people's church" to evangelising community. It requires discernment, patience and perseverance. Think of Schools of Evangelisation, Formation weekends for couples, singles or teenagers and youth, evenings of mercy, Alpha and post Alpha etc. Evangelising puts us in a dynamic of constantly being evangelised ourselves and that gives joy. Those without who are reached without a church background, Christians from other denominations, nourishes, deepens and enriches.

### *Proximity*

Being missional is, first and foremost, engaging in investing in personal relationships, really paying attention to the other and being near and accompanying the other on the way to Christ. It is not a method, but tailor-made.

### *Recommendations*

In keeping with the spirit of the times, offer short-term and easily accessible activities. Essential is training on Holy Scripture and prayer. In evangelisation, it is important to dare to take risks. There is a need to involve more men in the formation of children and teenagers (especially, but not only, for the boys). People who ask something of the parish may also be asked something wór.

### Theme 3 Participation in a welcoming church

Well, God who knows hearts has spoken out for them by communicating the Holy Spirit to them, just as to us, and He has in no way distinguished between us and them, but cleansed their hearts by faith. Acts 15:8-9

#### *How to be a welcoming church*

Welcoming is a church that starts from genuine attention, listening and passion for the person. This arises from our gratitude to Christ who came to us flawed people full of love. Him we want to recognise in those who are vulnerable.

Jesus' presence and warmth in the local church community can be the strength in any church that is welcoming, and as movements, we can help with this from our experience. That warmth can come from bringing love everywhere and making ourselves one with others.

Not doing group formation because the contribution of all Movements is important. As we struggle to get to know new people and those with difficulties, we can, through our spiritualities, encourage each other to persevere. We can always form each other in it and remind each other why we are doing it. The important thing is not to stick to unwritten rules.

#### *Personal education and commitment*

This happens from a personal growth process, not from proper organisation or division of labour. Communion with Christ in the Eucharist and respecting each other are important. In Christ, relationships can develop beyond culture and language.

After all, we share in the same sufferings, sins and struggles.

Because we are weak sinners, Christ is our most precious treasure that occupies the first place in our lives. We have experienced His warmth in our midst. From this comes a humble non-pedantic attitude and the responsibility to engage in dialogue with others and speak out oneself. Ecumenism enriches but does not mean diluting; after all, dialogue arises only from the identity of the dialogants.

#### *Recommendations*

Several suggestions were made for a welcoming church. Church buildings could be kept more open with the use of volunteers so that prayers can be offered at the altar, alone and also with others.

Other celebrations for families were mentioned, such as shorter celebrations for families with children (50 min). This makes it easier for parents with children to participate in the Eucharist, which is considered better than a children's word service. Living the synodal process and passing it on to others was mentioned. Not sticking to rules.

## Theme 4 Women in the life and mission of the Church

They all persevered in unison in prayer together with the women, with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. Han. 1,14

### *The woman as a Marian presence in the church*

In both communities that have discussed this issue, a culture has been present from the foundation onwards where women are the inspirers. At Focolare, female leadership has been endorsed by the Church. Here, unity between the female president and the male priest is seen as essential to build unity. Respect for women and equality is therefore taken for granted.

Samuel Advice was founded by women more than 35 years ago, carried and inspired and also encouraged by priests and this community therefore experiences a great responsibility to contribute to the holiness of priests and themselves.

This Marian aspect of movements could be a model for the church. Women simply have a different sensitivity from men; they were also the first to be present at Jesus' empty tomb. Their sensitivity in experiencing mutual love and the lived Gospel constitutes community, makes us come out of our comfort zone and thus promotes a supernatural contact with each other. Being present in the parish is of great importance. In the diaconate, it is mainly about women. But the church is more than a parish, it reaches further into daily life in family and work.

### *The tension between laity and ordained ministers*

On the one hand, voices are heard from competent lay fellow believers who say they are given little or no space in the parish because the pastoral team would like to control everything. Clericalism is regularly mentioned such as little understanding by priests, bishop or cardinal, poor listening to our experiences, neither women's nor men's.

Some women experience the fact that they are not allowed to give communion or preside at a word and communion service in their parish as a limitation. Protestant Christians indicate that greater gender equality and a more extensive experience of synodality in their communities might set an example for the RC Church. Vocation can also be broader than one's own church and more ecumenically focused.

Yet there are others who actually do experience recognition from the church of women's input and equality as baptised people such as recognition as lectors, musicians and conductors and as those who clean the church. There are fine examples of women's engagement in church communities.

On the other hand, there are also noises from pastors and/or members of the pastoral team, that they too are not recognised or confirmed in their ministry and/or vocation, because 'it has always been this way' in a particular parish or faith community and there are (informal) leaders who determine everything. The pastoral worker/deacon/priest/bishop is already starting at a disadvantage and must first prove himself as an 'accessible person.' In that case, no missionary and synodal church will get off the ground either.

It is precisely the cooperation around missionary parishes of ordained and lay people that can naturally allow clericalism on both sides to be chipped away. Also because people stand together 'before the Lord' in prayer and share the same desire of evangelisation, and each with his/her charisms and talents has his/her own contribution.

When it comes to everyone's calling to pray, grow in faith and contribute to the growth of other believers and the faith community as a whole, there is a tendency to excuse oneself by pointing to those "who have learned to do it" or "who are paid for it" or with similar reasoning.

It is also said that the role women have does not matter. Duties can be divided according to suitability and independent of gender. Women do not necessarily have to have access to the priesthood, differences can just be there. And even without theological training, women can be full of fire for the church.

Women could, however, participate more in pastoral teams, leadership teams and thus get more recognition from priests. Conducting synodal talks can trigger growth in responsibility and also give room for rejuvenation.