

Angelus prayer. Sunday 28th October 2018



ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 28 October 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning! But it does not seem so good! [amid wind and rain]

This morning, in Saint Peter's Basilica, we celebrated the closing Mass of the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops dedicated to young people. The first Reading, from the prophet Jeremiah (31:7-9), was particularly in tune with this moment, because it is *a word of hope* that God gives to his people. A word of consolation, based on the fact that *God is a father for his people*; he loves them and consoles them as his children (cf. v. 9); he opens before them a future horizon, a straight, practicable path, on which even "the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her who is in travail" will be able to walk (v. 8), that is, people in difficulty. Because God's hope is not a mirage — like certain advertisements where all are healthy and beautiful — but is a promise for real people, with merits and faults, potential and frailty, like all of us: God's hope is a promise for people like us.

This Word of God expresses well the experience that we have lived in the weeks of the Synod: it was a time of *comfort and of hope*. Above all it was a moment of *listening*: indeed, listening requires time, attention, openness of mind and heart. But this task was transformed each day into consolation, first and foremost because we had among us the lively and invigorating presence of young people, with their stories and their contributions. Through the testimonies of the Synod Fathers, the manifold reality of the new generations entered the Synod, so to speak, from all sides: from every continent and from many diverse human and social situations.

With this fundamental approach of listening, we sought to interpret reality, to grasp the signs of these times of ours. A *communal discernment*, carried out in the light of the Word of God and of the Holy Spirit. This is one of the most beautiful gifts that the Lord gives to the Catholic Church, namely

that of gathering voices and faces from the most varied realities and thus being able to attempt an interpretation that takes into account the wealth and complexity of the phenomena, always in the light of the Gospel. In these days, we thus discussed among ourselves how to walk together through many challenges, those of the digital world, the phenomenon of migration, the significance of the body and of sexuality, the tragedy of wars and violence.

The results of this labour are already 'fermenting', as grape juice does in the barrels after the harvest. The Synod of young people was a good harvest and promises good wine. But I would like to say that the first fruit of this Synod Assembly should be seen in the very method that was sought to be followed, beginning with the preparatory phase. A *synodal style* that does not have as its primary purpose the writing of a document, which is also valuable and useful. More than the document, however, it is important to promote a way of being and working together, young and old, in listening and in discernment, in order to arrive at pastoral choices that respond to reality.

For this let us invoke the intercession of the Virgin Mary. Let us entrust to her, who is Mother of the Church, gratitude to God for the gift of this Synod Assembly. And may she help us now to carry forward what we have experienced, without fear, in the ordinary life of the communities. May the Holy Spirit cultivate, with his wise creativity, the fruits of our labour, in order to walk together with the young people of the entire world.

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Source: Vatican.va