

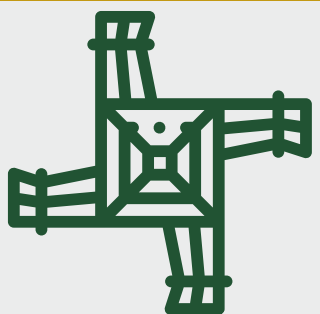
# Synodality for Mission:

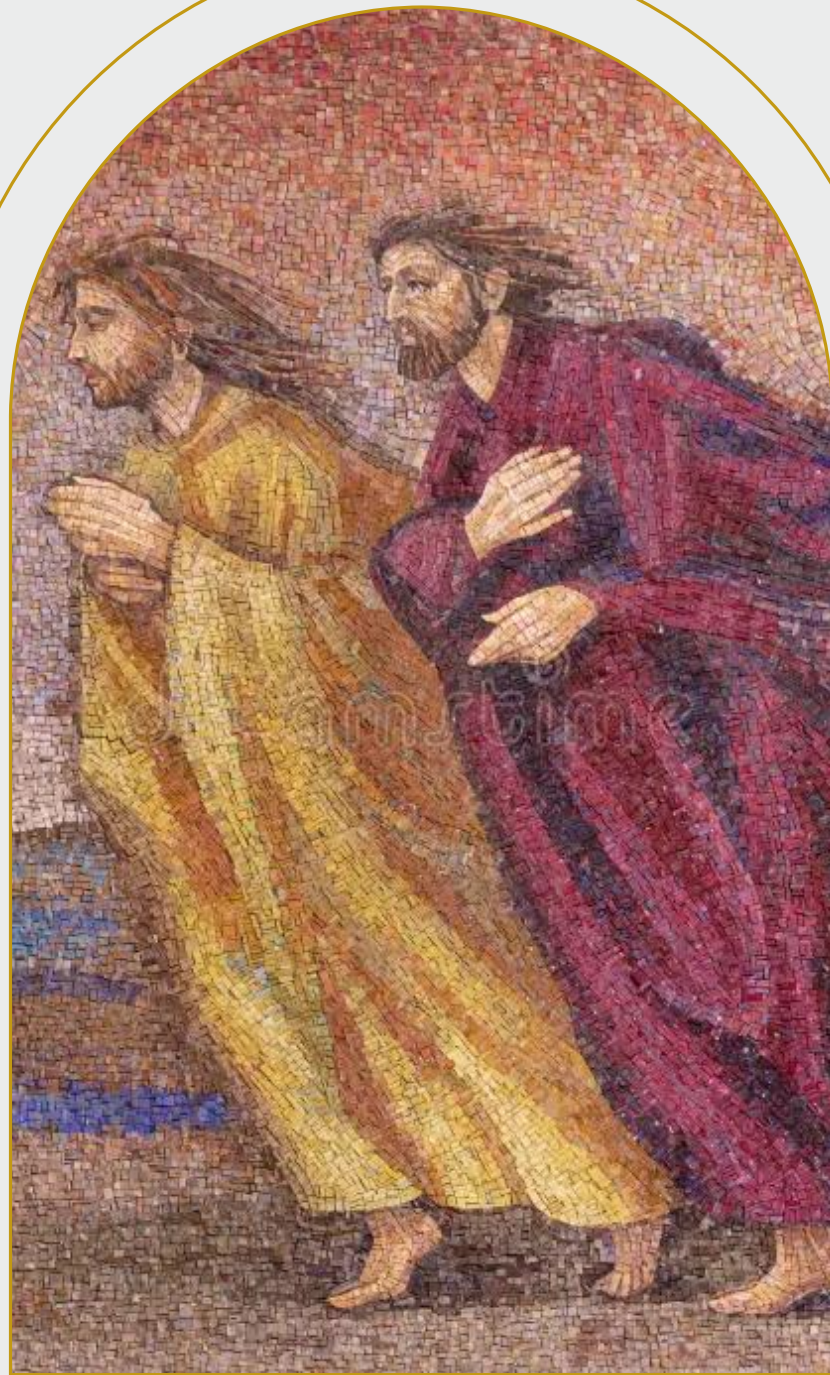
## Reflections from the Synod on Synodality



St Brigid's Day Lecture 2025

Bishop Alan McGuckian, SJ  
Diocese of Down and Connor





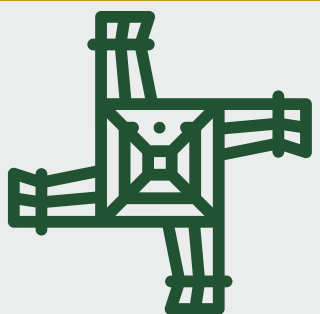
Synodality is:

- a **hermeneutic** for understanding ministry, hierarchy and co-responsibility in a Church conceived as the People of God journeying together with Christ towards God's kingdom
- a **path** of spiritual renewal and structural reform that enables the Church to be more participatory
- a **style** of the Church gathering in assembly for mutual listening, dialogue and discernment to reach consensus and make decisions
- a **spirituality** characterised by actively listening to the Word of God, contemplation, asceticism, patience and conversion
- a way of **relating** that is welcoming, listening and communal and a means of healing, reconciliation and rebuilding trust.



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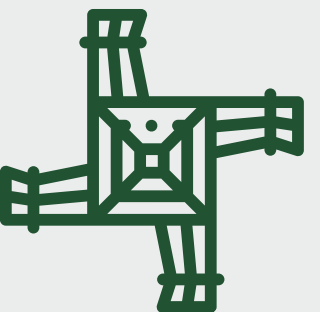
The holy People of God require proper formation so that they can witness to the joy of the Gospel.

No one can progress along the path of authentic spirituality alone; we need support, including formation and spiritual accompaniment, both as individuals and as a community.



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“The goal is not to put on a good show or to increase the numbers who turn up to your events. That’s a kind of spiritual vampirism where you seek out young people because you want them to give your community new life.

No, the goal is to touch their hearts, to enlighten their minds, to help them to know the love of Jesus Christ and to find their home in the community of the Church.

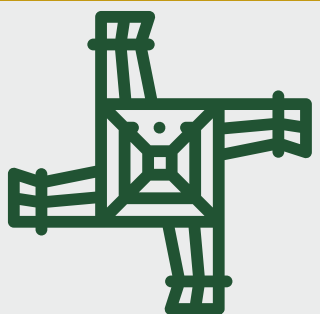
The goal is to save souls. There will be a thousand different ways of doing this. But it's always the same Spirit working for the same purpose.”

Fr Stephen Wang



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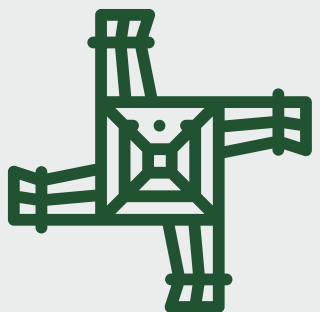


- a) clearly setting out the object of discernment and disseminating information and the means for adequately understanding it;
- b) giving sufficient time for prayerful preparation, for listening to the Word of God and for reflection on the question;
- c) an inner disposition of freedom regarding one's own interests, both personal and as a group, and a commitment to the pursuit of the common good;
- d) listening attentively and respectfully to each person's voice;
- e) searching for the widest possible consensus which will emerge when our hearts burn within us (cf. Lk 24:32), without hiding conflicts or searching for the lowest common denominator.



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## SENSUS FIDEI

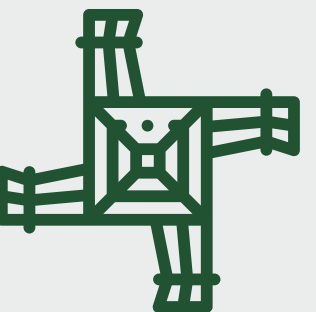
“The anointing by the Holy Spirit received at Baptism enables all believers to possess an instinct for the truth of the Gospel. We refer to this as the *sensus fidei*. This consists in a certain connaturality with divine realities based on the fact that, in the Holy Spirit, the Baptised become sharers in the divine nature”.

(22, Final Document of the Synod on Synodality)



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## SENSUS FIDEI

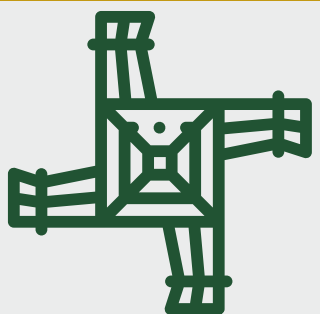
“The faith of the baptised must be rooted in Scripture, Tradition and Magisterium, not just personal preferences or the enthusiasms of the age; it is not enough simply to be one of the baptised.”

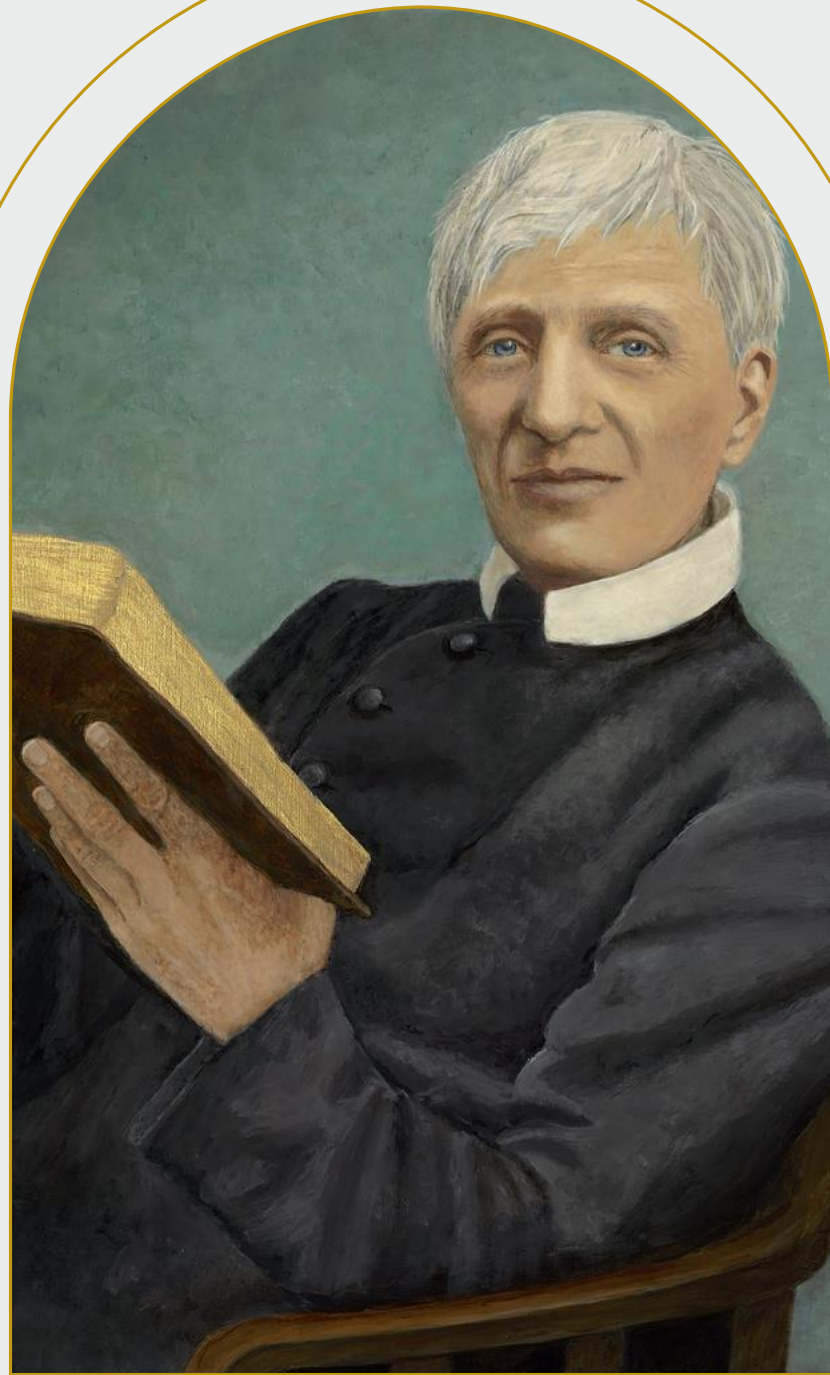
(Archbishop Anthony Fisher, Archdiocese of Sydney)



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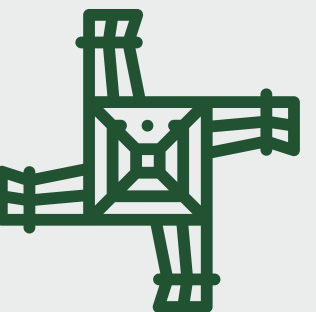
“When I was fifteen, a great change of thought took place in me. I fell under the influences of a definite Creed, and received into my intellect impressions of dogma, which, through God’s mercy, have never been effaced or obscured.”

(St John Henry Newman)



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Women make up the majority of churchgoers and are often the first witnesses to the faith in families. They are active in the life of small Christian communities and parishes.

They run schools, hospitals and shelters. They lead initiatives for reconciliation and promoting human dignity and social justice.

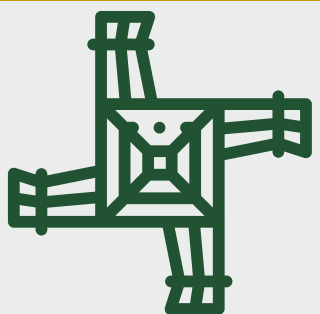
Women contribute to theological research and are present in positions of responsibility in Church institutions, in diocesan curia and the Roman Curia. There are women who hold positions of authority and are leaders of their communities.

This Assembly asks for full implementation of all the opportunities already provided for in Canon Law with regard to the role of women, particularly in those places where they remain underutilised. There is no reason or impediment that should prevent women from carrying out leadership roles in the Church: what comes from the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped.”



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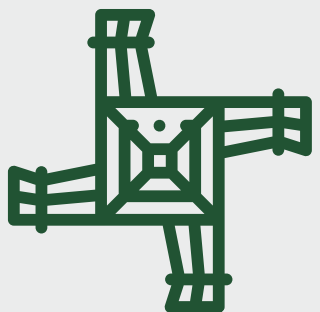
a) the increased participation of laymen and laywomen in Church discernment processes and all phases of decision-making processes (drafting, making and confirming decisions)

b) greater access of laymen and laywomen to positions of responsibility in dioceses and ecclesiastical institutions, including seminaries, theological institutes and faculties



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