

The school, a place of synodality

The Institute's Commission on Association has shared in its latest Newsletter some reflections on the implications of the Church's synodal process for the Lasallian Family.

The word "Synodality" means "walking together", and it is to this experience that the Lasallian **Claire Said, Head of Pastoral Care and Association in the District of Proche Orient**, refers when she recalls the lessons learnt from the sessions of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in which she took part in Rome in October 2023 and October 2024.

"I will focus on a point which touches on our Lasallian charism and mission: the school, a place of Synodality", Claire points out, noting that "mission was at the heart of the discussions during the Synodal Assembly".

Synodality in the Educational Mission

What mission, where, with whom, for whom? These were some of the recurring questions at the 'round tables' set up throughout the Paul VI Hall in the Vatican, where the Synod sessions on Synodality were held. **"At the Lasallian level our mission is very clear and explicit for all Brothers and Partners: our mission is the education of young people,"** remarks Claire.

In this regard, the *Final Document of the Synod* underlines, in number 146, that **"Catholic schools and universities play an important role in the dialogue between faith and culture** and in providing moral education in values, offering a formation oriented towards Christ, the icon of life in its fullness"

Thus, "they become capable of **promoting an alternative to the dominant models** that are often driven by individualism and competition, thereby also playing a prophetic role."

Similarly, the Synodal Assembly emphasises that "in some contexts, [Catholic schools and universities] are the only settings where children and young people come into contact with the Church. **When inspired by intercultural and interreligious dialogue, their educational engagement is also valued by those of other religious traditions as a form of human development**".

Talking about God in the classroom

“How is the Lasallian school a place of Synodality,” asks Claire. Her answer points to the essence of the Lasallian educational hallmark, for “in fact, at the level of ‘walking together’, **Lasallian pedagogy is attentive to each of the young and to all without exception**: speaking of God in the educational act in the classroom is the Synodal style proper to the Lasallian school”.

This synodal style of living the Lasallian educational mission also passes through the experience of mercy, from the option for the poor and vulnerable, the Lasallian educator asserts, since **“Looking at Lasallian works in the world and their presence in places of poverty, in places where education would bring out the dignity of young people, we Lasallians are offered the opportunity to live our baptism”**.

Places of Synodality

Similarly, and very concretely, Claire argues that some spaces such as management councils, team work and class delegates, are opportunities to put Synodality into practice: “our journey of living in Association between Brothers and lay people in our daily lives, and laity among themselves, **the process of living by the example of the Holy Trinity in our modes of operation, discernment and governance makes us a place of Synodality**”.

“Personally, this time of Synod has been for me a very beautiful gift in my journey as a lay faithful within my Church, where in this great diversity that forms the Church, I have witnessed the presence of the Holy Spirit who made our unity,” she concludes.

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