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**DIOCESAN SYNODS:  
THE APPLICATION OF THE LAW  
IN THREE DIOCESES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

by  
David M. Ross

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Canon  
Law, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada, in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Canon Law



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## ABBREVIATIONS

### Documents of the Second Vatican Council

<b>AA</b>	<i>Apostolicam actuositatem</i>
<b>AG</b>	<i>Ad gentes</i>
<b>CD</b>	<i>Christus Dominus</i>
<b>DV</b>	<i>Dei verbum</i>
<b>GE</b>	<i>Gravissimum educationis</i>
<b>GS</b>	<i>Gaudium et spes</i>
<b>IM</b>	<i>Inter mirifica</i>
<b>LG</b>	<i>Lumen gentium</i>
<b>PO</b>	<i>Presbyterorum ordinis</i>

### Textual References

<b>AAS</b>	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>
<b>AS</b>	<i>Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II</i>
<b>CB</b>	<i>Ceremonial of Bishops</i>
<b>CE</b>	<i>Caeremoniale Episcoporum</i>
<b>CLD</b>	<i>Canon Law Digest</i> , T. Bouscaren, et al., eds.
<b>CLSA Commentary</b>	Canon Law Society of America, <i>The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary</i>

## ABBREVIATIONS

x

<b>DPMB</b>	<i>Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops</i>
<b>DPME</b>	<i>Directorium De Pastoralis Ministerio Episcoporum</i>
<b>ES</b>	<i>Motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae</i>
<b>Fontes</b>	<i>Codex Iuris Canonici Fontes</i> , P. Gasparri and I. Seridi, eds.
<b>PL</b>	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina</i> , J. Minge, ed.
<b>PONT. COMM.</b>	<b>Pontificia Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo</b>
<b>1917 CIC</b>	<i>Codex Iuris Canonici...</i> (1917)
<b>1983 CIC</b>	<i>Codex Iuris Canonici...</i> (1983)

### **Diocesan Abbreviations**

<b>AB</b>	<b>Archdiocese of Boston</b>
<b>ANO</b>	<b>Archdiocese of New Orleans</b>
<b>DT</b>	<b>Diocese of Toledo</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

**One of the most notable characteristics of the post-Vatican II Church is the increased collaboration which now exists among its members in working toward the proclamation and advancement of the kingdom of God. Not only is this collaboration evident among those who are specifically commissioned by the Church to serve God's people, but it can also be seen among those who are recipients of this service. In short, many of the Christian faithful are simply assuming greater ownership and responsibility for the Church. They are not only helping to develop a solid vision which can serve as a basis for future ecclesial growth, but they are also creating practical strategies to facilitate this growth. One vehicle in particular which the post-Vatican II Church promotes to advance this collaborate effort is the diocesan synod.**

**The 1983 *Code of Canon Law* has revised the legislation pertaining to the holding of diocesan synods, their membership, and their functioning. As dioceses wishing to implement the prescriptions of the revised code began to convoke synods, it became evident that there was no standard procedure available that could be adopted by them. The canons of the code relative to the matter merely provide a framework and not a blueprint for holding synods. Inevitably, then, mistakes were made, points of law overlooked, procedures were unclear, and, at times, there was no unified vision relating to the nature of the synod and its purpose.**

In view of this situation, this dissertation wishes to examine the legislation pertaining to the diocesan synod in the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* in the context of its practical application.<sup>1</sup> While a fair amount of research has been done on the legislation itself, very little has been written as to its real-life implementation. To this end, the manner in which three United States dioceses have conducted their synods will be examined. The dioceses retained are Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo. These particular churches have been selected because each is unique demographically (size, location), and the synodal process each experienced was different. In addition, the fruits of the synodal labors were diverse: one issued recommendations and mandates, another mission statements, statutes and policies, while the third published visionary<sup>2</sup> documents and directives. The manner in which each of these particular churches prepared for, celebrated, and implemented its synod was unique.

The purpose of our efforts, then, will be not only to consider the nature of the diocesan synod, but also to study in detail *how* a diocesan synod should be prepared, celebrated, and implemented, taking into account the prescriptions of the

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<sup>1</sup>Particular portions of this work are based upon research previously done at the Catholic University of America. Cf. D. ROSS, "The Diocesan Synod: A Comparative Analysis of the 1917 and 1983 Codes of Canon Law", Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1986, iii-97p, J.C.L. Dissertation.

<sup>2</sup>The terms "vision" and "visionary" used throughout this work refer to a future direction or established goal.

common law of the Church, as well as those particular circumstances affecting the dioceses which are the focus of this endeavor.

Throughout the history of the Church, synods at various levels have played a significant role in enabling the Church to become more aware of its nature and mission. This study begins by examining the recent developments in the Western Churches relative to diocesan synods. It is only in the context of this rich background that those who participate in the synodal experience can appreciate the challenge which lies before them; that is, to continue to develop the nature of the institute.

The diocesan synod encompasses more than a single event held in a few hours or days. While it is a process, it is more than that. Its goal should be to produce something more than a pleasant recollection. Thus, substantive elements should issue from the experience if it is to be a successful one.

The law of the Church once mandated that diocesan synods should be celebrated at certain intervals. This is no longer the case. Yet, the necessity and frequency of their convocation should not be underestimated. Even though the synodal process today often involves far more time, effort, and money than in the past, it is possible that the benefits derived from the experience may also be greater now. If this is to occur, though, significant attention should be given to synodal preparation. Elements, such as the role of key personnel (bishop, coordinator, committees, etc.), should be considered far in advance of convoking a synod. The



extent of prior consultation should be examined. Establishing a work-plan and timeline are recommended. And finally, long before announcing a synod, careful attention should be given to the expenses involved in the venture. These practical elements, which are not fully considered by the law, are, nonetheless, quite important. This work will address these matters.

There are similarities in the manner in which Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo celebrated their synods. Working within the framework of the law, all employed popular consultations in creating their documents, and all limited what they could treat in their synods. But the extent of their membership, the type of documents, and the variety of synodal assemblies which they developed differed greatly. This diversity provides good examples for other particular churches contemplating such an endeavor.

The diocesan bishop is the sole legislator at the synod, but how he fulfills this responsibility can vary from diocese to diocese. This work will also consider the role of the bishop in this regard and how it was exercised in the three dioceses engaged in this study. In addition, the kind of documents which were signed by the bishop will be reviewed as well as their binding nature.

One particular element in relation to diocesan synods which is receiving increased attention today is the implementary phase of the process. The expectation in the past was that the diocesan bishop and curial officials would oversee the implementation of the declarations and decrees; and this was done rather quickly.

The broader nature of the synodal experience today seems to extend the responsibility for the implementation of the products. Certainly those employed by the Church would have a key role in making the synodal declarations and decrees effective; but, again, the good will and service of many other collaborators can help to ensure their fuller implementation.

So many factors today contribute to questioning the value of the diocesan synod, e.g., cost, effort, and rewards. But when viewed from a broader perspective, the institute can have great merit. When we see it as a vehicle for promoting co-responsibility for the Church, the synod can gain acceptance. If we consider its impact in more than immediate terms, its value increases. Over a longer span of time, for example, the enfleshment of a vision developed by a synod can occur. People are given the opportunity to struggle with and discover what decrees and declarations do and do not work. In this light, it can be a credible tool for planning and addressing people's concerns about the future of a particular church.

Because the diocesan synod is a practical event in the life of a particular church, this study will address the issues surrounding the synod from a very realistic perspective. The experience of three particular dioceses involved in the process can hopefully be of valuable assistance to others thinking of such an enterprise.

## CHAPTER I

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIOCESAN SYNODS

This chapter will initially consider the origin and evolution of the word "synod". Secondly, it will trace the development of the notion of "diocesan synod" since the eighteenth century when Benedict XIV gave it new impetus. Thirdly, it will address the nature of the institute as it is understood today, and experienced in contemporary forms of some diocesan synods which have been celebrated in the United States. And finally, the convocation of the synod itself will be treated.

Throughout this and succeeding chapters, while at times examining processes followed in other dioceses, special attention will be given to comparing aspects of the synodal processes in three particular churches of the United States: Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo.<sup>1</sup> As each diocese made plans for its own synod, the many

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<sup>1</sup>So that the reader might have a fuller understanding of the dioceses which are the specific focus of this work, some basic demographic information is offered herein. Cf. *The Official Catholic Directory*, Wilmette, Illinois, P.J. Kenedy and Sons, 1991, pp. 94, 114, 635, 646, 1036, 1043.

The Archdiocese of Boston was erected on April 8, 1808; it encompasses 2,465 square miles. Out of a total area population of 3,783,817, there are 1,927,711 registered Catholics. There are 401 parishes, 760 active diocesan priests and 821 religious priests in the archdiocese.

The Archdiocese of New Orleans was erected on April 25, 1793; it encompasses 4,208 square miles. Out of a total area population of 1,380,200, there are 549,977 registered Catholics. There are 145 parishes, 194 active diocesan priests and 268 religious priests in the archdiocese.

The Diocese of Toledo was erected on April 15, 1910; it covers 8,222 square miles. Out of a total area population of 1,486,610, there are 327,461 registered Catholics. There are 163 parishes, 164 active diocesan priests and 64 religious

personnel involved in guiding the process found it necessary to become acquainted first with the canonical and historical foundations of the institute. Only after they came to an understanding of the full nature of the synodal experience were they prepared to consider the practical elements involved in the undertaking.

#### A. Etymology of the word

The word "synod" or "meeting" is derived from the Greek "σύν" meaning "with" and "ὁδός" meaning "road";<sup>2</sup> in other words, it involves a group traveling upon the same road. Because of shared common interests and a similar vision of a future destination, members of a particular church join together to plan for a faith journey.

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priests in the diocese.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, G. Liddell and R. Scott, comps., Oxford, University Press, 1961, pp. 969 and 1397; *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, G. Lampe, ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987, pp. 1134-1135. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, Roma, Università Lateranense, 1986, pp. 44-45; F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod: An Historical Conspectus and Commentary*, Canon Law Studies, 74, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1932, pp. 1-6.

H. Ayrinhac<sup>3</sup> observed that ancient writers used the terms "council" and "synod" interchangeably. Tertullian seems to have introduced the use of the former term,<sup>4</sup> and both were used to signify the different gatherings of the Christians in the primitive community wherein ecclesiastical matters were considered.<sup>5</sup> Some authors<sup>6</sup> assert that, in reference to a diocesan synod, the term was first used by Hostiensis in his *Summa aurea*.<sup>7</sup> It seems that by the seventeenth century the term referred only to diocesan synods.<sup>8</sup> Yet, the phrase *sancta synodus* was often used

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<sup>3</sup>H. AYRINHAC, *Constitution of the Church in the New Code of Canon Law*, New York, Longmans, Green and Company, 1929, p. 193. Cf. also BENEDICT XIV, *De Synodo Dioecesana*, vol. 1, lib. I, cap. 1, n. 1, Mechliniae, P. Hanicq, 1842, pp. 31-32; R. NAZ, "Synode", in *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, R. Naz, ed., vol. 7, Paris, Letouzey et Ané, 1965, cols. 1134-1140; F. WERNZ and P. VIDAL, *Ius Canonicum*, vol. 2, Romae, Università Gregoriana, 1923, p. 658, fn. 1.

<sup>4</sup>TERTULLIAN, "De Jejuniis", in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, J. Migne, ed., vol. 2, Paris, J. -P. Migne, 1844, col. 972.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. PONTIFICIA COMMISSIONE PER LA REDAZIONE DEL CODICE DI DIRITTO CANONICO ORIENTALE, "Canones Apostolorum" in *Fontes*, P. Joannou, ed., vol. 1, pt. 2, c. 37, Grottaferatta (Roma), Tipographia Italo-Orientale "S. Nilo", 1962-1964, p. 26: "Bis in anno episcoporum concilia celebrentur, ut inter se invicem dogmata pietatis explorent et emergentes ecclesiasticas contentiones absolvant..."

<sup>6</sup>Cf. J. FUENTES CABALLERO, "El sínodo diocesano", in *Ius canonicum*, 21 (1981), p. 548; M. RIZZI, "De Synodis Dioecesanis et de Constitutionibus Synodalibus", in *Apollinaris*, 28 (1955), p. 292, fn. 3.

<sup>7</sup>H. HOSTIENSIS, *Summa aurea*, lib. 1, Venetiis, 1570, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. G. PHILLIPS, *Die Diözesansynode*, Freiburg im Breisgau, Herder'sche Berlagshandlung, 1849, p. 19, fn. 17.

to designate an ecumenical council.<sup>9</sup> M. Rizzi also notes its use for general or provincial councils as well as for diocesan and parochial gatherings.<sup>10</sup>

### B. Recent developments in the Western Churches

Until the Second Vatican Council, the purpose and parameters of the diocesan synod generally remained constant from one age to the next with slight variation.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Cf. BENEDICT XIV, *De Synodo Dioecessana*, vol. 1, lib. 1, cap. 3, n. 1, pp. 49-51; CONCILIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Decretum de Instrumentis Communicationis Socialis: 'Inter mirifica'" (hereafter: *IM*), n. 2, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (hereafter: *AAS*), 56 (1964), p. 146; "Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia: 'Lumen gentium'" (hereafter: *LG*), n. 20, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), p. 24; "Decretum de Pastoralis Episcoporum Munere in Ecclesia: 'Christus Dominus'" (hereafter: *CD*), n. 3, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), p. 674; "Declaratio de Educatione Christiana: 'Gravissimum educationis'" (hereafter: *GE*), nn. 1, 6, 8, 9, 10, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 728, 734, 735, 736, 737; "Constitutio Dogmatica de Divina Revelatione: 'Dei verbum'" (hereafter: *DV*), nn. 1, 6, 25, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 817, 819, 829; "Decretum de Activitate Missionali Ecclesiae: 'Ad gentes'" (hereafter: *AG*), nn. 1, 35, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 947, 983.

<sup>10</sup>M. RIZZI, "De Synodis Dioecesanis et de Constitutionibus Synodalibus", p. 293. Cf. H. SCHMITZ, "Die Diözesansynode: Ihre geplante Zukunft in kirchenrechtlicher Sicht", *Archiv für Katholisches Kirchenrecht*, 144 (1975), p. 448, fn. 13. At the Munich Canonical Symposium in 1971 where the text of the *Lex Ecclesiae Fundamentalis* was discussed, an additional canon was proposed which spoke of the establishment of a "conventus dioecesanus" or "eparchialis" -- diocesan synod. In commenting upon the proposal, H. Schmitz said that the Eastern Church's understanding of "conventus eparchialis," means a synodal assembly of the bishop with his clergy which is only partially comparable to the diocesan synod of the Latin Church.

<sup>11</sup>For a more extensive presentation on the evolution of diocesan synods -- especially their origin and development until the promulgation of the 1917 *CIC* -- cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 14-43; J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod, An Instrument of Renewal for the Local

Any differences which did occur were based upon two factors: 1) the special needs of a particular church at a specific moment in its growth; and 2) the operative ecclesiology of the period. Vatican II indeed aided in expanding the notion and purpose of this institute.

In the United States, at least one-third of the dioceses have celebrated synods since the beginning of the republic<sup>12</sup> and nearly forty have celebrated them since the Second Vatican Council or are currently in the process of doing so.<sup>13</sup> In

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Church", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), pp. 69-84; F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod: An Historical Conspectus and Commentary*, pp. 7-34; J. FUENTES CABALLERO, "El sínodo diocesano", pp. 547-556; J. GAUDEMET, "Aspect synodal de l'organisation du diocèse", in *Le Synode diocésain dans l'Histoire et dans le Code*, Paris, Faculté de droit canonique de Paris, 1988, pp. 1-31; L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", in *Studia canonica*, 20 (1986), pp. 320-329; O. PONTAL, "Evolution du synode diocésain", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, 14p.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. J. PROVOST, "Preparing for Particular Legislation to Implement the Revised Code", in *The Jurist*, 42 (1982), p. 354.

<sup>13</sup>For probably the most complete listing of diocesan synods celebrated from 300 A.D. until the present, cf. F. CANTELAR RODRÍGUEZ, *Coleccion sinodal "Lamberto de Echeverria" catalogo*, Salamanca, Universidad Pontificia, 1980-1987, 2 vols. Cf. also J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, pp. 3-4, fn. 6. Some of the dioceses in the United States which have celebrated synods since Vatican II are noted by Provost: from the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council to the promulgation of the 1983 code: Atlanta (1966), Richmond (1966), Kansas City-St. Joseph (1967), Allentown (1968), Manchester (1968), Detroit (1969), Evansville (1969), Bridgeport (1971), Cincinnati (1971), Paterson (1971), San Diego (1976), Bridgeport (1981), Gallup (1983), Sioux Falls (1983). Since the promulgation of the 1983 code the following have celebrated a synod: Steubenville (1983), Peoria (1984), Davenport (1986), La Crosse (1986), Scranton (1986), Charlotte, (1987), Milwaukee (1987), New Orleans (1987), Boston (1988), Corpus Christi (1988), El Paso (1988), Green Bay (1988), Harrisburg (1988), Helena (1988), Lafayette-in-

comparing the documents of these synods with those which were celebrated before Vatican II, one would surely recognize a development in their aims.

So that we might better understand the impact of Vatican II on the development of the notion of the diocesan synod, it would be helpful to retrace some recent highlights of the institute.

### 1. Benedict XIV

In his now classical work, *De Synodo Dioeclesana* (1748), Benedict XIV defined the diocesan synod as

a legitimate gathering convoked by the bishop, of the priests and clergy of his diocese and others who must attend, in which those matters relative to pastoral care are discussed and acted upon.<sup>14</sup>

The definition fundamentally reflected three basic characteristics of a diocesan synod: 1) for it to be legitimate, it had to be convoked by the bishop; 2) it was to be comprised mostly of the assembled clergy of the diocese; and 3) it dealt with matters of pastoral concern for the diocese.

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Louisiana (1988), Miami (1988), Joliet (1989), New York (1989), Toledo, (1989). Charleston, Cheyenne, Evansville, El Paso, Fargo, Newark and Owensboro are either currently in the synodal process or preparing for it.

<sup>14</sup>BENEDICT XIV, *De Synodo Dioeclesana*, vol. 1, lib. 1, cap. 1, n. 4, p. 38: "Legitima congregatio ab Episcopo coacta ex Presbyteris et Clericis suae Dioecesis, aliisque, qui ad eam accedere tenentur, in qua de his, quae curae Pastoralis incumbunt, agendum et deliberandum est."



A high synodal priority among these pastoral concerns was clerical life and ministry. Clerics were often exhorted in these gathering to follow the decrees of the provincial councils which usually preceded the synod, and at the same time were called to task for any abuses which may have crept into the exercise of their ministry.<sup>15</sup> When they arrived at the synod, those priests who attended were to be accountable to the bishop for their activities, and were to receive his instructions on the catechesis of the laity and on their own life and ministry.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the diocesan synod was not merely a repetition of the general law of the Church, but its application to local circumstances.

## 2. From the 1917 code until Vatican II

In the 1917 code,<sup>17</sup> canons 356-362 dealt with the diocesan synod. Not only was the interval between celebrations lengthened from one to ten years, but the

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<sup>15</sup>H. Ayrinhac (*Constitution on the Church in the New Code of Canon Law*, pp. 200-201) noted that in times past, after the decrees of the previous provincial council were published, the bishop, in the synod itself, would require the assembled pastors to be accountable for their administration and even perhaps to bring their sacred vessels and vestments to prove to him that they had taken care of them. They were also examined in regard to their fulfillment of their office.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 17. Cf. also J. MANSI, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Paris, Arnhem (Pays-Bas) and Leipzig, H. Welter, 1901-1927: for the Councils of Huesca (598), c. 1, vol. 10, p. 481; IV Toledo (633), c. 26, vol. 10, p. 627; Liptin (743), c. 3, vol. 12, p. 371; Clovesho (747), c. 25, vol. 12, p. 403; Arles (813), c. 4, vol 14, p. 59.

<sup>17</sup>*Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi Iussu Digestus Benedicti Papae XV Auctoritate Promulgatus* (hereafter: 1917 CIC), Westminster, Maryland, Newman Press, 1957, xlvi-786p.

synod's purpose was somewhat broadened to include acting upon matters which were useful and necessary for the diocese. The bishop was to convoke and preside over the synod, and his vicar general could do so only by special mandate. The canons indicated who were required to attend and who could be there at the behest of the bishop. The members had a consultative vote, but the bishop was the sole legislator. Preparatory commissions were recommended, schemata were to be sent to the members beforehand, and free discussion was to occur at the preparatory sessions. Because matters related to the synod were not confined to canons 356-362, but were also found in various other places throughout the code, H. Heinemann noted that it was difficult to offer an accurate definition or description of a synod.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, F. Donnelly described the institute as

a legitimate assembly of a representative body of clergy of a diocese who have been convoked by the bishop for the purpose of discussing and adopting whatsoever measures are necessary or useful for the welfare of the diocese.<sup>19</sup>

From the promulgation of the 1917 code until the Second Vatican Council, diocesan synods throughout the Church were held only sporadically. Very few dioceses followed the law obliging them to hold them every ten years. Indeed, for

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<sup>18</sup>H. HEINEMANN, "Zur Reform de Diözesansynode: Eine kritische Überlegung zu cc. 356-362 CIC", in *Ecclesia et Ius, Festgabe für A. Scheuermann zum 60 Geburtstag*, K. Siepen, J. Weitzel and P. Wirth, eds., Paderborn, F. Schöningh, 1968, p. 216.

<sup>19</sup>F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 2.

many bishops, other means such as diocesan statutes<sup>20</sup> seemed to serve the needs of the diocese.

### 3. From Vatican II until the 1983 code

When Pope John XXIII called the Synod of Rome in 1959, his definition of the institute did not differ considerably from those which preceded it. In his pastoral letter to the faithful of Rome he observed that

the synod is a reunion of the bishop with his priests to study the problems and the spiritual life of the faithful, to give or restore vigor to ecclesiastical laws, correct abuses, promote the Christian life, stimulate divine worship and religious practice.<sup>21</sup>

Subsequent to his announcement to convene both the diocesan synod of Rome and an ecumenical council and to revise the Code of Canon Law, the bishops of the world and other experts were invited to submit suggestions for conciliar legislation.<sup>22</sup> Among the suggestions regarding the diocesan synod were requests

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<sup>20</sup>Cf. A. STICKLER, *Historia Iuris Canonici Latini, Historia Fontium*, Torino, Athenaei Salesiani, 1950, p. 114. The author noted that the Chapters of Bishops, also known as "diocesan statutes", were really not different from the synodal constitutions which arose in the twelfth century and preceded the Chapters. Cf. also M. RIZZI, *De Synodis Dioecesis et de Constitutionibus Synodalibus*, pp. 313-314.

<sup>21</sup>JOHN XXIII, "La Lettera di Sua Santità al Popolo Romano", in *L'Osservatore Romano*, February 21, 1959, p. 1: "Il Sinodo è infatti la riunione del Vescovo con i suoi sacerdoti per studiare i problemi della vita spirituale dei fedeli, dare o restituire vigore alle leggi ecclesiastiche per estirpare gli abusi, promuovere la vita cristiana, fomentare il culto divino e la pratica religiosa."

<sup>22</sup>Cf. *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano Apparando*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 1, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960-1969, pp. 513-514.

to clarify its purpose,<sup>23</sup> the role of conciliar legislation in relation to the synod,<sup>24</sup> the frequency of convocation,<sup>25</sup> membership,<sup>26</sup> and the appointment of synodal examiners and of parish priest consultors.<sup>27</sup>

a. Vatican II influence

In the 83rd conciliar congregation, when n. 34 (later n. 36)<sup>28</sup> of the schema on the *Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church* was discussed, relatively little time was devoted to diocesan synods other than encouraging them.<sup>29</sup> When chapter three of the decree *Christus Dominus* was approved by the 137th general congregation on November 6, 1964, the text of n. 36 remained exactly the same as when it was first proposed.<sup>30</sup> This was the only place in the conciliar documents

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<sup>23</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 426 and 469. Cf. also 1, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 513.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 709.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 576 and 624. Cf. also 1, vol. 3, p. 57; 1, vol. 2, pt. 4, p. 184 where a seven year interval is recommended; 1, vol. 2, pt. 8, p. 240 for a ten year interval; 1, vol. 2, pt. 7, p. 321 where it is recommended that the synod be celebrated when necessary, but at least every ten years.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 8, p. 240. Cf. also 1, vol. 2, pt. 7, p. 82-83.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 7, p. 389.

<sup>28</sup>*Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II* (hereafter: AS), vol. 3, pt. 2, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970-1980, p. 37.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 53; vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 198. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 31-37.

<sup>30</sup>Cf. AS, vol. 4, pt. 2, p. 599.

where the subject was mentioned. In *Christus Dominus*, n. 36,<sup>31</sup> the notion of a synod began to be developed beyond that held previously. H. Heinemann observed that the term "synod" used there is understood more in the vein of the early Church rather than in the legal mentality of the 1917 code. He notes that the synod in the code was seen merely as an instrument of diocesan governance, whereas the Council situates it in the broader context of teaching the truths of the faith and regulating ecclesiastical discipline.<sup>32</sup> The contemporary shift in the conciliar texts from the "perfect society" ecclesiology to a more communal focus affected the notion and purpose of the diocesan synod.<sup>33</sup> This is exemplified in both *Christus Dominus*, n.

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<sup>31</sup>AAS, 58 (1966), p. 692.

<sup>32</sup>H. HEINEMANN, "Zur Reform der Diözesansynode, p. 210: "Da das 3. Kapitel des Dekretes ohnehin von der Zusammenarbeit der Bischöfe zum gemeinsamen Wohl mehrerer Kirchen spricht und in den Ausführungen von Synoden, Provinzilkonzilien und Plenarkonzilien, in denen Bischöfe eine einheitliche Regelung für die Verkündigung der Glaubenswahrheiten und für die kirchliche Disziplin festlegen, die Rede ist, liegt die Vermutung nahe, daß das Wort Synode hier mehr im Verständnis der frühchristlichen Kirche als im rechtssprachlichen Sinne der cc. 358 ff. verwandt wird. Synoden nach c. 358 sind lediglich Instrumente der Diözesanregierung."

<sup>33</sup>Cf. P. COLLINS, "The Diocesan Synod - An Assembly of the People of God", in *The Jurist*, 33 (1973), p. 402: "If we think of the Church primarily in personal rather than societal terms, it will become something quite different for us in externals. If we conceive of the Church as primarily an internal, spiritual entity that needs external expression and coordination but not necessarily external uniformity, then the Church will become for us something quite different in its communal and structural appearances. For as we conceive of a thing, so it will become for us."

Cf. also K. MÖRSDORF, "Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church", in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, H. Vorgrimler, ed., vol. 2, New York, Herder and Herder, 1968, p. 282.

27<sup>34</sup> and *Ad gentes*, n. 30<sup>35</sup> which encourage the bishop to establish a pastoral council composed of clergy, religious and laity to assist him in apostolic activity.<sup>36</sup> Although section 1<sup>37</sup> of the *motu proprio, Ecclesiae sanctae* implementing *Christus Dominus* and *Presbyterorum ordinis* did not clarify the role of such a body, the norms in section 3 implementing *Ad gentes* offer partial clarification. N. 20 states that the pastoral council should investigate, consider, and arrive at practical conclusions about pastoral work, and also assist in preparing for a diocesan synod and carrying out its statutes.<sup>38</sup> The initial mention of a greater role for the laity in the preparatory and executory phases of the synod was a decisive step leading to their eventual involvement in the process itself.

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<sup>34</sup>AAS, 58 (1966), p. 687.

<sup>35</sup>AAS, 58 (1966), p. 976.

<sup>36</sup>P. Collins ("The Diocesan Synod-An Assembly of the People of God", p. 400) notes that *CD* "makes three things clear:

1. The synod is to be an instrument of spiritual renewal.
2. The synod is to reform the external life of the particular church.
3. The synod's decisions and methods, its renewal and reform must correspond to the needs of the times."

<sup>37</sup>PAUL VI, *Motu proprio, Ecclesiae sanctae*, I, August 6, 1966, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 757-775.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 787.

b. The period subsequent to the Council

Following the Second Vatican Council, synods were held in numerous countries.<sup>39</sup> The approach varied from Germany where they were held in common, to Switzerland where they were held simultaneously but not in common. In the wake of the Council, some authors, like H. Schmitz, considered diocesan synods to have lost all their meaning,<sup>40</sup> but eventually even he, after the promulgation of the

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<sup>39</sup>In addition to F. Cantelar Rodríguez who was cited earlier, cf. J. FUENTES CABALLERO, "El sínodo diocesano", pp. 555-556. Cf. also J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", pp. 3-4, fn. 6.

For recent insights into synods which have been celebrated in Europe, cf. papers presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990: **Spain**: J. ARRIETA, "Los sínodos diocesanos españoles tras la promulgación del Código de Derecho Canónico de 1983", 23p; **Germany**: W. SCHULTZ, "Les synodes régionaux et diocésains: Erfahrungen und Perspektiven in den deutschsprachigen Ländern", 19p; **Poland**: M. STASIAK, "Sinodi Diocesani in Polonia dopo il Concilio Vaticano II", 12p; and **France**: J. DURAND, "Un regain d'intérêt en France pour les synodes diocésains. Experiences et perspectives", 6p. Cf. also M. HÉBRARD, *Révolution tranquille chez les catholiques?*, Paris, Centurion, 1989, 234p.

<sup>40</sup>Cf. H. SCHMITZ, *Die Gesetzssystematik des Codex Iuris Canonici Liber I-III*, München, M. Hüber, 1963, p. 161. Nonetheless, Schmitz observed that diocesan synods had not fallen into as much desuetude as plenary and provincial councils. H. Heinemann (*ibid.*, p. 215, fn. 35) himself declared that the synod, while once the ordinary organ for advising the bishop, developed into an extraordinary vehicle.

Cf. also L. de ECHEVERRIA, "La legislación particular canónica en la época moderna", in *El Concilio de Braga y la función de la legislación particular en la Iglesia*, Salamanca, Instituto San Raimundo de Peñafort, 1975, pp. 341-343. If the synod were viewed simply as a gathering where conciliar texts were communicated by the bishop to his clergy, de Echeverria noted that it would be an anachronism in the contemporary Church because the communications media can do so just about as accurately.

Cf. also A. GOMMENGINGER, "Verfassung und Strukturen in einem neuen Kirchenrecht", in *Orientierung*, 31 (1967), p. 27. The author argued that the

revised code, saw hope for the institute because it offered an opportunity for "all the parties, ministries, groups and [apostolic] initiatives" to gather so that they might thoroughly consider the significant issues affecting the diocese.<sup>41</sup>

As greater emphasis was placed upon the conciliar notion of co-responsibility in the Church, a definition of the diocesan synod developed which would include this idea. S. O'Connor would see the diocesan synod

not... as a body which determines detailed rules for those within the diocese, but rather the assembly which establishes and defines the competence of representative bodies which, in turn, will be the on-going instruments for ordering the mission of the diocese.<sup>42</sup>

The notion of a synod found in the 1917 code as being basically a convocation in which laws were established now gives way to a broader definition.<sup>43</sup> J. Coriden

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diocesan synod is superseded by the new conference of bishops, at least in the Latin Church, and thus should be abolished. K. Mörsdorf (in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 2, p. 283) noted, though, that this is contrary to paragraph 2 of CD, n. 36.

<sup>41</sup>H. SCHMITZ, "Die Konsultationsorgane des Diözesanbishops", in *Handbuch des katholischen Kirchenrechts*, J. Listl, H. Müller and H. Schmitz, eds., Regensburg, F. Pustet, 1983, p. 355: "Die Chance der Diözesansynode könnte darin liegen, daß sie alle Teile, Dienste, Gruppen und Initiativen vereint und die großen Fragen der Diözese grundlegend und unfassend berat." Cf. also H. HEINEMANN, "Zur Reform der Diözesansynode", p. 222.

<sup>42</sup>S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, Canon Law Studies, 473, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1970, p. 2 (preface).

<sup>43</sup>S. O'Connor (*ibid.*, p. 15) clarified his definition by observing that synods should concern themselves with particularizing the universal mission of the Church and implementing it. Of course, not all share O'Connor's view. Some authors repeat the traditional purposes for a diocesan synod. Cf. I. FÜRER, "De Synodo Dioecesana", in *Periodica*, 62 (1973), pp. 117-131; L. de ECHEVERRIA, *Código de*



even suggested that a post conciliar-diocesan synod should discuss ways of fostering communication, providing for religious education, raising consciousness, establishing goals, reorganizing diocesan structures, and correcting abuses to reflect contemporary ecclesiology.<sup>44</sup>

c. *The Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*

In 1973, the *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* declared that

according to the pastoral practice which was traditional for centuries and was given the force of law by the Council of Trent, the diocesan synod and pastoral visitations are matters of extraordinary importance in the ministry of the bishop...

The diocesan synod, which is convoked and moderated by the bishop and to which the clergy, religious and laity are summoned according to the norms of law, is the assembly in which the bishop -- using the help of experts in theology, pastoral and law, and drawing upon the advice of the diocesan community's various associations -- officially fulfills his function and ministry of feeding the flock entrusted to him, by adapting the laws and norms of the universal Church to local conditions, by pointing out the policy and program of apostolic work in the diocese, by resolving problems encountered in the apostolate and administration, by giving impetus to projects and

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*Derecho Canónico*, Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1983, p. 252; P. LOMBARDIA and J. ARRIETA, *Código de Derecho Canónico*, vol. 1, Pamplona, Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1983, p. 327. Cf. also LG, n. 5, in AAS, 57 (1965), pp. 7-8; J. PROVOST, "Preparing for Particular Legislation to Implement the Revised Code", p. 55.

<sup>44</sup>J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod", p. 87.

undertakings and by correcting errors in doctrine and morals if any have crept in.<sup>45</sup>

In the eighteenth congregation of the Third General Synod of Bishops held on October 14, 1974, Cardinal Pericle Felici, president of the Code Commission, offered the assembled bishops a report on the progress of the revision of the code. Later, during a question and answer period, Archbishop Bernard Echeverria Ruiz of Guayaquil, Ecuador, inquired how diocesan synods could be celebrated at that time if bishops did not have any clear legislation which could be used. In response, the secretary of the Code Commission, Msgr. Willy Onclin, noted that new norms

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<sup>45</sup>CONGREGATIO PRO EPISCOPIS, *Directorium de Pastoralis Ministerio Episcoporum* (hereafter: *DPME*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973, nn. 162-163, pp. 159-160 (Cf. *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* [hereafter: *DPMB*], Translation prepared by the Benedictine Monks of the Seminary of Christ the King, Mission, B.C., Ottawa, Publications Service of the Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974, pp. 83-84. This translation will be used in this study for all English version quotations from the *Directory*): "Iuxta traditam a saeculis et a Tridentino Oecumenico Concilio statutam actionis pastoralis disciplinam, praecipua in ministerio Episcopi negotia sunt Synodus dioecesis et Visitatio pastoralis..."

Synodus dioecesis, quam convocat et moderatur Episcopus et ad quam clerici, religiosi et laici ad normam iuris convocantur, est congregatio, in qua Episcopus, auxilio usus peritorum scientiae theologiae, pastoralis ac iuridicae, atque consiliis fruens diversorum coetuum communitatis dioecesis, solemniter modo fungitur officio ac ministerio pascendi gregem sibi commissum, leges et normas universalis Ecclesiae adiunctis localibus aptando, via ac rationes laboris apostolici in dioecesi indicando, apostolatus ac regiminis difficultates solvendo, opera et incepta generalia instimulando, errores in doctrina et moribus, si qui serpent, corrigendo."

were prepared but had not yet been promulgated. Nonetheless, diocesan synods could be celebrated according to the spirit of Vatican II.<sup>46</sup>

d. The code schemas

The canons of the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei* dealing with diocesan synods were seen as a welcome improvement over the 1917 code.<sup>47</sup> Of significant importance was the inclusion of the laity as members.<sup>48</sup> While the ten-year interval between synods was retained, it was modified to allow the bishop greater discretion

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<sup>46</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 6 (1974), pp. 162-163.

F. Donnelly ("The New Diocesan Synod", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), pp. 396-399) held that the *DPME* did not oblige bishops to include laity as members of the synod, but only *recommended* their inclusion in the institute.

<sup>47</sup>Cf., for example, CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, *Initial Report of Task Force Committee on the Draft of the Canons of Book Two: The People of God*, U.S.C.C. Publications, 1978, pp. 30-31. The report noted that the provisions offered significant possibilities if they were seriously implemented, especially in the realm of setting diocesan priorities and establishing offices and institutes for long-term pastoral planning.

<sup>48</sup>PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO CODICI IURIS CANONICI RECOGNOSCENDO (hereafter: PONT. COMM.), *Schema Canonum Libri II De Populo Dei*, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977, p. 113: "Can. 273, §1, 4° - christifideles etiam laici, sive viri sive mulieres, ut delegati Consilii pastoralis, ab eodem Consilio eligendi, modo et numero ab Episcopo dioecesano determinandis, aut, ubi hoc Consilium non exstet, aliqui christifideles ratione ab eodem Episcopo determinata."

For an additional explanation of the development of the institute of diocesan synods in the various schemas preceding the current code, cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 40-43.

regarding the appropriateness of its celebration, but not beyond twenty years.<sup>49</sup>

Canon 270 of the schema reflected the spirit of Vatican II and the recommendations of commentators on the Council when it defined the synod as

a group in which are called from the particular church some selected presbyters and also other members of the Christian faithful who, for the good of the entire diocesan community, offer help by their work to the pastor of their own church and the diocesan bishop, and concern themselves with those causes which pertain to the proper mission of the church and the proper usefulness for the particular church...<sup>50</sup>

One criticism of the proposed definition noted that it still appeared to be "overly personalized, an instrument of the bishop rather than a significant assembly of the whole people of God of a particular church."<sup>51</sup> The *coetus* which reviewed the animadversions on the schema *De Populo Dei* entertained requests for changes

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<sup>49</sup>PONT. COMM., *Schema Canonum Libri II De Populo Dei*, pp. 112-113: "Can. 271, §1 - Synodus dioecesis in singulis Ecclesiis particularibus celebretur decimo saltem quoque anno; si tamen, iudicio Episcopi dioecesis, adiuncta id suadeant, eius celebratio differi potest, non vero ultra viginti ab anteacta celebratione annos."

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 112: "Synodus dioecesis est coetus in quo conveniunt aliqui ex Ecclesiae particularis presbyterio delecti necnon et eiusdem quidam alii christifideles, qui in bonum totius communitatis dioecesis adiutricem praestent operam proprio eiusdem Ecclesiae pastori, Episcopo dioecesis, et ad quam pertinet de iis quae ad propriam missionem propriasque utilitates eiusdem Ecclesiae particularis referuntur agere causis..."

<sup>51</sup>CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, *Second Report of the Canon Law Society of America Task Force Committee on the Schema Canonum Libri II De Populo Dei*, Washington, 1978, p. 24.

reflecting the traditionally clerical view of the synod, but canon 460 of the 1983 code basically restates what was contained in the original schema.<sup>52</sup>

In reference to canons 379-388 of the 1980 schema on the synod,<sup>53</sup> Cardinal C. Bafile said that synods were traditionally instruments of the bishops for promoting the good of souls and strengthening the faith and discipline. But, like particular councils, diocesan synods may be occasions of possible confusion and damage to the governance of the Church. Therefore, the code needed to address the issue.<sup>54</sup> In reply to his observation, the *Relatio* mentions that the text was not to be changed because the abuses of which Cardinal Bafile spoke do not arise from the very nature of the synod, and because diocesan bishops possess the appropriate authority to forestall or curb such abuses anyway.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>For the discussion of the *coetus studiorum* relative to the proposed definition of the synod, cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), pp. 314-315.

<sup>53</sup>Cf. PONT. COMM., *Schema Codicis Iuris Canonici iuxta animadversiones S.R.E. Cardinalium, Episcoporum Conferentiarum, Dicasteriorum Curiae Romanae, Universitatum Facultatumque ecclesiarum necnon Superiorum Institutum vitae consecratae recognitum*, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1980, pp. 92-94.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. PONT. COMM., *Relatio Complectens Synthesim Animadversionum ab Em. mis atque Exc. mis Patribus Commissionis ad Novissimum Schema Codicis Iuris Canonici Exhibitarum, cum Responsionibus a Secretaria et Consultoribus Datis* (hereafter: *Relatio*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1981, pp. 108-109.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. *ibid.*

The 1982 schema<sup>56</sup> allowed the bishop to celebrate the synod when he judged it necessary after consulting the presbyteral council, and this was restated in the 1983 code.

### C. The nature of the diocesan synod

To appreciate better the forms of diocesan synods which have taken place recently or are being celebrated today in the United States, most especially those of Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo, it is necessary to consider first the nature of the synod as reflected in the current code.

#### 1. 1983 Code of Canon Law<sup>57</sup>

By broadening the scope of concerns the diocesan synod should treat, the 1983 code not only gives the diocesan synod a more positive pastoral character than its 1917 predecessor, but, in the light of Vatican II, also makes it a more

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<sup>56</sup>Cf. PONT. COMM., *Codex Iuris Canonici Schema Novissimum iuxta placita Patrum Commissionis Emendatum atque Summo Pontifici Praesentatum*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1982, p. 85: "Can. 461, §1 - Synodus dioeciesana in singulis Ecclesiis particularibus celebretur cum, iudicio Episcopi dioeciesani audito consilio presbyterali adiuncta id suadeant."

<sup>57</sup>The placement of "The Diocesan Synod" in chapter one under the title "The Internal Ordering of Particular Churches" may have been done by the legislator to indicate the preeminent place of this institute among the consultative organs to the diocesan bishop.

representative structure of the people of God in advising the bishop on the guidance of the particular church.<sup>58</sup> The revised code declares that only the diocesan bishop convokes the synod; a greater variety of members is mandated than in the former discipline; free discussion during synodal sessions is called for; the diocesan bishop is the sole legislator, and he is to communicate the text of the synodal declarations and decrees to the metropolitan and the conference of bishops; the diocesan bishop may suspend or dissolve the synod according to his prudent judgement; and should the episcopal see become vacant or impeded, the synod is interrupted *ipso iure* until the succeeding bishop decrees its continuance or termination.<sup>59</sup>

a. Canon 460

Canon 460 of the current discipline has no parallel in the 1917 code:

A diocesan synod is a group of selected priests and other Christian faithful of a particular church which offers assistance to the

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<sup>58</sup>L. Jennings ("A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", pp. 329-338) observes that in the light of *Dei verbum*, and *Lumen gentium*, a fundamentally new understanding of the diocesan synod has evolved and been incorporated in the current code. The institute is one in which there is an honest search for truth, i.e., an understanding of the manner in which the Spirit is working in a particular church. This replaces the simple affirmation of provincial or conciliar statutes as was the practice in synods for centuries.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici, Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus* (hereafter: 1983 CIC), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1983 (Cf. *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, Translation prepared under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1983, xlii-668p. English translations of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* are taken from this edition), cc. 460-468.

diocesan bishop for the good of the entire diocesan community according to the norm of the following canons.<sup>60</sup>

J. Alesandro<sup>61</sup> observes that in the revision process the code was supposed to clarify the meaning of the three functions of the *munus regendi*: legislative, executive, and judicial, and reiterate the principle that only the bishop has the authority to legislate.<sup>62</sup> Yet, the synod is "not simply an *ad hoc* convocation, but an identifiable entity with particular members selected to assist the bishop in exercising his legislative office."<sup>63</sup> For Alesandro, developing particular legislation may again appear to be the primary purpose of a synod in the light of canons 460 and 467 of the 1983 code, but "such a conclusion relies more on the synod's recent history as a legislative forum than on anything contained in the text [c. 460]."<sup>64</sup> Nonetheless, as noted above, when considering the synods held in the United States since the Second Vatican Council, and most especially since the promulgation of the 1983 code, it is easy to see that the legislative type of synods has not prevailed.

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<sup>60</sup>"Synodus dioecesis est coetus delectorum sacerdotum aliorumque christifidelium Ecclesiae particularis, qui in bonum totius communitatis dioecesis Episcopo dioecisano adiutricem operam praestant, ad normam canonum qui sequuntur."

<sup>61</sup>Cf. J. ALESANDRO, in *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* (hereafter: *CLSA Commentary*), J. Coriden, T. Green, and D. Heintschel, eds., New York/Mahwah, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 379.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 5 (1973), p. 221.

<sup>63</sup>J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 379.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*



Canon 460 of the 1983 *CIC* thus identifies three elements in particular when it describes the nature of the diocesan synod: 1) it is a group of selected priests and other faithful from the particular church; 2) which helps the diocesan bishop; 3) for the welfare of the whole diocesan community.

**b. Composition of the synod**

The composition of the current diocesan synod, in comparison to those held prior to the Second Vatican Council, first of all demonstrates quite clearly the notion of *communio* addressed earlier. In this process, both laity and clergy share in the responsibility for the Church's welfare and development.<sup>65</sup> The occasion of the diocesan synod is preeminent in the life of the particular church when it comes to demonstrating this theological principle.<sup>66</sup> As J. Provost notes, the expression of communion found in the synod is not limited simply to those moments when the Eucharist is celebrated, but rather to the entire experience.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Cf. *LG*, nn. 30-38, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), pp. 37-43.

<sup>66</sup>Cf. F. DANEELS, "De Dioecesanis Corresponsabilitatis Organis", in *Periodica*, 74 (1985), p. 306.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", p. 14.

L. Jennings ("A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", p. 340) asserts that the diocesan synod "is the *only* [added emphasis] formal means where all the Christian faithful in a particular Church together can work co-responsibly to build up the Church and make it a prophetic agent in the world."

It has been my observation that other gatherings such as pastoral congresses, while not quite as formal as diocesan synods, can also be excellent opportunities to demonstrate co-responsibility in a particular church.

The inclusion of the laity in the synodal assembly facilitates an even greater acceptance of the synodal documents within a particular church.<sup>68</sup>

c. Assistance to the bishop

Even though the notion of episcopal consultation will be considered in greater depth in the following chapter, it can be simply noted now that the function of the synodal assembly is to *assist* the diocesan bishop in his role as chief shepherd of the particular church. While the delegates to the synod enjoy a consultative vote in the synod, their opinions and advice are indeed essential if the diocesan bishop is to grasp the *sensus fidelium* of the diocese entrusted to his care.<sup>69</sup> Their views certainly carry weight; and, within the context of a diocesan synod, they are quite

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J. Coriden ("The Diocesan Synod - An Instrument of Renewal for the Local Church", pp. 84-86) offers seven theological foundations of a diocesan synod which can help us to understand it in a broader context: 1) the Church as *communio* calls for a gathering of members to decide the future course of a particular church; 2) the Holy Spirit is present in such assemblies; 3) the fundamental equality of all christians necessitates that all in the community be able somehow to share in the synodal decision-making process; 4) the mission of the Church is the responsibility of all in the christian community; 5) communal renewal can occur through a synod; 6) the synod itself is a kerygmatic event; and 7) the synod is a manifestation of collegiality -- priests with their bishop. Cf. also J. PROVOST, ed., *The Church as Communion*, Washington, The Canon Law Society of America, 1984, pp. 4-23, 191-245.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, p. 13. Cf. also cc. 210-211.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. c. 212, §2.

powerful.<sup>70</sup> A diocesan bishop would surely be remiss if he failed to consider carefully the animadversions of the delegates.<sup>71</sup>

d. The welfare of the particular church

Although some have wondered whether a diocesan synod is, in fact, an expression of democracy,<sup>72</sup> there is no question about the fact that it should be an

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<sup>70</sup>Cf. R. KENNEDY, "Shared Responsibility in Ecclesial Decision Making", in *Studia canonica*, 14 (1980), pp. 1-23. The author notes that while "power" can be equated with decision-making, the latter is not the same as choice-making. Decision-making, in fact, includes such things as creative idea production, the presentation of factual data, the implementation of the choices, and finally the evaluation of the decision-making process. A good synodal process will indeed include these elements, and *all* the members of the synod -- clergy and laity -- will thus share in the "power" of the process.

In the synodal process, the bishop shares, so to speak, his "power" with the members present. J. Provost (*The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church*, p. 18) observes that "synods represent a way of structuring the exercise of the bishop's power in a way that permits greater participation while safeguarding his essential role. This is not a question of exchanging a new political system (e.g., democracy) for an older one (e.g., monarchy). Rather, it is a recognition that the exercise of church authority is always a combination of divine and human elements. The human elements have borrowed from the real-life experience of Christians from the very beginning of the Church; it should be no surprise that this pattern continues in our day."

<sup>71</sup>This notion is not new. Cf. S. SMITH, *Notes on the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore*, New York, P. O'Shea, 1874, p. 30: "Diocesan synods are held by the bishop and clergy of the respective dioceses. In them the decrees of national and provincial councils are promulgated; and diocesan disciplinary matters examined... A law that is enacted with the consent or counsel of the clergy will assuredly meet with ready and cheerful compliance."

<sup>72</sup>Cf. D. MOGAVERO, "Il sinodo diocesano", in *Chiesa Particolare e Strutture di Comunione*, A. Longhitano et al., eds., Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1985, pp. 61-62. Cf. also M. HÉBRARD, *Révolution tranquille chez les catholiques?*, pp. 165-180.

experience wherein there is a free exchange of ideas.<sup>73</sup> Delegates, of course, have the right and obligation to express their opinions on the matters under discussion.<sup>74</sup> To say that factions<sup>75</sup> will not emerge in the process is naïve. It is only natural that delegates will join together occasionally in an attempt to persuade the larger synodal assembly to accept a particular vision, recommendation or statute under consideration, or an alternative to that proposed. This was certainly the case at the Second Vatican Council.<sup>76</sup> What needs to be emphasized, though, is that while endeavoring occasionally to promote a particular position, the *synodales* must recognize that the synod is not convoked simply to address the needs of any one specific element within the diocese, but those of the whole particular church community.<sup>77</sup> A rather broad knowledge of the diocese and its needs is important, then, if a person is to serve effectively as a member of the synod. In addition, a delegate must be committed to listening to differing opinions which is not always the

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<sup>73</sup>Cf. c. 465.

<sup>74</sup>Cf. c. 212, §2.

<sup>75</sup>The term "faction" which is used here is not meant to refer to partisan conflict, but rather to a group of persons who are united in a common interest. Nonetheless, it does not necessarily exclude the former meaning.

<sup>76</sup>Cf. X. RYNNE, *The Third Session: The Debates and Decrees of Vatican Council II, September 14 to November 21, 1964*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965, pp. 24-61. The debates on the *Declaration on Religious Liberty* would indeed exemplify the strong contrary coalitions which were present at the Council.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, p. 56.

case when gatherings become politicized.<sup>78</sup> As will be noted later, the parameters of what can be undertaken at the synod have to be clearly delineated, most especially by the bishop.<sup>79</sup>

## 2. The synodal process in the United States

Diocesan synods had usually been occasions in which the local bishop would gather some of his priests either to begin the process of implementing the decrees of a general or provincial council, or to develop appropriate legislation which would serve as a vehicle for local ecclesiastical governance.<sup>80</sup> Immediately following the Second Vatican Council, there was a short period of time in which an occasional diocesan synod in the United States did not differ much from the pre-Vatican II variety.<sup>81</sup> But not too long thereafter, for the most part, the shift appeared to have

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<sup>78</sup>Cf. B. FRANCK, "Les expériences synodales après Vatican II", in *Revue catholique internationale: Communio*, 3 (1978), p. 77.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 58-85.

<sup>80</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF RICHMOND, *Synodus Dioecesis Richmondiensis Tertia*, Richmond, Lewis Printing, 1933, 88p; DIOCESE OF TOLEDO, *Acta et Decreta Synodi Dioecesis Toletanae Primae*, 1941, 125p; ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON, *Acta et Statuta Synodi Bostoniensis Septimae*, 1952, 95p; DIOCESE OF FARGO, *Synodus Dioecesis Fargensis Secunda*, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1952, 332p; DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Springfield*, 1957, 145p.

<sup>81</sup>S. O'Connor (*The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, pp. 136-138) considered the fourth synod of Richmond to be a "bridge between the older and newer type of diocesan synod." The establishment of diocesan consultative bodies would have placed it within the latter category. The fact that it dealt with "dos and don'ts" for clerics, religious and lay persons, in his

been away from the legalistic mode to a more visionary or pastoral one.<sup>82</sup> Particular churches took their lead from many pastoral documents of the Council. Most synods had as a goal not only structural renewal but also rekindling the faith of the members of the particular church. In some dioceses they were immediately preceded by programs such as Christ Renews His Parish or RENEW; in others, the synod itself was seen to be the vehicle for promoting spiritual renewal.<sup>83</sup>

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estimation, placed it within the former.

<sup>82</sup>Cf. S. O'CONNOR, "The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America", pp. 136-149; J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", pp. 5-6; J. PROVOST, "Diocesan Synods", in *Center Papers*, n. 1, New York, National Pastoral Life Center, Summer, 1984, pp. 1-3; L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", p. 340. Cf. also ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI, *Sixth Synod, Archdiocese of Cincinnati*, 1971, pp. 66-67, 197-200: "This Synod therefore recognizes and encourages the diversity in the communities and individuals that compose this archdiocese. It also realizes that the Church is an on-going institution and that renewal and implementation will vary in time and place. Consequently, the following points are submitted as guidelines for the role of the laity in any Christian community:...

c. The lay men and women must cooperate in creating a realistic, communitarian organization in their home parish -- to its equivalent community -- and on all other levels of Church life, in order to provide continuous survey, study, and discussion of the spiritual and temporal needs of the local community, the diocese and the whole Church."

Cincinnati also enacted "guidelines" which appear to have the force of statutes. For example, the section on Temporal Administration includes very specific elements.

Cf. also DIOCESE OF PATERSON, *Second Synod, Diocese of Paterson*, 1971, pp. 1-103. In addition to articulating a vision, the synodal statutes deal basically with the establishment of diocesan offices.

<sup>83</sup>Both the Diocese of Toledo, Ohio, and the Archdiocese of New Orleans, for example, engaged in the RENEW program prior to their synods. The Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, embarked on an extensive program in parish renewal from 1981-1984. The synod was a component of that process. The Diocese of Scranton

Subsequent to the release of the 1973 *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, the number of diocesan synods being convoked in the United States continued to grow. The "new way of thinking", expressed by Pope Paul VI<sup>84</sup> was very evident in these experiences. In accord with the *Directory*,<sup>85</sup> diocesan synods usually would establish a future vision in particular areas, recommend to the bishop the erection of new diocesan structures, and design broad policies, guidelines, directions or recommendations which would facilitate making that vision a reality.<sup>86</sup>

After reviewing almost a quarter-century of diocesan synods, two potential problems, though, need to be given greater consideration. The first concerns the

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undertook the RENEW program subsequent to its synod of 1986.

<sup>84</sup>PAUL VI, "Allocutio ad E.mos Patres Cardinales et ad Consultores Pontifici Consilii Codici Iuris Canonici recognoscendo", November 20, 1965, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), pp. 985-989. Also found in *Communicationes*, 1 (1969), p. 38-42.

<sup>85</sup>*DPME*, n. 163, pp. 159-160.

<sup>86</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF STEUBENVILLE, *Synod 1983, Diocese of Steubenville*, 1983, iii-61p; DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE, *Synod of the Diocese of Charlotte, 1986-87*, 1987, 61p; DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY, *That All May Be One, Synod 1988*, 1988, 83p; DIOCESE OF HELENA, *Acts of the Synod of the Diocese of Helena*, 1989, pp. 15-66; DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI, *Synod 88, Becoming One Body: The Second Synod of the Diocese of Corpus Christi*, 1989, xlvii-288p; DIOCESE OF JOLIET, *Come, Journey Together: Official Documents of the Synod of Joliet*, 1989, 48p. Cf. also ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK, *Eighteenth Synod of the Archdiocese of New York: Official Directives and Suggestions for Implementation*, 1989, pp. 7-51; DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG, *Diocese of Harrisburg, Tenth Diocesan Synod: "Let Christ's Light Shine Through You"*, 1988, pp. 7-12. Neither of these last two particular churches established visions which were included in their published synodal documents, but new diocesan departments and policies were established.

emphasis placed on the process itself, and the second concerns the "product" which emerges from the process.

### 3. The importance of a dynamic process and substantive element

A dynamic synodal process is indeed a great benefit to a diocese. For the first time in centuries, the laity can join with clergy in designing the future direction of a particular church.<sup>87</sup> Special care should be taken to create a process which will facilitate the free exchange of ideas and opinions. If the experience is planned well, a healthy sense of responsibility for the particular church can be engendered and persons can be drawn into a more intimate experience of *communio*. It must be remembered, though, that the synodal process is not an end in itself. Its goal is to establish "declarations and decrees"<sup>88</sup> in whatever form that may take, which will guide the diocese into the future. Thus, emphasis should also be placed upon that "product" which will emerge from the process. The benefits must extend beyond the memories of the participants.

At the same time, even though the product may be a magnificent vision and the establishment of new diocesan offices, some of the other recommendations or guidelines which are also an integral part of the process could rather easily be

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<sup>87</sup>Cf. S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, pp. 77-118.

<sup>88</sup>Cf. c. 461, §1.



forgotten or ignored because of their impracticality.<sup>89</sup> This has proven to be the case. A number of times over the past twenty-five years significant effort was often expended in identifying the needs of a particular church, but the recommendations or guidelines which attempted to address those needs seemed to be weak and ineffective and were not given appropriate attention later. As synods continued to be convoked, some dioceses understood that although a powerful synodal process was important for the renewal of the particular church, it was also necessary to emerge from that process with not only a solid vision, but also eminently practical recommendations. Therefore, greater emphasis began to be placed upon the product of the synod.

In response to the problem, the visionary component of synodal documents which many dioceses created not only incorporated elements of Vatican II teaching but also honest observations about the "state of the Church" in the particular diocese. A realistic assessment of conditions was commonly offered.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>This observation is based upon conversations with synodal coordinators.

<sup>90</sup>In some cases, the observations about the current state of affairs was a follow-up to the vision. Cf. DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY, *That All May Be One, Synod 1988*, 1988, pp. 1-3; DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE, *Synod of the Diocese of Charlotte, 1986-87*, 1987, pp. 10-11, 18-19. Cf. also DIOCESE OF NELSON, *Be Light to the World: First Diocesan Synod - Nelson, B.C., 1986-1989*, Nelson, Diocese of Nelson, 1991, 310p; P. GERVAIS and G. MAXWELL, eds., *Forward in the Spirit: Challenge of the People's Synod*, Diocese of Victoria, Nelthorpe (Victoria), B.C., 1991, 288p.

In some cases, it became clear that making the synod pastoral<sup>91</sup> also included establishing very tangible and practical laws for the "good order" of the diocese,<sup>92</sup> as well as statutes, specific policies, or directives for which persons could be held accountable.<sup>93</sup> This portion of the synodal product, though, was still unlike that promulgated in synods prior to Vatican II.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>J. Provost ("The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", p. 11) observes that the term "pastoral" which is used so often in today's synods essentially means "getting down to the business of being Church, candidly addressing real issues, breaking through the crust of tedium, indifference and routine to try to address preaching, celebrating and living the gospel today."

<sup>92</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, Letter to Co-worker[s] in the Ministry, May 28, 1987, Synod Archives, Diocese of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio. The bishop offers his reasons for convoking a diocesan synod, one of which is for "the sake of good order" in the life of the particular church. Cf. also B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, Boston, Daughters of St. Paul, 1986, p. 14. In his letter Cardinal Law notes that "[a]nother result of the Diocesan Synod will be the revision and enactment of legislation which will serve to order this particular Church..."

<sup>93</sup>Cf. R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 1. Pagé studied twelve dioceses in the United States (all noted in this work) relative to the manner in which they celebrated their diocesan synods. All of the episcopal letters which announced the decision to convoke a diocesan synod referred to the need to deepen and apply the teachings of Vatican II in a more systematic manner. At the same time, most of the letters refer to the revised code and the need for concrete application of the recommendations of the synod. Cf. also *DPME*, n. 163, pp. 159-160.

<sup>94</sup>Cf. *Mission and Goals of the Diocese of Toledo, 1983-1988*, Toledo, Ohio, Diocese of Toledo, 1983, 25p. In the initial planning stages for the synod in the Diocese of Toledo, concern was raised by a number of the priests that the synod consider "real" issues and not simply create a visionary document similar to the *Mission and Goals* document produced by the diocese in 1983.

At the semi-annual gathering for priests, religious and diocesan department personnel of the Diocese of Cheyenne in January, 1991, the topic of the upcoming

At times, a particular church would model its documents after the structure of the 1983 *CIC* as did many post-1917 *CIC* synods.<sup>95</sup> And others, in addition to establishing goals, would enact even more explicit particular legislation which occasionally included a re-articulation of some universal ecclesiastical prescriptions.<sup>96</sup> The call for documents with substance appeared to grow; documents which people could be held accountable for implementing.

#### 4. The synodal processes of Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo

The three particular churches which are the focus of this study -- Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo -- developed unique synodal processes. In each location it seemed that the architects of the synod recognized the importance of a well-developed process to ensure the success of the endeavor, but the process was not seen to be an end in itself. In other words, a definite product emerged which would extend beyond the process.

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diocesan synodal process was discussed. It was not uncommon for persons to mention also that the synod should deal with "down-to-earth" issues which touch the day-to-day lives of pastors and people in parishes. The need for establishing a common vision was noted, but it had to be complemented by some practical statutes to concretize the vision.

<sup>95</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF LACROSSE, *The Bishop with His People: Fourth Synod of the Diocese of LaCrosse*, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Worzalla Publishing Co., 1987, pp. 11-316.

<sup>96</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT, *Synod V, Diocese of Davenport*, 1986, pp. 24-36; DIOCESE OF SCRANTON, *Acts of the Scranton Diocesan Synod II*, 1986, pp. 244-252; DIOCESE OF PEORIA, *Seventh Synod and Parish Renewal, Diocese of Peoria*, 1984, 1984, pp. 1-56.

a. Boston

The formal synodal process in the Archdiocese of Boston extended over a two-year period.<sup>97</sup> Actually the process itself spread over a longer period because of the appointment and preparatory work done by the Synod Executive Secretary, a Synod Associate Director<sup>98</sup> and a Synod Executive Committee throughout the nine months prior to the formal opening of the synod by the Archbishop of Boston.

The synodal process itself included eight basic elements: 1) the formal opening in the cathedral; 2) the distribution of an attitudinal survey to Catholics throughout the entire Archdiocese of Boston; 3) the development of draft documents in twenty-six areas; 4) holding parish reflection sessions in regions throughout the Archdiocese to allow parishioners the opportunity to critique the drafts; 5) the revision of the drafts; 6) regional reporting sessions to interested parties concerning the changes made in the drafts; 7) five sessions of the synod body (over 350 persons) to discuss and eventually vote upon the documents; 8) celebration of the closing Mass and

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<sup>97</sup>The actual process began on September 14, 1986, with the formal opening of the synod at the diocesan cathedral, and extended until November 27, 1988, when a closing Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated again at the cathedral where Cardinal Bernard Law promulgated the synodal documents.

J. Provost ("The Ecclesiological Nature of Diocesan Synods in the Real Life of the Church", p. 7) points out that synodal processes in the United States tend to be shorter than those in Europe.

<sup>98</sup>Fr. Paul McInerney was appointed the Executive Secretary of the Synod Office in January, 1986, and Sr. Mary Anne Doyle, C.S.J., upon the recommendation of the Synod Executive Committee, was appointed Associate Director soon thereafter.

signing of the documents; and 9) the initiation of the implementary phase under the direction of the Synod Executive Secretary and the Associate Director.

Careful attention was given to each aspect of this process. The Executive Committee did have a general notion as to *how* the process should unfold, but it was not pre-planned by those entrusted with its development; rather, it evolved step by step.<sup>99</sup>

The fruits of the above mentioned synodal process are twofold: 1) a *Pastoral Plan for Mission*,<sup>100</sup> and 2) *Statutes/Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines*.<sup>101</sup> *Pastoral Guidelines and Policies*,<sup>102</sup> developed previously, and apart from the synodal process, were reprinted and issued as a compendium to the synodal documents.

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<sup>99</sup>A significant amount of information relative to the development of the Boston synodal process is not to be found in the archives. Rather, it is gleaned from interviews with Fr. Paul McNerny and Sr. Mary Anne Doyle, Boston, November 17-21, 1990.

<sup>100</sup>ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON (hereafter: AB), *Eighth Synod, Archdiocese of Boston: Pastoral Plan for Mission*, Boston, Daughters of St. Paul, 1989, 71p.

<sup>101</sup>AB, *Statutes, Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines*, Boston, Daughters of St. Paul, 1989, 42p.

<sup>102</sup>AB, *Pastoral Guidelines and Policies, Book II*, Boston, 1988, 220p.

**b. New Orleans**

The synodal process in the Archdiocese of New Orleans was indeed unique - perhaps in the nation. It can be traced back to 1980, but, in fact, at that time it was not the intention of the Archbishop of New Orleans to convoke a synod.

In 1979, Archbishop Philip Hannan decided that it was necessary to initiate a process leading to the establishment of long-range goals for the church in New Orleans. To accomplish this task, town hall meetings were held in 1980 in parishes throughout the diocese at which members of the particular church were given the opportunity to express their opinions on "any aspect of the pastoral mission of the Church."<sup>103</sup> These gatherings served as a foundation for an Archdiocesan General Assembly which was convened in 1981. This Assembly was composed of clergy, religious, and laity, and its purpose was to "recommend areas in which [pastoral] goals should be set and broad strategies for implementing these goals."<sup>104</sup> Subsequently, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and Priests' Council recommended some specific goals, objectives, and programs based upon the Assembly deliberations. From 1982-1984 an Executive Committee for Implementation met regularly to establish specific recommendations for action.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup>ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS (hereafter: ANO), Brochure explaining the town hall sessions, Synod Archives, New Orleans, 1980.

<sup>104</sup>"Committee named for pastoral goals assembly", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, February 21, 1980, p. 1.

<sup>105</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, New Orleans, 1987, p. xiii.

Throughout the period in which the diocesan goal-setting process was occurring, the 1917 *Code of Canon Law* was being revised. During the time the Executive Committee for Implementation was doing its work, the 1983 code was promulgated. Nearly a year after the issuance of the universal code, the Archbishop, in consultation with the Priests' Council, determined the need to convoke a synod.<sup>106</sup>

After the appointment of a Synod Chairman and Vice-Chairman by the Archbishop<sup>107</sup> and subsequent convening of a Central Committee and nine writing subcommittees, the synodal process progressed over the next two and one-half years in the following stages: 1) the composition of the first drafts of the synodal documents in areas corresponding, for the most part, to the books of the 1983 *CIC*;<sup>108</sup> 2) consultation on first draft with all clergy, religious superiors, the Pastoral Council, and heads of diocesan departments; 3) the revision of the first draft by writing subcommittees; 4) consultation and voting on the second draft with the Priests' Council; 5) the final consultations with the Central Committee and subcommittees, all clergy, religious superiors, department heads, and the Pastoral

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<sup>106</sup>E. GAUTHREAU, Letter to James P. McGough, September 18, 1986, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans.

<sup>107</sup>Cf. ANO, Minutes of Priests' Council Meeting, meeting of September 20, 1984, Diocesan Archives, ANO, New Orleans, p. 2. Msgrs. Earl Gauthreaux and Clinton Doskey assumed the chairmanship and vice-chairmanship respectively.

<sup>108</sup>In place of the section on Sanctions found in the code, synodal documents on the Community and Social Mission of the Church were written.

Council; 6) the formal synod session held in the context of a Mass of Thanksgiving at which the synodal documents were signed; and 7) the initiation of the implementary phase under the direction of diocesan departments.<sup>109</sup>

The product of the synod is quite extensive, covering fifty-five general areas. Each segment includes recommendations and mandates preceded by a short visionary statement. In addition, two varieties of appendices are included with the synodal documents: 1) recommended policy statements of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops; and 2) policy statements previously issued in the Archdiocese and reaffirmed by the synod.

c. Toledo

Although there was a period of time (two years) in which no formal work was being done, the entire synodal process extended over nearly seven years.<sup>110</sup>

At the annual plenary session of the diocesan Priests' Council in the fall of 1983, a Subcommittee on Remote Preparations for a Toledo Diocesan Synod was established at the suggestion of the priests who attended the meeting. The goals of this body were threefold: 1) to study documentation relative to the previous diocesan

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<sup>109</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, p. xiv.

<sup>110</sup>Subsequent to the recommendation of the Priests' Council to Bishop James Hoffman to convoke a synod, the future coordinator of the process, Fr. David Ross, was assigned to graduate work for a two year period to study the topic of diocesan synods.



synod of 1941 as well as to gather information from other dioceses in the United States concerning synods which they celebrated since Vatican II; 2) to raise awareness that a synod will occur; and 3) to report to Bishop J. Hoffman on the results of their work.<sup>111</sup> Nine months after it began its work, the Subcommittee on Remote Preparations submitted its report to the Bishop which included comments, questions and recommendations.<sup>112</sup>

For eleven months prior to the formal announcement of the diocesan synod in June, 1987, by Bishop Hoffman, the Vicar for the Synod (general coordinator) gathered together the Synod Steering Committee whose role it was to make the major decisions relative to the process to be employed. The Synod Steering Committee, in turn, secured the services of a consulting firm to assist it in planning the synodal process, and, together with the consultants, designed census and attitudinal survey instruments which were to be used in the initial stages of the synodal process.

After the formal announcement of the synod by the Bishop, the following major events in the process occurred over the next three years: 1) the synodal process was begun officially by the Bishop at a cathedral liturgy; 2) a diocesan-wide

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<sup>111</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF TOLEDO (hereafter: DT), Minutes of the Priests' Council Meeting, meeting of October 27, 1983, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, Ohio.

<sup>112</sup>Cf. SUBCOMMITTEE ON REMOTE PREPARATIONS FOR A DIOCESAN SYNOD, "Final Report to Toledo Senate of Priests", Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, June 27, 1984, 2p.

census and attitudinal survey was undertaken; 3) the Steering Committee selected seven topics for synodal documents based on information gleaned from the survey; 4) Parish Synod Teams were formed and trained; 5) document writing subcommittees were selected and trained; 6) parish-based educational programs were offered on the documents of Vatican II; 7) Parish Synod Teams reviewed census/survey data and reported to the Vicar for the Synod on the validity of the data for their parishes; 8) document writing subcommittees composed document outlines and possible diocesan policy changes; 9) document outlines were reviewed by parishes, diocesan departments, clergy, religious, and consultative bodies; 10) deanery reporting meetings were held to synthesize input from parishes on outlines (reports also received from other reviewers); 11) first document drafts were written;<sup>113</sup> 12) TV programs on the document topic areas were aired throughout the diocese; 13) first drafts were reviewed in parishes and elsewhere; 14) second drafts were written; 15) Parish Synod Teams and consultative bodies critiqued second drafts; 16) two day formal synodal sessions were held with approximately 1700 members who voted on documents which were then signed by the Bishop at a closing Mass; 17) an implementation plan was developed by the Bishop and selected administrative staff referred to as his cabinet; 18) a process for the revision and, if

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<sup>113</sup>It was decided by the Synod Steering Committee a year and a half into the process to replace the section in the documents concerning diocesan policies with directives to individuals, diocesan offices or parishes.

necessary, the establishment of diocesan policies was begun;<sup>114</sup> and finally, 19) the synodal implementation plan was released on May 15, 1990.

The fruits of the Toledo synod are contained in seven documents<sup>115</sup> dealing with major areas that touch the life of the particular church. Each document identifies the signs of the times relative to the area being considered and includes a visionary statement followed by three directives addressed either to individual Catholics, to parishes or to the diocesan offices or persons therein. Finally, each document is accompanied by an implementation plan.

#### **D. The convocation of the synod**

This section will consider the convocation of the synod from four perspectives: the necessity of convoking a diocesan synod, the frequency of convocation, preliminary notices, and the actual convocation itself. Again, this will include special reference to the three dioceses being studied in this work.

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<sup>114</sup>This process is scheduled to extend over two years.

<sup>115</sup>DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo: Pastoral Plan for Implementation*, 1990, pp. 1-54.

### 1. The necessity of convoking a synod

Canon 461, §1, renews the universal prescription traditional since the Fourth Lateran Council that diocesan synods are to be celebrated in each diocese.<sup>116</sup>

In comparing canon 461, §1, with canon 356, §1, of the 1917 code, one notices first a terminological change. The phrase "particular church" found in *Christus Dominus*, n. 11 is used instead of the word "diocese".<sup>117</sup> Canon 368 of the current law says that particular churches are first of all dioceses. At the same time, unless it is otherwise understood, the term "particular church" includes territorial prelatures, territorial abbeys, apostolic vicariates, apostolic prefectures, and apostolic administrations erected on a stable basis.<sup>118</sup>

Citing Cyprian's notion of "the bishop in the Church and the Church in the bishop",<sup>119</sup> *Lumen gentium*, n. 23 uses the term "particular church" to refer to the

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<sup>116</sup>"Synodus dioecesana in singulis Ecclesiis particularibus celebretur cum, iudicio Episcopi dioecesani et audito consilio presbyterali, adiuncta id suadeant."

<sup>117</sup>AAS, 58 (1966), p. 677. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodi Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 51-53.

<sup>118</sup>R. Pagé (*Les Églises particulières*, vol. 1, p. 18) holds that these other five portions of the people of God mentioned in c. 368 are "similar" to particular churches.

<sup>119</sup>Cf. CYPRIAN, *Epist.* 66, par. 8 [in G. HARTEL, *S. Thasci Caecili Cypriani Opera Omnia*] in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. 3, pt. 2, Vindobonae, C. Geroldi, 1868, p. 733: "episcopum in ecclesia esse et ecclesiam in episcopo..."

role of individual bishops as the source and basis of unity in their own churches.<sup>120</sup> Thus, the entire Church exists in and from the particular churches.<sup>121</sup> This was done to dispel the notion that dioceses were merely subdivisions of the Church universal, and to re-establish the concept that each diocese is fully "Church" in itself, which, when joined with others, forms the Church universal.<sup>122</sup>

The 1917 code did not define the word "diocese" as in canon 369. The current law describes a diocese as

a portion of the people of God entrusted for pastoral care to a bishop with the cooperation of the presbyterate so that adhering to its pastor and gathered by him in the Holy Spirit through the gospel and the Eucharist, it constitutes a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church is truly present and operative.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>Cf. *ibid.*: "Episcopi autem singuli visibile principium et fundamentum sunt unitatis in suis Ecclesiis particularibus..."

<sup>121</sup>Cf. c. 368: "Ecclesiae particulares, in quibus et ex quibus una et unica Ecclesia catholica existet..."

<sup>122</sup>Cf. T. GREEN, in *CLSA Commentary*, pp. 315-316. Cf. also B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, p. 8: "The Church is not like a multinational organization with national and local branches. The Archdiocese of Boston is a 'particular church.' This means that the entire Church in heaven and on earth becomes incarnate in our Archdiocese."

Cf. also J. PASSICOS, "Le retour du synode diocésain: un épiphénomène?", in *Le Synode diocésain dans l'Histoire et dans le Code*, Paris, Faculté de droit canonique, 1988, p. 35. Vatican II recaptured the proper relationship that should exist between the Church universal and the particular church. A diocesan synod enables the particular church to come to a fuller understanding of this relationship.

<sup>123</sup>"Diocesis est populi Dei portio, quae Episcopo cum cooperatione presbyterii pascenda concreditur, ita ut, pastori suo adhaerens ab eoque per Evangelium et Eucharisticam in Spiritu Sancto congregata, Ecclesiam particularem constituat, in qua vere inest et operatur una sancta catholica et apostolica Christi Ecclesia." Cf. *CD*, n. 11, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 677-678.

Because the diocese is the preeminent form of the particular church, canon 461, §1, permits the celebration of a diocesan synod when the diocesan bishop, after having consulted with the presbyteral council,<sup>124</sup> deems it necessary.

## 2. The frequency of convocation

The required length of time between celebrations of diocesan synods has increased gradually since Lateran IV decreed that they be held annually throughout the entire Church.<sup>125</sup> Prior to that time, provincial councils and diocesan synods went hand and hand, and this seemed to be the more realistic approach.<sup>126</sup> At the time of the Council of Trent a change was suggested, but the three centuries-old ideal still remained.<sup>127</sup> At Vatican I it was proposed that diocesan synods be held triennially, but the Council's untimely disruption prevented the enactment of any legislation in this regard.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup>The obligation of the diocesan bishop to consult with the presbyteral council will be discussed in chapter two.

<sup>125</sup>Cf. J. ALBERIGO et al., eds., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, Bologna, Istituto per le Scienze Religiose, 1973, p. 236.

<sup>126</sup>Cf. J. FUENTES CABALLERO, "El sínodo diocesano", p. 558. Cf. also R. NAZ, "Synode", col. 1137.

<sup>127</sup>Cf. *Concilium Tridentinum Diariorum, Actorum, Epistolarum, Tractatum Nova Collectio*, Societatis Goerresiana, ed., vol. 10, Friburgi Brisgoviae, Herder, 1930, pp. 825-826, 864.

<sup>128</sup>Cf. J. MANSI, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 50, p. 345.

Canon 356 of the 1917 code mandated that each diocese was to celebrate a synod every ten years, although it could be celebrated more frequently. Prior to the promulgation of the 1917 code, it was suggested that contrary customs had voided any obligation to follow the requirement of annual celebration. F. Donnelly held that the former law "removed practically all the difficulties which might prudently warrant the toleration of a previous custom."<sup>129</sup>

Actually, the 1917 code did not abrogate any long-standing customs of delaying the celebration of the diocesan synod. As in the past, commentators continued to call for a relaxation of the law,<sup>130</sup> and this request continued throughout the period of revision of the code.<sup>131</sup>

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In the United States, the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore espoused the pre-Lateran IV practice and called for diocesan synods to be held to promulgate its decrees. Cf. *Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis in Ecclesia Metropolitana Baltimorensis a die VII ad diem XXI Octobris A.D. MDCCCLXVI Habiti et a Sede Apostolica Recogniti Acta et Decreta*, Baltimore, J. Murphy, 1880, nn. 63-69, pp. 50-53. This council repeated c. 2 of Sessio XXIV of Trent.

<sup>129</sup>F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 38.

<sup>130</sup>Cf. H. AYRINHAC, *Constitution of the Church in the New Code of Canon Law*, p. 196; J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod", p. 90; J. NABUCO, *Pontificalis Romani Expositio Iuridico-Practica*, Paris, Desclée, 1962, p. 705.

<sup>131</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 315. Cf. also Canon Law Society of America, *Second Report for Canon Law Society of America Task Force Committee on the Schema Canon Libri II De Populo Dei*, p. 24.

Canon 461, §1, of the 1983 *CIC* leaves it up to the diocesan bishop to determine when to hold the synod after consulting with the presbyteral council.<sup>132</sup>

The circumstances which warrant the celebration of the synod in each diocese will vary, and the length of time between celebrations could conceivably be shorter than the ten year requirement of the 1917 code.<sup>133</sup>

The attention given to the former law by the particular churches which are the focus of this study may have indicated its impracticality. Boston has held only eight synods in its over 180 year history,<sup>134</sup> New Orleans has also celebrated only

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<sup>132</sup>Cf. PONT. COMM., *Relatio*, p. 109. Cf. *Communicationes*, 1 (1969), p. 80-82. The decision to allow bishops the freedom to convoke a synod at their own discretion and after appropriate consultation is in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity which was applied in the revision of the code.

<sup>133</sup>T. Green, (*CLSA Commentary*, p. 335) suggests that the diocesan bishop could call a diocesan synod before he submits his quinquennial report.

The Diocese of Bridgeport celebrated synods in both 1971 and 1981. The Diocese of El Paso which celebrated a synod in 1988 is currently in the process of preparing for another.

In light of the current legislation, some have suggested that the significance of the diocesan synod has been diminished. But it would seem rather that this change merely demonstrates the fact that law is *post-factum*, i.e., legislation eventually follows praxis. Cf. F. MORRISEY, "The Significance of Particular Law in the Proposed New Code of Canon Law", in *Proceedings of the Forty-Third Annual Convention/Canon Law Society of America*, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1981, p. 11.

<sup>134</sup>Cf. P. GUILDAY, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore*, New York, Macmillan, 1932, p. 132. The first synod in Boston was convoked in 1842 under the presidency of Bishop Benedict Fenwick. A total of thirty priests attended the function at which the decrees of the Provincial Councils of Baltimore were promulgated. Archbishop John Williams convoked the second synod in 1868, the third in 1872, and the fourth in 1886. Archbishop William O'Connell convened the fifth synod in 1909, and the sixth in 1919. The seventh synod was convoked by Cardinal Richard Cushing in 1952. Cardinal Bernard Law called for the eighth



eight since its foundation in 1793,<sup>135</sup> and Toledo has had two since it was erected as a diocese in 1910.<sup>136</sup>

### 3. The infrequency of synodal celebration

One might wonder why, despite universal mandate, synods were celebrated so infrequently. None of the three dioceses which are the focus of this study convened a synod decennially as c. 356 of the 1917 *CIC* required.

Like the 1983 *CIC*, the former code indicated that a diocesan bishop possessed legislative power in accord with the norm of law.<sup>137</sup> As was the case in Toledo, bishops could and simply did issue episcopal directives with binding force.<sup>138</sup> Even before the introduction of more developed synodal processes which came into vogue subsequent to the Second Vatican Council, a significant amount of work over a

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synod on August 6, 1986. Cf. "Cardinal Law Announces 8th Diocesan Synod", in *The Boston Pilot*, August 8, 1986, p. 1.

<sup>135</sup>According to P. Guilday (*A History of the Councils of Baltimore*, p. 102), the first synod was convoked by Bishop Leo de Neckere in 1832 to promulgate the decrees of the First Provincial Council of Baltimore and consider some matters peculiar to the diocese. Succeeding synods were called by Bishop Anthony Blanc in 1844 and 1858, Archbishops Jean Marie Odin in 1869, Francis Janssens in 1889, John Shaw in 1922, and Joseph Rummel in 1949. Cf. ANO, Diocesan Archives, New Orleans.

<sup>136</sup>Other than the synod celebrated in 1989, the only other one was convoked by Bishop Karl J. Alter in 1941. Cf. DT, Synod Archives, Toledo.

<sup>137</sup>Cf. 1917 *CIC*: c. 335, §1; 1983 *CIC*: c. 391, §1.

<sup>138</sup>Between the 1941 and 1989 Toledo diocesan synods, episcopal directives were contained in clergy bulletins issued periodically.

rather lengthy period was essential if the synod was to be successful. It was simply easier for a bishop to legislate by fiat rather than enter into a synodal process.<sup>139</sup>

Since Vatican II, while diocesan bishops understand the tremendous significance of a well-developed synodal process -- especially the need to involve more people than in the past -- some are well aware of the greater amount of time, money and energy it takes to celebrate a synod. Thus, some would declare that they expect to convoke a synod only once in their tenure as bishop.<sup>140</sup>

#### 4. Preliminary notices

The announcement of the convocation of a synod can be done in many ways. It is not uncommon today for the diocesan bishop to do so initially in an informal manner by meeting with representatives of the media, and later to issue a pastoral letter to that effect.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>Even though the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore decreed more stringent observance of the Tridentine law requiring annual synodal celebrations, those present also recognized that the law simply would not be observed. Therefore, they recommended regular theological conferences for priests in each diocese -- four times annually (twice in rural areas). Cf. *Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis II*, n. 68, p. 52.

<sup>140</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, Letter to Co-worker[s] in Ministry, May 28, 1987. Cf. also J. HART, Homily delivered at a Mass to celebrate the official proclamation of the synodal process in the Diocese of Cheyenne, January 23, 1991.

<sup>141</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 61, p. 66.

a. Boston

On March 22, 1984, at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, Archbishop Bernard Law initially announced his intention to convoke a synod.<sup>142</sup> Nearly two and one-half years later, the then Cardinal issued an extensive pastoral letter on the subject to the members of the Archdiocese on the feast of the Transfiguration, August 6, 1986. In his letter, he not only presented the purposes of the synod,<sup>143</sup> but also rooted the experience in the mystery of both the Church universal and the particular church.

At the beginning of his letter, Cardinal Law reiterated his intention to convoke a synod, and announced a two-year process leading toward the actual celebration of the event.<sup>144</sup> The letter itself was grounded in the scriptures, the

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<sup>142</sup>Cf. B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, p. 1.

<sup>143</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 1-2, 5, 8, 12: "This, then, is to be the first and most important purpose of the upcoming Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston: to direct our attention to the sovereign majesty of Jesus Christ in order to worship Him, to glorify Him, to submit to His rule in all the aspects of our lives, confident that in Him and through Him alone shall we attain true liberty and abundance in life...

Another purpose of the Synod... will be to heighten our awareness of the nature of the choice before us, [i.e, the religion of God made man and the religion of man who makes himself God]...

One of the purposes... shall be to experience more intensely this unity between people, priests, and bishop in our own particular Church...

Accordingly... the Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston should have the following three principal purposes: (1) to draw strength and abundance of life from the crucified and risen Lord by a renewed obedience to His Word; (2) to experience more intensely through the power of the Spirit the nature of the Church as mystery and communion; (3) to fill us with a greater zeal in pursuing the Church's mission of evangelization, worship and service to the men and women of today."

<sup>144</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, p. 1.

documents of Vatican II, and subsequent papal encyclicals. It was educational in nature and quite easy to read.<sup>145</sup> As the letter drew to a close, the Cardinal offered a broad overview not only of the canonical elements involved in a synod, but also of the actual process which was to evolve in the particular church. One of the "results" of the synod, according to the letter, would be the development of "more finely adapted diocesan norms."<sup>146</sup>

b. New Orleans

In lieu of issuing a pastoral letter announcing the convocation of a diocesan synod, Archbishop Philip Hannan simply announced to the members of the media and others his intention to do so.<sup>147</sup> Prior to the previous town hall process, the Archbishop issued a short letter in the form of a brochure to the people of the particular church inviting them to participate in the four-step process.<sup>148</sup> The brochure also indicated the purpose of the town hall meetings and their structure.

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<sup>145</sup>The primary educational themes which were expressed were collegiality, communion, ecumenism, evangelization, and service.

<sup>146</sup>B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, p. 14.

<sup>147</sup>Cf. "Archbishop calls for Archdiocesan Synod", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, January 24, 1985, p. 1; "Hannan calls synod to update policies", in *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, January 24, 1985, p. 1.

<sup>148</sup>ANO, Brochure explaining the town hall sessions, New Orleans, 1980, 2p.

## c. Toledo

Bishop James Hoffman of Toledo also issued a pastoral letter to the people of the Diocese indicating his intention to initiate a synodal process.<sup>149</sup> In conjunction with the pastoral letter, press conferences were held by the Bishop and his auxiliary.<sup>150</sup>

In his letter, the Bishop addressed the nature of the diocesan synod rooted in its historical foundation, his purposes for convening it,<sup>151</sup> and the process which would evolve. Like Cardinal Law's letter, it was quite readable and clear. In addition, the Bishop revised his letter for children in the Diocese.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup>J. HOFFMAN, "Synod '89, Together in Christ", Pastoral letter convoking a synod in the Diocese of Toledo, Toledo, June 25, 1987.

<sup>150</sup>CF. D. ROSS, Letter to priests in the Toledo Diocese, May 22, 1987, Synod Archives, DT: "On June 25, 1987, Bishops Hoffman and Donnelly along with Fr. Blaser and myself will call a press conference at three locations in the diocese to... announce the convocation of a diocesan synod... At the same time we will outline the synodal process including the diocesan-wide census/survey scheduled in the fall."

<sup>151</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, "Synod '89, Together in Christ": "The last synod in the diocese was completed in 1941... [T]he policies established then are still in effect. They need to be reviewed, and where necessary, adapted to our day... (2) It is time again to look anew at the Mission statement and assure ourselves that it captures the ecclesial vision for the Catholic people of Northwest Ohio. It will also be important to review the diocesan priorities... (3) [W]e have need to adapt elements of the revised Code of Canon Law to the life of the local Church... (4) [W]e need a vigorous effort to reach out to inactive Catholics... [and] to develop a strategy that would make available to the unchurched the rich blessings of the Catholic faith. (5) ...[W]e need to plan for the future."

<sup>152</sup>J. HOFFMAN, "Synod '89, Together in Christ", Pastoral letter convoking the synod in the Diocese of Toledo (children's edition), Toledo, June 25, 1987.

#### 5. Benefits of issuing a formal preliminary notice

Even though a number of people in the particular church may already be aware of the possibility of the convocation of a diocesan synod,<sup>153</sup> it is helpful for the bishop to indicate explicitly his intention to initiate such a process. The canons do not require that such an announcement be made, but it is imperative that all in the particular church know where the bishop stands in regard to the process. In the announcement, as was the case in Boston and Toledo, it is advisable for the bishop to state clearly his purposes for convoking the synod and the benefits hopefully to be achieved.

If the need to clarify the purpose of a diocesan synod were the only important element, a pastoral letter would be sufficient, but equally significant is the need to foster enthusiasm for the process. Thus, use of the media -- printed word, radio, and TV -- is also very helpful.

#### 6. The opening of the synodal process

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, when a diocesan bishop decided to convoke a synod, it was not uncommon for him simply to announce his intention and then arrange for the establishment of pre-synodal committees composed of clergy to

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<sup>153</sup>Priests in the diocese are usually the first to hear of the possibility of a synod through the minutes of the presbyteral council in which the matter is initially discussed. Cf. c. 461, §1.

prepare statutes.<sup>154</sup> There was usually no fanfare connected with the beginning of the process.

Although, technically speaking, the "synod" which a particular church celebrates refers to those sessions in which duly-appointed members convene to discuss "proposed questions",<sup>155</sup> in actuality most consider the term to pertain to the entire process, from its announcement by the bishop through the lengthy period of preparation of texts until the subsequent signing of declarations or decrees by him. Because it is the common perception that the synod thus begins with the announcement, it is not uncommon today to commence the process with a eucharistic liturgy in the cathedral church of the diocese. It seems that this developing practice would be supported by the *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* which notes that the synod offers opportunities for a number of liturgical celebrations to stimulate the faith and zeal of members of the particular church.<sup>156</sup>

The recently revised *Ceremonial*<sup>157</sup> which is used at episcopal functions

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<sup>154</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF RICHMOND, *Synodus Dioecesis Richmondensis Tertia*, pp. vii-xii; DT, *Synodus Dioecesis Toletana in America Prima*, pp. 10-11; DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Springfield*, pp. x-xii; DIOCESE OF FARGO, *Synodus Dioecesis Fargensis Secunda*, pp. 301-305.

<sup>155</sup>Cf. 1983 *CIC*, c. 465: "propositae quaestiones".

<sup>156</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 163, p. 160.

<sup>157</sup>*Caeremoniale Episcoporum, ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. Promulgatum*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1984, 393p. (Cf. *Ceremonial of Bishops*, Translation

designates particular ritual elements to be followed at a synod, but it also seems to refer to the synod sessions proper and not to any official opening as occurs today. Nonetheless, the spirit of the *Ceremonial* suggests that a formal liturgical commencement would be entirely acceptable and fitting:

From the longstanding practice of the Church, a council or a diocesan synod includes liturgical services, modeled on the celebrations that are recorded in Acts 15:6-29. The governance of the Church is never to be looked upon as a mere administrative act; under the influence of the Holy Spirit, its governing assemblies are gathered in the name of God and for God's glory, and they therefore are an expression of the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ, which shines with greatest clarity in the liturgy. It is right that those who bear the responsibility together also share in the one prayer together.

These assemblies should all begin with the celebration of a Mass, to which the people are invited and which all the members of the council or synod rightly concelebrate with the president of the assembly.<sup>158</sup>

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prepared under the auspices of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, Coliegeville, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1989, 339p. This translation will be used in this study for all English quotations from the *Ceremonial*).

<sup>158</sup>*Ibid.*, n. 1169, p. 277 (CB, p. 321): "Ex antiqua Ecclesiae traditione sive Concilia sive Synodus dioecesana actiones quoque liturgicas complectuntur, exemplar sumendo eorum celebrationum quae in Actis Apostolorum (15, 6-29) referuntur. Ecclesiae enim regimen numquam uti actus mere administrativus est habendus, sed cum eius coetus in nomine et ad laudem Dei eiusque gloriam, movente Spiritu Sancto, coadunentur, eam unitatem Corporis Christi manifestent, quae maxime in sacra liturgia emicat. Quibus enim communis est cura, communis etiam debet esse oratio.

Coetus initium habeant Missae celebratione, ad quam vocetur populus et in qua omnia membra Concilii seu Synodi convenienter cum eius Praeside concelebrent..."



In both Boston and Toledo, formal opening Masses were celebrated. Because, for all practical purposes, the synodal process in New Orleans had already begun four years previously, there was no formal liturgical opening after its announcement in 1984.<sup>159</sup>

### Conclusion

It has been over a quarter of a century since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. More and more, the dioceses in the United States of America appear to be discovering the value of convoking a diocesan synod. Particular churches today are fertile soil which can give the marvelous idealism of the conciliar documents practical expression. The phenomenon of a truly representative body of

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<sup>159</sup>P. McINERNEY, Letter to the priests and deacons of the Archdiocese of Boston, June 26, 1986, Synod Archives, AB, Boston. On September 14, 1986, the Feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross, the Archbishop of Boston formally inaugurated the two-year preparation period for the synod at the cathedral. Prior to the Mass, a formal invitation was sent by the Cardinal to the invitees.

Cf. also *Pontifical Mass for the Opening of the Eighth Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston*, Boston, AB, pp. 1-3. At the beginning of the liturgical celebration, the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, traditional to synods, was sung in the context of a renewal of baptismal promises by those assembled.

Cf. *Eucharistic Liturgy Opening the Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo in America, Sunday, October 11, 1987*, Toledo, DT, pp. 3 and 7. The formal opening of the synod of the Diocese of Toledo occurred on Sunday, October 11, 1987, in the cathedral. Prior to the celebration, personal letters were sent to all invitees requesting their presence at the event. At the beginning of the liturgy, the Bishop officially proclaimed the opening of the synod. Immediately following his homily the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* was sung and the Bishop then commissioned the seventeen members of the Synod Steering Committee who were guiding the process.

the particular church aiding its bishop in charting its future course has been rediscovered.

Vatican II has become a model, so to speak, for diocesan synods.<sup>160</sup> Just as the Bishop of Rome, John XXIII, prayerfully considered the circumstances of his day prior to calling a synod in his diocese and an ecumenical council, so diocesan bishops today finally have the same freedom to consider whether circumstances in a particular church warrant the convocation of a synod.<sup>161</sup> As the Second Vatican Council established a vision for the entire Church, so diocesan synods can particularize that vision and create a framework in which it can be concretized. In the spirit of the Council, that framework should not only be strong enough to bear a diversity of genuine theological and ecclesiological opinion, but also promote greater unity within the diocese. At the same time that framework must deal with the real life circumstances of the particular church, for diocesan synods are eminently practical experiences.

Those dioceses in the United States which have celebrated synods since Vatican II aimed to provide future direction for their particular church in the light of the conciliar documents and, after its promulgation, the Code of Canon Law. The fruits of their labors, though, reflect the diverse circumstances of the particular

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<sup>160</sup>Cf. J. PASSICOS, "Le retour du synode diocésain: un épiphénomène?", pp. 33-34.

<sup>161</sup>Cf. c. 461, §1.

churches. Respecting this difference is the beauty of the current law on diocesan synods.

Because the current law does not provide a complete blueprint for celebrating a diocesan synod, additional preparatory planning at the level of the particular church is necessary if the experience is to be a beneficial one. It is that preparatory phase that we shall consider next.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE PREPARATORY PHASE OF THE SYNOD**

One key element for the success of any diocesan synod is the groundwork which is laid even before the formal process begins. This chapter will consider two components of this preliminary process: the primary personnel involved and the structures which give shape to its development. As in the previous chapter, we shall concentrate on these factors as they were evidenced in the particular churches of Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo. While the law pertaining to diocesan synods does not directly address the elements related to the personnel and the structure, serious consideration of them would appear to be essential if the experience is to be fruitful.

#### **A. The Personnel<sup>1</sup>**

The three personnel aspects to be treated here include: 1) the diocesan bishop and his role; 2) consultation prior to undertaking the synodal process; and 3) the synod secretariate and preparatory committees.

Only the diocesan bishop and selected priests of the particular church were officially involved in the various phases of diocesan synods convoked after the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Appendix VI for the Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo synod organizational charts.

promulgation of the 1917 code and until the Second Vatican Council. In the United States, at least, the preparatory stage usually consisted in the appointment of certain priests by the bishop to pre-synodal committees to consider legislation which was to be enacted at the formal synod gathering.<sup>2</sup> With the promulgation of the 1983 *CIC*, the number of principals included in the preparatory portions of the synod -- not to mention the entire synodal process -- extends far beyond those few engaged before. Even so, no one will doubt the tremendous place the diocesan bishop and his priests continue to have in the initial phase of the synodal planning. If anything, their role now is actually far more extensive than in the past.

#### 1. The role and function of the diocesan bishop

As the chief shepherd of the particular church, according to the current code the diocesan bishop or his equivalent, in accord with c. 381, §2, is the key figure when it comes to a diocesan synod. The law is explicit on his rights and obligations relative to the institute; most especially on his right to convoke the synod. The preparatory period offers him an opportunity to exercise his responsibility to govern, teach, and sanctify in a unique manner.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF RICHMOND, *Synodus Dioecesis Richmondiensis Tertia*, 1963, pp. xi-xii; DIOCESE OF TOLEDO, *Synodus Dioecesis Toletana in America Prima*, 1941, pp. 10-13; DIOCESE OF FARGO, *Synodus Dioecesis Fargensis Secunda*, 1951, p. 305.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus*, (hereafter: 1983 *CIC*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1983 (Cf.

a. *Munus regendi*

The diocesan bishop possesses the authority necessary for the exercise of his pastoral office.<sup>4</sup> In the synodal process, this can be manifested in two particular ways: 1) by exercising his right to convoke the diocesan synod; and 2) by indicating the parameters of synodal competence.

1) The right of convocation

Canon 462, §1, notes that only the diocesan bishop can convoke the diocesan synod. One who merely presides over a diocese *ad interim* does not possess such a right.<sup>5</sup>

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*Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, Translation prepared under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1983, xlii-668p. English translations of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* are taken from this edition), c. 375, §1. Cf. CONCILIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia: 'Lumen gentium'" (hereafter: *LG*), nn. 25-27, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (hereafter: *AAS*), 57 (1965), pp. 29-33; "Decretum de Pastoralis Episcoporum Munere in Ecclesia: 'Christus Dominus'" (hereafter: *CD*), nn. 8 and 11, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 676, 677-678. Cf. also S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, *Canon Law Studies*, 473, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1970, pp. 23-76.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. c. 381, §1.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. cc. 405, §1 and 409, §2. It would seem that the coadjutor or auxiliary bishop would be permitted to convoke a diocesan synod during an impeded or vacant see if the competent authority provides for it.

According to c. 382, §1, a bishop promoted to the diocese may not exercise his office before taking canonical possession of the diocese. In the former law,<sup>6</sup> episcopal consecration did not have to precede taking possession.<sup>7</sup> Canon 379 of the 1983 code dictates that episcopal consecration is necessary before assuming canonical possession. In the 1917 code, canonical possession was taken when the appointee, either personally or by proxy, presented the apostolic letters of appointment to the cathedral chapter or diocesan consultors in the presence of the secretary of the chapter of the diocese whose duty it was to record the presentation in writing.<sup>8</sup> In the current law, the apostolic letter is to be presented to the college of consultors in the presence of the chancellor who officially records the event. No longer is the cathedral chapter involved unless the chapter has the functions of the college of consultors -- an option provided in c. 502, §3. In the case of a newly-erected diocese, the appointee takes canonical possession of the see as soon as he has communicated the apostolic letter to the clergy and people present in the cathedral

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<sup>6</sup>*Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi Iussu Digestus Benedicti Papae XV Auctoritate Promulgatus* (hereafter: 1917 CIC), Westminster, Maryland, Newman Press, 1957, xlvii-786 p.

<sup>7</sup>C. Augustine (*A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law*, vol. 2, St. Louis, B. Herder Book Co., 1923, p. 350) noted that this canon referred to juridical possession and not liturgical possession. Cf. also H. AYRINHAC, *Constitution of the Church in the New Code of Canon Law*, New York, Longmans, Green and Co., 1929, pp. 196-197. The author stated that consecration was not necessary for the bishop before taking possession of the diocese, nor was investiture with the pallium necessary in the case of an archbishop.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. c. 334, §3, 1917 CIC.

with the senior presbyter among those present acting as the official recorder. The current law also clearly urges that the act of taking canonical possession occur within a liturgical ceremony.<sup>9</sup>

a) Convocation by the vicar general

Canon 357, §1, of the former law gave the vicar general the right to convoke a diocesan synod if he possessed a mandate to this effect from the diocesan bishop.<sup>10</sup> It would still be possible for the vicar general to convoke a synod in light of c. 134, §3, provided he possessed a mandate to do so from the bishop.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Cf. c. 382, §§3 and 4.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. *Codicis Iuris Canonici Fontes* (hereafter: *Fontes*), P. Gasparri, ed., vol. 5, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1930, n. 2745, p. 327. On December 4, 1655, the Sacred Congregation of the Council declared: "Ordinarius humiliter supplicat pro declaratione: An Vicarius Generalis Episcopi possit Episcopo absente Synodum Dioecesanam congregare ita, ut constitutiones in ea editae sint observandae.

Sacra, etc. respondit non potuisse absque speciali mandato Episcopi, ac propterea constitutiones in Synodo, ut proponitur, factae esse ipso facto nullas."

<sup>11</sup>Cf. cc. 137, 479, §1. J. Alesandro (in *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* [hereafter: *CLSA Commentary*], J. Coriden, T. Green, and D. Heintschel, eds., New York/Mahwah, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 380) holds that a vicar general or episcopal vicar cannot convoke a diocesan synod even if a mandate has been received from the diocesan bishop. The use of the word "only" in the canon would prohibit the conferral of such a mandate. To support his position, Alesandro notes that c. 357, §1, of the 1917 *CIC* mentions both the words "convoking" and "presiding", thus implying that a vicar general could do both with a special mandate from the diocesan bishop. In the current code, however, the acts of convoking and presiding are treated in two separate canons, thus limiting the right to the diocesan bishop. Other authors would also limit the power to convoke the synod to the diocesan bishop. Cf. D. MOGAVERO, "Il sinodo diocesano", in *Chiesa Particolare e Strutture di Comunione*, A. Longhitano et al., eds., Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1985, p. 66; *Commento al Codice di Diritto Canonico*, P. Pinto, ed., Roma,



Although c. 462, §1, says that only the diocesan bishop can convoke the synod, the canon is meant to protect his *right* to do so. If the diocesan bishop should choose to mandate the vicar general or episcopal vicar to convoke the synod, the act would presume his intention to convoke it.

b) Delegation of presidency in synodal sessions

The 1917 code, in one canon, treated of convoking and presiding over the synod, yet the current law considers them in two separate canons. Canon 361 of the previous law allowed the bishop to delegate other priests to preside over the preparatory sessions. According to c. 462, §2, of the current law, the vicar general or the episcopal vicar may be delegated to preside at any individual session; no distinction is made between preparatory or solemn sessions.<sup>12</sup> Even though only

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Urbaniana University Press, p. 271.

<sup>12</sup>It is interesting to compare the canons which deal with synodal presidency in the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei* with those in the 1980 and 1982 schemata. Cf. PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO CODICI IURIS CANONICI RECOGNOSCENDO (hereafter: PONT. COMM.), *Schema Canon Libri II De Populo Dei*, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977, p. 113: "Can. 272, §2. Synodo dioecesanæ præest Episcopus dioecesanus non vero, sine speciali mandato, Vicarius generalis nec Vicarius episcopalis." This formulation was later changed at the request of a conference of bishops to avoid the negative tone the canon conveyed. Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 316.

Cf. PONT. COMM. *Schema Codicis Iuris Canonici iuxta animadversiones S.R.E. Cardinalium, Episcoporum Conferentiarum, Dicasteriorum Curiae Romanae, Universitatum Facultatumque ecclesiarum necnon Superiorum Institutorum vitæ consecratae recognitum*, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1980, p. 92: "Can. 381, §2. Synodo dioecesanæ præest Episcopus dioecesanus, qui tamen Vicarium generalem aut Vicarium episcopalem cum mandato speciali pro singulis

the vicar general or episcopal vicar are mentioned in the canon, it would seem that c. 137, §1, would also permit another priest to be delegated to fulfill the responsibility of occasional presidency.<sup>13</sup>

The code does not require that the delegation be in writing, but it would be wise to do so in light of c. 131, §3, which "serves to remind the person delegating another that the mandate or charge about the purpose and extent of the delegation must be clear, and it must be in a form... such that the delegate can prove delegation to others."<sup>14</sup>

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sessionibus Synodi ad hoc officium implendum delegare potest."

The 1982 schema deletes any reference to a mandate and speaks merely about delegating the vicar general or episcopal vicar. Cf. PONT. COMM. *Codex Iuris Canonici Schema Novissimum iuxta placita Patrum Commissionis Emendatum atque Summo Pontifici Praesentatum*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1982, p. 86: "Can. 462, §2. Synodo dioeceseanae praeest Episcopus dioeceseanus, qui tamen Vicarium generalem aut Vicarium episcopalem pro singulis sessionibus synodi ad hoc officium implendum delegare potest."

J. Alesandro (in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 300) holds that a vicar general or episcopal vicar cannot be delegated to preside at *all* synodal sessions because this would be contrary to the purpose of the institute which is supposed to gather representatives from the whole people of God -- bishop, clergy and laity.

Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, Roma, Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1986, pp. 130-136.

<sup>13</sup>L. Jennings ("A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", in *Studia canonica*, 20 (1986), p. 344) holds that only the vicar general and episcopal vicar may be delegated to preside at individual sessions. Yet, c. 137, §1, says that the ordinary executive power may be delegated unless the law "expressly" provides otherwise. It does not seem that c. 462, §2, expressly limits the role of presidency to the two offices mentioned above.

<sup>14</sup>R. HILL, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 94. Cf. also M. CAMPAGNA, *Il Vicario Generale del Vescovo*, Canon Law Studies, 66, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1931, p. 131.

c) The right to convoke a synod for other dioceses

Canon 356, §2, of the former discipline said that if a bishop had the care of several dioceses which were equally principally united, or had title to one and perpetual administration of another, he could convoke but one synod for all the dioceses.

Canon 461, §2, of the 1983 *CIC* is practically the same as its 1917 code counterpart (356, §2). Under the new law, the bishop can convoke one synod for all the dioceses committed to his care if he has care of several dioceses, or of one as its proper bishop and another as its administrator. Presumably the priests and laity from both dioceses would collaborate in this venture. The proper bishop mentioned in c. 461, §2, is one who has been appointed or confirmed by the Holy See and has taken canonical possession of the diocese according to the norm of c. 382.

Canon 461, §2, when speaking of the bishop who administers another diocese, considers him to be a permanent administrator and not simply one *ad interim*.<sup>15</sup> F. Donnelly held that under the former law, a bishop who was the temporary administrator of another diocese was tacitly prohibited from convoking a synod, but he could have done so if his letter of appointment expressly declared the right.<sup>16</sup> Despite the restriction of c. 462, §1, of the current law, a bishop who presides over

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<sup>15</sup>Cf. c. 427, §1.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod: An Historical Conspectus and Commentary*, Canon Law Studies, 74, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1932, p. 40.

another diocese *ad interim* could still convoke a synod if his letter of appointment indicated this right.

## 2) Establishment of synodal parameters

The diocesan bishop has the obligation to guide the synodal process in conformity with the general discipline of the Church.<sup>17</sup> This duty extends beyond his attention to the structural details of the process to the actual content of the synodal discussions. In the preparatory phase of the synod, the bishop should declare the parameters of topics which could legitimately be discussed in the process. This should be done to clarify expectations, to dispel false hopes which may arise relative to what can be treated in the synod, and to focus the discussion more clearly.

### a) Clarifying expectations

Canon 465 indicates that all "proposed questions" are subject to the free discussion of the synodal members. It seems, though, that the canon implies that the matters under discussion are those which fall within the competence of the

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<sup>17</sup>Cf. cc. 392, §§1 and 2. Cf. also *LG*, n. 23, in *AAS* 57 (1965), p. 27.

members of the synod to consider and which the diocesan bishop can later make normative if he so chooses.<sup>18</sup>

As J. Provost notes,<sup>19</sup> at some synodal celebrations it has happened that proposals have been made which are contrary to current church discipline. As the synodal process expands to include more persons of varying theological opinions, this phenomenon becomes more common. The difficulty, though, is that some participants might enter into the process wishing to politicize it; or some might believe that the diocesan bishop does indeed possess the power to effect a change in line with a contrary teaching or discipline which they propose. In both cases this can damage the synodal process. If the bishop indicates at the very beginning of the process what falls within the boundaries of discussion, false expectations and later disappointment can be diminished. It is advisable, though, for the bishop to allow the greatest latitude possible in topics which can be considered so that participants

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<sup>18</sup>Cf. c. 466. Cf. also A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", in *Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Convention/Canon Law Society of America*, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1987, p. 12; J. DURAND, "Un regain d'intérêt en France pour les synodes diocésains: Expériences et perspectives", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 5.

<sup>19</sup>J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 20.

do not consider the process to be merely a "rubber stamp" event.<sup>20</sup> The parameters were established early in New Orleans,<sup>21</sup> Boston,<sup>22</sup> and Toledo.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Cf. CONGREGATIO PRO EPISCOPIS, *Directorium de Pastoralis Ministerio Episcoporum* (hereafter: *DPME*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973, n. 94, pp. 95-96 (Cf. *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* (hereafter: *DPMB*), Translation prepared by the Benedictine Monks of the Seminary of Christ the King, Mission, B.C., Ottawa, Publications Service of the Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974, p. 50. This translation will be used for all English version quotations from the Directory in this study). This paragraph merely reiterated c. 357, §1, of the 1917 CIC when it said: "In exercising his ministry of shepherd, the bishop... is always actively concerned about the unity of the entire Catholic Church. This concern for unity does, however, admit legitimate variety which the bishop accepts according to the norms of law."

<sup>21</sup>Cf. P. HANNAN, Letter of August 26, 1980, Synod Archives, Archdiocese of New Orleans (hereafter: ANO), New Orleans. Even though the town hall sessions which were held in the Archdiocese of New Orleans were not considered initially to be part of the synodal process in their planning stages, some concern was expressed about the nature of the meetings. Archbishop Hannan addressed the issue by noting that the function of the sessions would not be to make decisions, but rather offer suggestions concerning the "spiritual improvement" of the particular church. Furthermore, he indicated that "everyone has been informed very strongly that the final decisions will be made by the Ordinary alone." Archbishop Hannan also spoke to the issue on other occasions. Cf. also ANO, Minutes of the Priests' Council meeting, meeting of March 20, 1986, Diocesan Archives, New Orleans, p. 3; ANO, Minutes of the Priests' Council Meeting, meeting of September 20, 1984, Diocesan Archives, New Orleans, p. 2; P. HANNAN, Letter of March 18, 1986, Synod Archives, New Orleans.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON (hereafter: AB), Minutes of the Presbyteral Council Meeting, meeting of November 23, 1984, Diocesan Archives, Boston, p. 2. When the synodal process was being considered in the Archdiocese of Boston, the report of the Ante-Preparatory Synod Committee stated that "clear parameters for the synod should be established from the beginning. Strong, positive direction from the Archbishop is needed if the synod is to be successful. Parameters should be guidelines and not means of stifling topics."

Cf. B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, Boston, Daughters of St. Paul, 1986, p. 13. Over a year later, in his pastoral letter, Cardinal Law indicated in a general fashion what would be covered in the synod by saying that

**b) Focusing the discussion**

Another reason why the bishop should indicate the parameters of discussion at the synod would be to focus the work. With expanded participation in the synodal process comes the problem of many persons wanting the synod to consider topics which are important to them. It would be unrealistic, though, to assume that in the process every topic which affects church life will be open for discussion. It would be helpful if the bishop or the central coordinating committee, after

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"the agenda for this Synod corresponds to the agenda of the Extraordinary Synod of the universal Church in December, 1985... Through this Archdiocesan Synod we shall reply to the invitation of the Extraordinary Synod which suggested that a 'pastoral program be implemented in the particular Churches for the years to come, having as its objective a new, more extensive and deeper knowledge and reception of the Council'..."

The Cardinal also spoke to the issue on other occasions. Cf. B. LAW, "Meeting with synod subcommittee chairpersons and liaisons", Synod Archives, Boston, pp. 3-4.

<sup>23</sup>Although Bishop James Hoffman of Toledo and the Vicar for the Synod, Fr. David Ross, had first met with the priests of the Diocese nine months prior to the formal announcement of the synod to convey to them the Bishop's intention to convoke one, some still expressed confusion about the process. Cf. D. ROSS, Memo to Bishop J. Hoffman concerning the lack of presbyteral support for the synod, May 20, 1987, Synod Archives, Diocese of Toledo (hereafter: DT), Toledo: "While at the [Priests' Council] meeting, the questions, 'Why are we having a synod?' and 'Why do we need a synod?' again surfaced. After explaining the course of events leading up to the decision to convoke a synod, I found myself standing before a few who, in my opinion, simply would not accept the process. One comment in particular which sticks with me is: 'Why doesn't the bishop just tell us that he wants a synod?'. A month before the actual announcement, the Bishop wrote to each priest and pastoral administrator in the Diocese and indicated the purpose and general parameters of the process. Cf. J. HOFFMAN, Letter to "Co-worker[s] in the Ministry", May 28, 1987, Synod Archives, Toledo. This served as a foundation for his later pastoral letter in which he indicated that the matters dealt with in the synod would have to be in conformity with the documents of Vatican II and the Code of Canon Law.

appropriate consultation, could indicate those areas which the synod should treat, but be open to addressing adjunct subjects if they have popular support.<sup>24</sup> The synodal process simply loses its effectiveness when it tries to embrace too much.

b. *Munus docendi*

In addition to the pastoral office of governance, the diocesan bishop is given the responsibility to teach the gospel in his particular church.<sup>25</sup> The duties of guiding and forming the people entrusted to his care are part of his *munus docendi*.<sup>26</sup> In the context of a diocesan synod, the bishop can experience an excellent opportunity to exercise his role as chief teacher. Perhaps the most important element in the preparatory stage, then, is the bishop's articulation of both the benefits involved in convoking the synod and his personal vision as to where he hopes the process will guide the diocese.

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<sup>24</sup>The Executive Committee in Boston, in consultation with the Cardinal, determined the twenty-six document areas. In Toledo, the Steering Committee and Bishop established the seven areas. In New Orleans, the Archbishop, in consultation with the Priests' Council and the Central Committee, selected the areas to be considered.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. *CD*, n. 11, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), p. 677; c. 369.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. J. TOBIN, *The Teaching Office of the Diocesan Bishop*, Ottawa, Saint Paul University, 1983, p. 12.



1) Expressing the ecclesial benefits of the synod

As he indicates the rationale behind his decision to convoke the synod, the diocesan bishop has the opportunity to ground his remarks in the rich synodal heritage of the Church universal and particular. When he speaks of the benefits of such a venture, his remarks can and should be based on the mystery of the Church in which both word and sacrament are experienced.

In their pastoral letters on the subject, Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston and Bishop James Hoffman of Toledo spoke of the synod in the context of scripture and tradition.<sup>27</sup> Cardinal Law used the feast of the day upon which the letter was issued -- the Transfiguration of Christ<sup>28</sup> -- to note the need for the transfiguration of those within the particular church.<sup>29</sup> The mystery of the Church<sup>30</sup> itself was addressed and the gospel challenge to be a servant community was recalled.<sup>31</sup>

Bishop Hoffman began by referring to the previously developed mission statement of the Diocese.<sup>32</sup> Recalling the vision developed by Vatican II, he

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<sup>27</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 60, p. 65.

<sup>28</sup>B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, p. 1. Cf. also B. LAW, Letter to those completing the diocesan survey, Synod Archives, Boston, October 25, 1986.

<sup>29</sup>B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, pp. 3-6.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, "Synod '89, Together in Christ", Pastoral letter convoking a synod in the Diocese of Toledo, Toledo, June 25, 1987.

observed that it "has yet to be completely implemented."<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Toledo synod would offer people within the Diocese the opportunity to consider again the teachings of the Council, and apply them to the particular church.

## 2) Expressing a personal vision

In addition to educating his people about the theological dimensions connected with the synod, and making known the precise purposes for convoking it, the bishop can inspire others in the diocese to accept the challenges which the synod will bring. This can foster that sense of *communio* which every local ecclesial community can experience more deeply.

The "personal" dimension of the bishop's vision should not be underestimated. It is not uncommon for a number of persons in the diocese to see the synodal process simply as a bureaucratic exercise. If the bishop can express in down-to-earth -- even personal -- terms what he sees as the eventual outcome of the process, it will be far more acceptable to those who can and must participate in it. In the three particular churches which are being studied in this work, the diocesan bishops shared their personal vision not only of the Church universal and particular but also of the synodal process as well.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>To encourage participation in the Toledo synodal process and show his own commitment to it, Bishop Hoffman acted as the host of four prime-time TV programs aired throughout the Diocese.

c. *Munus sanctificandi*

In so far as the diocesan synod is a vehicle whereby the particular church can experience spiritual and structural renewal, the bishop plays a key role in the process as he exercises his priestly office.<sup>35</sup> His presence is especially powerful and beneficial to the process -- or more appropriately to the people involved in it -- when he not only presides at liturgical functions, but also when he serves his people by being with them in other situations.<sup>36</sup>

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Cf. "Archdiocese Project: Procedural plans for the town hall session process in New Orleans", Synodal Archives, New Orleans, p. 2.

Cardinal Law ("Meeting with synod subcommittee chairpersons and liaisons", pp. 3-5) met with those who would be writing the synodal documents and expressed to them his personal ecclesial vision as they prepared to begin their work: "Finally, just a word about my vision of the Church, because if I am going to be responsible, in the final analysis, to take all the wonderful ideas that you have and formulate them, how do I begin? Very simply, let me say that for me everybody has something about our faith that is pivotal to their life... And I can tell you that on a straight trajectory since I was in the tenth grade of high school, I have had one thing that has been pivotal for my life of faith, and that is the Pauline understanding of the Church..."

Now I want our parishes to come alive... I do not think we have begun to be who we can be. I don't think we have begun to make the impact that we can make...

What does it profit a Church if it gains the most beautiful Synodal document, but along the way the members of the Church have not been renewed in their life in Christ?...

I am excited about this. I think that all of the things that God will give me the ability to do as the Archbishop of Boston -- and like it or not you've got me for about twenty more years, unless I die first -- of all the things that I will do, I do not think that anything will have [a greater]...potential for impact and for good than will this Synod..."

<sup>35</sup>Cf. *LG*, n. 26, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), pp. 31-32; *CD*, n. 15, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 679-680.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. *CD*, n. 16, in *AAS*, (58), pp. 680-681.

### 1) Episcopal presence at the liturgical celebrations

The *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* indicates that the diocesan synod is a marvelous opportunity to experience liturgical celebrations which can enliven the faith of the participants and increase their apostolic zeal and piety.<sup>37</sup> As principal dispenser of the mysteries of the Lord,<sup>38</sup> it is indeed a great help to the synodal process when the bishop expresses those mysteries not only in eucharistic celebrations, but in other opportunities for prayer as well. His presence at the liturgy formally opening the synod could set the tone for the entire process. In his homily, he could, perhaps, reiterate that ecclesial and personal vision which can inspire the synodal participants. At other synodal meetings as the bishop leads the gathered community in prayer, he has the opportunity to call the assembled faithful to focus their attention on the real purpose of their synodal labors.<sup>39</sup>

### 2) Episcopal presence at other occasions

While the diocesan bishop may appoint a general coordinator and committees to take care of synodal preparations, it is nonetheless very important for *him* to be present at particular synodal gatherings. Even though he might have to direct the

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<sup>37</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 163, p. 160.

<sup>38</sup>Cf. *CD*, n. 15, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), p. 679.

<sup>39</sup>In the midst of synodal preparations, it is a great temptation for synodal staff and delegates to become immersed in documentation. As "ἐπίσκοπος", the bishop can be the one who, in a sense, continually puts all the work into perspective for those involved in it.

discussion at a certain meeting, his presence at other times will also indicate to those gathered the importance he places on the process and on their work as well.<sup>40</sup> The time the bishop devotes to being present at various synodal gatherings will exemplify his willingness to be "as one who serves".<sup>41</sup>

## **2. Prior consultation**

Preceding the announcement of any major event in the diocese, such as a diocesan synod, it is only natural for the diocesan bishop to tap the wisdom of other persons to ascertain their opinions about such a venture. The current law requires the bishop to consult at least one diocesan body, but it is helpful if others are given the opportunity to offer their advice to him.

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<sup>40</sup>Cf. E. GAUTHREAUX, "Dos and Don'ts for the Bishop and Synodal Chairman", Synod Archives, New Orleans, pp. 1-2. The bishop's presence, at least at central coordinating committee meetings, is recommended, but he is advised not to preside at them nor dominate them.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. *CD*, n. 16, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), p. 680. In addition to attending the weekly administrative staff meetings during the two-year synodal process, Bishop Hoffman of Toledo was also present at deanery meetings with priests, at deanery sessions with Parish Synod Teams throughout the process, and on TV programs aired throughout the Diocese. Cardinal Law of Boston also was present at the Steering Committee meetings, especially at the beginning of the synodal process.

a. The presbyteral council

Under the current law, the diocesan bishop must now consult the presbyteral council before celebrating a synod.<sup>42</sup> Prior to Vatican II, there were no such councils;<sup>43</sup> instead there were cathedral chapters and boards of consultors, but their canonical role did not extend to offering advice relative to the convocation of a

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<sup>42</sup>C. 271, §1, of the 1977 schema and c. 380, §1, of the 1980 schema did not oblige the bishop to consult anyone prior to deciding to convoke a synod. After some discussion, such a consultation provision was added in the 1982 schema. Cf. PONT. COMM. *Codex Iuris Canonici Schema Novissimum...* p. 85: "Can. 461, §1. Synodus dioecesana in singulis Ecclesiis particularibus celebretur cum iudicio Episcopi dioecesani audito consilio presbyterali adiuncta id suadeant."

Cf. also PONT. COMM. *Relatio Complectens Synthesim Animadversionum ab Em. mis atque Exc. mis Patribus Commissionis ad Novissimum Codicis Iuris Canonici Exhibitarum, cum Responsionibus a Secretaria et Consultoribus Datis*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1981, p. 109, relative to the decision to change the wording of the canon.

<sup>43</sup>Cf. CONCILIIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Decretum de Presbyterorum Ministerio et Vita: 'Presbyterorum ordinis'", n. 7, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 1001-1003; CD, n. 27, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 686-687; PAUL VI, *Motu proprio, Ecclesiae sanctae* (hereafter: ES), I, August 6, 1966, in AAS, 58 (1966), n. 15, p. 766; and cc. 495-502 of the 1983 CIC for a more detailed understanding of the role of this council as expressed in official documents.

synod.<sup>44</sup> The diocesan bishop was not obliged to consult anyone, but could convoke the diocesan synod at his own discretion.

In regulating such discretion, c. 127, §1, declares that, when the law states that for certain acts to be placed the counsel of a college or group of persons is required by the superior, the college or group must be convoked according to the norm of c. 166 unless otherwise provided for in particular or proper law. For the act to be valid, the counsel of all who are present is to be sought. Canon 127, §2, 2°, further states that if counsel is required, the act of the superior is invalid if the superior does not listen to those who offer the advice. Although not bound to follow the counsel of those present, the superior should not act contrary to their advice unless for a serious reason. Canon 127, §3, admonishes those offering advice to remember the importance of their role, to be sincere, and, if necessary, to observe secrecy. The bishop is not bound to follow the advice of the presbyteral council, but

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<sup>44</sup>For a more thorough understanding of the roles of cathedral chapters or boards of consultors relative to diocesan synods, cf. *Fontes*, vol. 5, n. 2602, p. 283.

L. Ferraris (*Bibliotheca Canonica Juridica, Moralis, Theologica, necnon Ascetica, Polemica, Rubricistica, Historica*, vol. 8, Romae, 1768, n. 17) noted that some held the opinion that the counsel of the cathedral chapter or board of consultors was necessary. Cf. also F. DONNELLY, p. 44, n. 26.

The Congregation of the Council recognized the value of a contrary custom which obliged the bishop to seek the advice of the cathedral chapter before deciding to convoke a diocesan synod. Cf. *Fontes*, vol. 5, n. 2327, pp. 194-195. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore did legislate that the counsel of diocesan consultors was to be sought before a synod was convoked. *Acta et Decreta Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis Tertii*, vol. 1, Baltimore, J. Murphy, 1886, no. 20, p. 15. F. Donnelly (*The Diocesan Synod*, p. 44) held that this provision was *praeter ius* under the 1917 CIC and therefore continued in force.

if there is a consensus in the group he would be remiss were he to fail to follow it unless there were prevailing reasons to the contrary.<sup>45</sup>

The diocesan bishop of each of the three particular churches being considered in this paper consulted his presbyteral council regarding the convocation of a synod; indeed, in one diocese the idea for such an enterprise came from the priests themselves and not from the bishop.

In the Archdiocese of Boston, it was Cardinal Law who first proposed the notion of a diocesan synod<sup>46</sup> not long after he was appointed there. An Ante-Preparatory Synod Committee was established by the Presbyteral Council,<sup>47</sup> and a year later the Committee recommended that a synodal Steering Committee be established.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Cf. c. 500, 1983 *CC*. Cf. also J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, pp. 404-405, regarding the authority of the presbyteral council. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, p. 90.

<sup>46</sup>Cf. AB, Minutes of the Presbyteral Council Meeting, meeting of September 6, 1984, Diocesan Archives, Boston, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. AB, Minutes of the Presbyteral Council Meeting, meeting of November 23, 1984, p. 2. In the preliminary report of the Ante-Preparatory Committee four points were made: 1) a synod could be a fine renewal instrument for the Archdiocese; 2) the synod should issue a mission statement, and particular legislation should be revised; 3) the people of the particular church should benefit spiritually from the experience; and 4) the Archbishop should establish clear parameters and direction for the process.

<sup>48</sup>Cf. AB, Minutes of the Presbyteral Council Meeting, meeting of September 13, 1985, Diocesan Archives, Boston, pp. 3-4. At this particular meeting it was decided that the purposes of the synod would be to develop a mission statement for the particular church and review and revise all diocesan statutes.



It was at the Archdiocese of New Orleans Priests' Council meeting in the fall of 1984 that Archbishop Hannan discussed the synod with the members present, and announced the appointment of persons to guide the process.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the general framework of the synod was considered at that time. Throughout all phases of the synod, the Priests' Council was advised of its progress, and the body played a key role in the review of draft documents.<sup>50</sup>

The subject of a diocesan synod in Toledo first arose at a plenary session of the Priests' Council (then Senate) in the fall of 1983.<sup>51</sup> A committee was established to study the possibility of a synodal convocation, and a year later issued a report to the Senate and the Bishop.<sup>52</sup> Subsequent to receiving this report,

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<sup>49</sup>Cf. ANO, Minutes of the Priests' Council Meeting, meeting of September 20, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, New Orleans, 1987, p. xiv. The sections of the second drafts of the synodal documents were reviewed and voted upon in ten Priests' Council meetings. The various committees of the Council considered all the suggestions received from the deaneries, religious, and diocesan departments. It was the responsibility of the Council to "provide specification for the policies and norms which were to be mandated or recommended by the Synod."

<sup>51</sup>Cf. DT, Minutes of the Priests' Senate Meeting, meeting of September 17, 1983, Diocesan Archives, Toledo, p. 1. All the priests of the Diocese were invited to this event, and were asked to submit topics for consideration by the Senate during that term. Their first request was for the Senate to study the convocation of a diocesan synod.

<sup>52</sup>Cf. SUBCOMMITTEE ON REMOTE PREPARATIONS FOR A DIOCESAN SYNOD, "Final Report to Toledo Senate of Priests", Synod Archives, Toledo, June 27, 1984, p. 1: "A synod may have a clearly legal/institutional focus, resulting in specific legislation for a local church; or may function in a highly pastoral way -- as a focus for a diocese at a particular point in time, and surfacing attitudes and concerns of Catholics within the diocese on a broad variety of issues affecting the

Bishop Hoffman decided to begin the synodal process which included a diocesan-wide census and survey of attitudes relative to the Church.

It should be noted that in the three particular churches the contribution of the presbyteral council to the synodal process did not cease with the initial consultation between them and the diocesan bishop. Their role was extremely important in the continual review of the respective processes as they developed, and also of the documents which were being prepared.

**b. Additional consultation**

Other than conferring with the presbyteral council, the current code does not oblige the diocesan bishop to consult others prior to convoking the synod. Nonetheless, since, according to c. 463, §1, 5°, the diocesan pastoral council is to have a role in the selection of lay representatives to the diocesan synod, it would seem only appropriate for the bishop to extend his initial consultation to the council, if one exists.<sup>53</sup> In fact, if time permits, the diocesan bishop may wish to consult

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Church..."

<sup>53</sup>Cf. ES, III, in AAS, 58 (1966), n. 20, p. 787. In missionary territories, the pastoral council is to aid in the preparations for the diocesan synod and the implementation of the statutes which emanate from it. Cf. also c. 511; R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, pp. 2 and 5; H. SCHMITZ, "Die Diözesansynode: Ihre geplante Zukunft in kirchenrechtlicher Sicht", in *Archiv für Katholisches Kirchenrecht*, 144 (1975), p. 451; H. HEINEMANN, "Zur Reform der Diözesansynode: Eine kritische Überlegung zu cc. 356-362 CIC", in *Ecclesia et Ius, Festgabe für A. Scheuermann zum 60*

other major consultative bodies like a sisters' or deacons' council, or even others mentioned in c. 463, §1, who are to be called to the synod and who would not otherwise be represented by a diocesan consultative body.<sup>54</sup>

### 3. Personnel to guide the process

While it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop to preside over the formal synodal sessions,<sup>55</sup> it is obvious that he cannot guide the preparatory process alone. At least since the promulgation of the 1917 *CIC*, it has been the common practice of bishops in the United States to appoint personnel to facilitate the actual preparatory phase of the synod. Such fall into three categories: 1) the synod secretariate; 2) the synodal committees; and 3) the professional consultants.

#### a. The synod secretariate

The synod secretariate is the office whose general responsibility is to execute the synodal process, often under the guidance of the bishop and the coordinating committee. It normally consists of the synodal coordinator and, perhaps, an associate and a secretary. This was the case in Boston and New Orleans. The secretariate in Toledo, also known as the Synod Administrative Staff, consisted of

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*Geburtstag*, K. Siepen, J. Weitzel and P. Wirth, eds., Paderborn, F. Schöningh, 1968, pp. 219-223.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. J. HICKEY, "The Bishop as Teacher", in *Origins*, 12 (1982-1983), p. 140.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. c. 462, §2.

the diocesan Bishop, the coordinator, a secretary and, in addition, the synod public relations director and four other department directors who, during the process, worked part-time for the Synod Office. Each member of this team assumed responsibility for portions of the synodal operation, and also acted as staff liaisons with the deaneries and later with the writing committees.<sup>56</sup> The specific responsibilities of the synod secretariate might include the following: 1) arranging the coordinating committee meetings and other gatherings as required; 2) providing assistance to the coordinating committee; 3) coordinating the synod event itself, including the selection of delegates; 4) supervising the design and production of educational materials for all groups within the diocese; 5) supervising the staffing of the various subcommittees; 6) supervising the selection of liaison and resource persons and materials for the various writing committees; 7) providing information to diocesan consultative bodies, diocesan department personnel, pastors and other interested parties; 8) coordinating with pastors and deans all parish and deanery level events connected with the synod; 9) coordinating all synod consultation processes; 10) supervising the recruitment of volunteers and their training; 11) supervising the application for synod sponsors and grants (if applicable); 12)

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<sup>56</sup>The Synod Administrative Staff in Toledo was formed as the synodal process progressed. After the decision was made to continue the process without the assistance of a consulting firm, the number on the staff increased. The eight members met weekly to assess the progress of the process and report on their areas of responsibility, i.e., public relations, synod education, evangelization, document consultation process, and deanery rapport.

supervising the timely preparation and distribution of the drafts; 13) coordinating all synod public relations; 14) coordinating all liturgical events connected with the synod; 15) preparing and monitoring the synod budget; and 16) coordinating the actual synodal celebration.<sup>57</sup>

Although the synodal coordinator may not be able to supervise personally all of the above items connected with the synod process, he or she should have a general knowledge of their progress and interaction so as to guide the process well.

#### 1) Appointment of a synodal coordinator

The 1917 code did not mention the need for appointing particular persons to serve as synodal officials; nor does the current law. Prior to the 1983 *CIC*, synodal coordinators in the United States were priests.<sup>58</sup> Today an increasing number of lay persons are serving in executive coordinating positions in diocesan synods.<sup>59</sup>

The question arises as to whether the synodal coordinator enjoys an ecclesiastical office. In addition, must the coordinator be a cleric?

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<sup>57</sup>Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, Synod Archives, Toledo, pp. 39-40. Cf. also E. GAUTHREAUX, "Dos and Don'ts for the Bishop and Synodal Chairman", pp. 1-2.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. cc. 358, §1 and 360, §1, 1917 *CIC*. Cf. also J. JOHNSON, "A Practical Approach to a Diocesan Synod", in *The Jurist*, 20 (1960), p. 63.

R. Pagé ("Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", p. 4) observes that, at least in the twelve United States dioceses which he studied, it was still common to appoint a priest to the position of general coordinator. In some cases it was the vicar general, chancellor or even an auxiliary bishop.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 98, p. 97.

a) The synod coordinator and ecclesiastical office

Canon 145, §1, of the 1917 *CIC* described an ecclesiastical office in the strict sense as a function constituted in a stable manner by divine or ecclesiastical law, and involving some participation or sharing in ecclesiastical power, whether of orders or jurisdiction.<sup>60</sup> Under the new law, an ecclesiastical office is "any function constituted in a stable manner by divine or ecclesiastical law to be exercised for a spiritual purpose."<sup>61</sup>

In so far as the universal law does not address the office of synodal promotor or coordinator, it is thus left up to the diocesan bishop who is the competent authority to decide if it would be an ecclesiastical office.<sup>62</sup>

If by "stable" is meant that the office is permanent, then the position of synodal coordinator would not be an ecclesiastical office because, in most cases, the function ceases when the synod is completed. However, if the position could be considered a permanent juridic entity in the sense that the code itself establishes it as an institute, then it could be considered an ecclesiastical office, and the various canons relating to appointment, resignation, removal, etc., would apply.

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<sup>60</sup>"... stricto autem sensu est munus ordinatione sive divina sive ecclesiastica stabiliter constitutum... aliquam saltem secumferens participationem ecclesiasticae potestatis sive ordinis sive iurisdictionis." Cf. R. HILL, in *CLSA Commentary*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. c. 145, §1: "quodlibet munus ordinatione sive divina sive ecclesiastica stabiliter constitutum in fine spirituales exercendum."

<sup>62</sup>Cf. c. 391, §1.

b) Must the synodal coordinator be a cleric?

Does the coordinator have to be a cleric? If, under the former law, the promotor or coordinator of the synod was considered to be exercising an ecclesiastical office, that person would have had to be a cleric. Today this is no longer the case since the code permits lay persons to assume ecclesiastical offices in accord with the norms of law.<sup>63</sup> But, if the coordinator were appointed, for example, as an episcopal vicar, then that person would have to be a priest.<sup>64</sup>

The functions of a synodal coordinator, at least in the United States, are generally the same. The person's responsibility is usually an administrative one, i.e., to guide the process, in cooperation with an executive or steering committee, through the preparatory phase to the actual synodal celebration.<sup>65</sup> In some

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<sup>63</sup>Cf. c. 228, §1.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. c. 478, §1.

Under the current code, ecclesiastical office does not presume the power of governance. But, if the power of governance is attached to the office by the bishop, then two issues arise: 1) Does the person holding the office have to be a cleric? and 2) If the coordinator is a layperson, does that person actually exercise the power of governance or simply "cooperate" in the power of governance as expressed in c. 129, §2? This issue is beyond the focus of this study, but for a further analysis of the question, cf. J. PROVOST, "The Participation of the Laity in the Governance of the Church", in *Studia canonica*, 17 (1983), pp. 417-448; A. CELEGHIN, "Sacra potestas: quaestio post conciliaris", in *Periodica*, 74 (1985), pp. 165-225; G. GHIRLANDA, "De natura, origine et exercitio potestatis regiminis iuxta novum codicem", in *Periodica*, 74 (1985), pp. 109-164; J. HERRANZ, "Le statut juridique des laïcs: l'apport des documents conciliaires et du *Code de droit canonique*", in *Studia canonica*, 19 (1985), pp. 229-257; E. MCDONOUGH, "Laity and the Inner Working of the Church", in *The Jurist*, 47 (1987), pp. 228-245.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 82.

dioceses a cleric did serve as the "official" coordinator of the process, but a woman religious acted as executive coordinator.<sup>66</sup>

c) The appointment

If the diocesan bishop considers the position of synodal coordinator to be an ecclesiastical office,<sup>67</sup> it would be necessary for him to provide for the office in canonical fashion, i.e., in writing.<sup>68</sup> Of the three particular churches which are the focus of this study, the only coordinator to receive a formal letter of appointment was Msgr. Earl Gauthreaux of New Orleans.<sup>69</sup> In all cases, though, the appointments of the coordinators were made public through the media.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>A woman religious served as an associate director in Boston. In Green Bay and Joliet, women religious acted as executive coordinators. Cf. M. HÉBRARD, *Révolution tranquille chez les catholiques?*, Paris, Centurion, 1989, pp. 58-60. At one diocesan synod in France, a woman was appointed to serve as a secretary general.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. cc. 129, §§1 and 2; 274, §1; 157; 470.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. cc. 146 and 156. Even if it is not considered to be an ecclesiastical office, the appointment to the position should be in writing. Cf. cc. 37 and 51.

<sup>69</sup>E. GAUTHREAU, Interview held in New Orleans, Louisiana, December 13, 1990.

<sup>70</sup>The announcement of Cardinal Law's appointment of the Executive Secretary of the Office of the Synod and of the Associate Director was made in the diocesan newspaper. Cf. "Boston archdiocese preparing for synod", *The Boston Pilot*, September 26, 1986, p. 13.

The announcement of the appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the synod in New Orleans was made in the presbyteral council minutes (Minutes of the Priests' Council Meeting, meeting of September 20, 1984, p. 2) and later in both the diocesan newspaper and the local paper. Cf. "Archbishop calls for



## 2) Appointment of other officials and personnel

In addition to appointing a synodal coordinator, it was the past practice, in accordance with the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, to appoint other synodal officials such as the notary, procurator of the clergy, secretary, porter and master of ceremonies.<sup>71</sup> Such officials are no longer appointed in the United States. Instead, a director of public relations, a liturgy coordinator, and the like, are sometimes appointed.

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Archdiocesan Synod", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, January 24, 1985, p. 1; "Hannan calls synod to update policies", in *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, January 24, 1985, p. 1.

The announcement of the appointment of the Vicar for the Synod in Toledo was made by the Bishop in his letter to the priests of the Diocese (J. HOFFMAN, Letter to "Co-worker[s] in the Ministry", p. 1), and later to the entire Diocese (J. HOFFMAN, "Synod '89, Together in Christ") in his pastoral letter.

The titles given to synodal coordinators vary. In the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (1971), the general coordinator was known as the "Coordinator-Procurator"; in Corpus Christi, "Episcopal Vicar for the Synod"; in Davenport (1986), "Promotor".

<sup>71</sup>J. Catalano (*Ceremoniale Episcoporum in Duos Libros Distributum Clementis VIII et Innocenti X Auctoritate recognitum a Benedicto XIII in multis correctum...*, vol. 1, Parisiis, A. Jouby, 1860, p. 575) notes that the Fourth Council of Toledo (c. 4) mandated the presence of certain synodal officials. Cf. also DIOCESE OF FARGO, *Synodus Dioecesisana Fargensis Secunda*, p. 307; DIOCESE OF RICHMOND, *Synodus Dioecesisana Richmondiensis Tertia*, p. x; DT, *Synodus Dioecesisana Toletana in America Prima*, p. 4; J. JOHNSON, "A Practical Approach to a Diocesan Synod", p. 64.

**b. Synodal committees**

There are generally two varieties of synodal committees appointed to aid in the development of the synodal process: 1) coordinating committees; and 2) document preparatory commissions.

**1) Coordinating committee**

In addition to the diocesan bishop and the synod coordinator, the coordinating committee should play a key role in charting a course for the synod. Even though the Synod Executive Committee was responsible for designing the process in Boston, the Synod Steering Committee played an important role in finalizing the process. In Toledo, the Synod Steering Committee served as the actual coordinating committee. In New Orleans, the Central Committee worked with the Synod Chairman. It is suggested that the general function of a central coordinating committee be to work closely with the synodal coordinator to guide the process, and in some cases make the major decisions relative to it. The various other committees are usually appointed<sup>72</sup> to take care of specific elements either of the process itself or of the documents, e.g., theological and canonical review of the documents or preparation of the convocation event. Each of the three particular churches which are the focus of this study arranged for the appointment of a number of such committees.

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<sup>72</sup>Cf. cc. 146-156.

In the Archdiocese of Boston, Cardinal Bernard Law established four separate committees to guide the synodal process: 1) the Executive Committee; 2) the Steering Committee; 3) the Committee of Reference for Statutes; and 4) the Committee of Reference for Other Documents.<sup>73</sup> In the New Orleans synod and its prior consultative phase, three committees served in the overall process: 1) the Archdiocesan Assembly Committee; 2) the Executive Committee for Implementation (of the Assembly recommendations); and 3) the Central Committee.<sup>74</sup> Likewise,

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<sup>73</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Committees", Synod Archives, Boston. An eight member Synod Executive Committee was organized subsequent to the appointment of the Executive Secretary for the Synod. It included the Vicar General who acted as chairperson, the Executive Secretary for the Synod and the Associate Director who served as staff, a consultant, and three others -- one bishop, four priests, two religious woman and one lay woman.

The Synod Steering Committee was comprised of the chairpersons of the twenty-six document writing subcommittees -- clergy, religious and laity. (Although religious who are not in orders are considered to be laypersons, for the sake of clarification in this paper they will be listed separately).

Cf. also D. BURNS, "Report of the Canonical Consultants Committee at the First Working Session of the Eighth Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston", June 18, 1988, Synod Archives, Boston, p. 1.

<sup>74</sup>In 1980, an Archdiocesan Assembly Committee was appointed by Archbishop Hannan to prepare for both the town hall sessions and subsequent Archdiocesan Assembly in 1981. It was composed of priests, religious and one lay person. Following the Assembly, an Executive Committee for Implementation (also priests, religious and laity) was established to make recommendations for action based upon the needs expressed in the assembly.

After the Archbishop made the decision to convoke a synod, the members of the Executive Committee for Implementation were requested to submit the names of persons who could serve on the synod Central Committee and the sub-committees. Three months after announcing the synod, Archbishop Hannan appointed the twenty-four members of the Central Committee, twenty of whom were co-chairpersons for the document writing subcommittees. Cf. P. HANNAN, Letter to R. Hebert, December 14, 1984, Synod Archives, New Orleans. Cf. also ANO, *8th*

in Toledo, Bishop James Hoffman appointed a Steering Committee, and others were appointed by the synodal coordinator.<sup>75</sup>

a) Relationship to the synodal coordinator

Considering the recent practice in the United States, the synodal coordinator may relate to the coordinating committee either as a member, participating in its decisions, or as a convener of the committee and implementor of its decisions.

The Executive Secretary and the Associate Director in Boston served as staff to the Executive Committee, but they participated in all decisions relative to the process.<sup>76</sup> In Toledo, the Vicar for the Synod was a member of the Steering Committee. Even though he participated in the discussions of the Committee, it was

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*Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans, New Orleans, 1987, p. xiii.*

<sup>75</sup>Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan: Synod Process*, Toledo, 1987, pp. 21, 69, 71-73. After his appointment as the Vicar for the Synod, Fr. Ross began the process of consulting with the executive heads of the diocesan consultative bodies to the Bishop and diocesan department directors to surface the names of suitable persons for the Synod Steering Committee. As in Boston, these persons served as chairpersons for the seven document writing subcommittees. The Steering Committee in Toledo was analogous to the Executive Committee in Boston in that in Toledo the members themselves actually made the major decisions relative to the direction of the synodal process.

A Theological and Canonical Document Review Committee was appointed by the Vicar for the Synod, and a special Convocation Committee was established one year into the process.

<sup>76</sup>Cf. P. McINERNEY, Interview held in Boston, November 19, 1990.

his responsibility to execute the decisions which the Committee itself made.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, the Chairman of the synod in New Orleans did not serve as a member of Central Committee, but rather supervised its operation.<sup>78</sup>

b) The specific responsibilities of the coordinating committee

It is suggested that the specific responsibilities of the coordinating committee be determined either by the bishop, the synodal coordinator, or the members themselves in consultation with the bishop and the coordinator. The roles of the coordinating committees in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo differed, depending upon the responsibilities entrusted to the general coordinator.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, pp. 24 and 27. The Vicar for the Synod was to implement the decisions of the Committee, but he was also to supervise, direct and guide it, as well as call it to accountability for all synodal activities.

<sup>78</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans, 1987*, p. xiii.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. P. McINERNEY, Interview held in Boston, November 19, 1990. The Synod Executive Committee in Boston was established after the appointment of the synodal coordinator. The role of the Committee was to design the general synodal process with the help of the Steering Committee. It made the major policy decisions regarding such things as publicity and education on the synodal purpose and process, and had a key role in planning the diocesan-wide survey.

With the exception of one person, the members of the Executive Committee served on the Steering Committee. The chairpersons of the document writing subcommittees were appointed to the Steering Committee.

Cf. also E. GAUTHREAU, Memo to Central Committee chairpersons, July 2, 1985, Synod Archives, New Orleans. The initial responsibility of the Central Committee in New Orleans was to aid in the selection of document subcommittee members. As chairpersons of the document writing committees, the members of the Central Committee also coordinated the revision of the drafts.

Cf. also DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, p. 24. The primary duty of the Synod Steering Committee in Toledo was to make the major decisions relative to the

c) Preparation of the coordinating committee

In the three particular churches considered in this work, the members of the coordinating committee experienced some training to aid them to understand and fulfill their responsibilities. In Boston, the Executive Committee designed the training for the members of the Steering Committee, and Cardinal Law played a key role in this endeavor. The usual practice in all three dioceses was to instruct the committees first on the historical and canonical implications of a diocesan synod, and then to consider the role and responsibility of the committee members.<sup>80</sup> In Toledo, the Steering Committee was also trained in the process of survey development.

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direction of the synodal process. As in Boston and New Orleans, the members of the Committee served as liaisons to the document writing subcommittees. And, as in Boston, they assisted in the development of the diocesan-wide survey instrument. Finally, the Committee coordinated and facilitated the closing synodal celebration.

<sup>80</sup>Cf. AB, Agenda, Meeting of the Chairpersons of and Administrative Liaisons to Synod Subcommittees with Cardinal Law, Executive Committee and Synod Office staff, Synod Archives, Boston, October 27, 1986; AB, "Role and Responsibility of Subcommittee Chairpersons", Synod Archives, Boston, 2p; AB, "Subcommittee Mandates", Synod Archives, Boston, October 27, 1986, 2p; DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, p. 26.

In Boston and New Orleans, an extended meeting was held with committee chairpersons to explain the synodal process to them. In Toledo a two-day retreat was held.

## 2) Preparatory commissions

Under the 1917 code, c. 360, §1, provided that the bishop, if it seemed opportune, could establish one or more commissions composed of clerics of the see city and diocese to prepare the tracts to be discussed in the synod.<sup>81</sup>

In the current law, there are no references to preparatory commissions; although these were mentioned in the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei* and in the 1980 schema.<sup>82</sup> Because a specific reference to preparatory commissions is not found in the current code, it cannot be assumed that the significance of preparation has diminished; rather, it seems to indicate a presumption that any bishop who decides to convoke a synod will surely prepare for it, but in a fashion amenable to the situation of the particular church. Thus, it is common in the United States for the diocesan bishop to appoint commissions to assist in the preparation of documents for the synod in addition to having the input of the members of the secretariate and coordinating committees. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, those other persons were always clerics.<sup>83</sup> Subsequent to the Council, laity have played a significant

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<sup>81</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, pp. 78-81.

<sup>82</sup>Cf. PONT. COMM., *Schema Canonum Libri II De Populo Dei*, c. 275, §1, p. 114; PONT. COMM., *Schema Codicis Iuris Canonici...*, c. 384, §1, p. 93. Cf. also PONT. COMM. *Relatio...*, pp. 110-111. The canons were not included so that the bishop could remain free in regard to the manner in which he wished to prepare for the synod.

<sup>83</sup>Cf. c. 360, §1.

role in the process.<sup>84</sup> In Boston,<sup>85</sup> New Orleans,<sup>86</sup> and Toledo<sup>87</sup> drafting commissions were appointed at various stages of the synodal processes.

### 3) The advantages of an episcopal appointment of committee members

In synods celebrated before Vatican II, the diocesan bishop would either appoint individuals personally to serve on the commissions or arrange for their selection in another manner.<sup>88</sup> The fact that the bishop himself makes the appointments indicates the significance of the synodal process as well as the

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<sup>84</sup>Cf. *DPMB*, n. 164, p. 83 (*DPME*, p. 160): "Well in advance [of the synod] the bishop should set up preparatory commissions, made up not only of clergy but also of suitable chosen religious and laity..."

<sup>85</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Committees". There were twenty-six document subcommittees with membership ranging from five to sixteen people.

<sup>86</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, pp. iii-vi. There were ten general document committees and various subcommittees thereof in New Orleans. Each subcommittee consisted of one to seven members.

<sup>87</sup>Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, pp. 29-34. There were seven document subcommittees in Toledo with seven to ten members in each.

<sup>88</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF FARGO, *Synodus Dioecesisana Fargensis Secunda*, pp. 304-305. In preparation for the second synod of Fargo, for example, the auxiliary Bishop who also served as vicar general, was given a special mandate by the diocesan Bishop (serving at that time as the Apostolic nuncio in Germany) to guide the synodal process in his place. The auxiliary himself appointed members to the synodal commissions.

Cf. DIOCESE OF TOLEDO, *Synodus Dioecesisana Toletana in America Prima*, pp. 10-11. In Toledo's first synod, the Bishop requested the deans to appoint five synodal committees in their respective territories. Later he convened the diocesan consultors who acted as a revisionary committee and reviewed the work of the deanery committees.



respective roles of the various committees. In a sense, this affirmation on the part of the bishop also gives the committee members and the process greater credibility when the appointments are made public. The manner of making such appointments varied in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo.<sup>89</sup>

c. Professional assistance

Preparing for the celebration of a diocesan synod today involves many more elements than in the past. Some knowledge of human dynamics and process development is essential if the endeavor is to succeed. Unless the synodal coordinator or someone on the staff possesses these organizational skills, it may be advisable for a particular church to consider securing the services of professional consultants to assist in the development and celebration of the synod.

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<sup>89</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Committees". Cardinal Law personally appointed all those who served on the Steering Committee. The five to seven members of each subcommittee were selected upon the recommendation of clergy and others in leadership positions in the Archdiocese and appointed by the Cardinal.

Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, p. xiii. Archbishop Hannan personally appointed the members of both the Central Committee and the subcommittees, and gave them specific mandates.

Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, p. 29. The Synod Steering Committee selected the seven document writing committee members and the Vicar for the Synod appointed them after consultation with the Bishop. Cf. also DT, *Eucharistic Liturgy Opening the Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo in America, October 11, 1987*, Toledo, 1987, p. 7. At the time of the formal opening of the synod in Toledo, Bishop Hoffman commissioned the fifteen members of the committee which was composed of clergy, religious and laity.

Cf. D. ROSS, Letter to document writing subcommittee members, February 5, 1988, Synod Archives, Toledo. The Vicar for the Synod in Toledo appointed the members of the various subcommittees.

Both Boston and New Orleans designed their synodal processes using "in-house" personnel. In Boston, the Associate Director of the Office of the Synod -- chosen because of her skills in the area of process design -- assumed the responsibility for creating the consultative components involved in the process. In New Orleans, a committee, which included experts in the area of organizational development, designed both the process leading to the town hall sessions and the Archdiocesan Assembly.<sup>90</sup>

Upon the recommendation of the Synod Steering Committee, the Diocese of Toledo began its synodal process by hiring a consulting firm. Because the synod administrative staff was initially very small (a synod coordinator and secretary), the firm worked with the Vicar for the Synod to create a synodal process which was later approved by the Steering Committee.<sup>91</sup> After the first year, it was decided

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<sup>90</sup>Cf. "Committee named for pastoral goals assembly", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, February 21, 1980, p. 1.

<sup>91</sup>Cf. DT, "Agreement... between the Catholic Diocese of Toledo, Ohio and Bannon Associates, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio", Synod Archives, Toledo, April 11, 1987, pp. 1-2. In the first year of the synodal process, it was the responsibility of the consulting firm to: 1) facilitate all synod committee meetings; 2) draft all required materials for such meetings; 3) work with the Steering Committee to design an effective synodal process; 4) provide the Steering Committee with various census and survey options; 5) design a process for and materials to support input by clergy, religious and laity in the Diocese; 6) write a final plan for the synodal process inclusive of a budget for that process; 7) finalize the census and survey forms; 8) train pastors and parish committees in the implementation of a census and survey process; 9) follow-up with parishes by phone and letter to assist in the census and survey process; 10) provide full updates for diocesan staff and the Steering Committee as to the census and survey status on a regular basis.

to discontinue employing the services of the consulting firm, increase the size of the administrative staff, and internalize the design of the consultation process and synod event itself. One member of the staff, skilled in organizational development, planned the remaining future process which was approved subsequently by the Steering Committee.

If qualified diocesan department persons possessing organizational talents are not available to the synod staff, it is suggested that the services of professional consultants seriously be considered. Their fees can often be expensive, but the expert advice they provide can usually prevent costly errors of another variety.<sup>92</sup>

### **B. The synodal structures**

The four parts of the synodal structure which merit attention in this section are: 1) the work-plan; 2) the timeline; 3) communications and public relations; and 4) the synodal expenses.

#### **1. The work-plan**

The diocesan bishop may articulate his ecclesial and personal vision for the synod, but the process which leads to the realization of that vision ought to be

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<sup>92</sup>Some consultants may not have a fine understanding of the organizational operation of the Church. This could be detrimental to a synodal process.

something which is concrete. To enable the vision to become a reality, the development of a work-plan at the beginning of the synodal process is most helpful. The plan itself should consider all the major components of the synodal process from the preparatory stages, through the celebration of the synod, to the implementation of the documents. It should also be open to modification as the process unfolds.<sup>93</sup> Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of designing a work-plan in the initial stages of the process is the sense of clear direction which it can provide not only to the administrative staff, but also to all other participants who are naturally interested in the expected results and the method whereby they would be achieved. If the work-plan can be compiled in one volume and distributed to all responsible for guiding the process -- especially parish priests and others -- greater cooperation on their part may be achieved.<sup>94</sup> If the plan is designed as the process progresses, key participants still need to be informed periodically.<sup>95</sup> In any event, before

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<sup>93</sup>Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, pp. 2-6. The work-plan might consider: 1) the selection and role of the various synodal committees (preparatory commission, document draft committees, etc.); 2) the role of diocesan departments in the synodal process; 3) the role of the synod office; 4) the rationale and methodology for conducting a census and survey if they are undertaken; 5) public relations and education; 6) the synodal documents, e.g., defining topical areas, methodology involved in their composition, consultation process, and the canonical and theological review; 7) the synod event itself, i.e., format and process; 8) the synod budget; and 9) the synodal implementation process.

If the work-plan is to be distributed to parishes, it would be helpful to include a special section pertaining to parish involvement in the process.

<sup>94</sup>This was the case in Toledo.

<sup>95</sup>Throughout the synodal phases in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo, communiques were issued periodically by the synod offices to all involved in the

embarking upon the synodal process, as much information as possible about the major stages should be communicated to those involved in it.

## 2. The timeline<sup>6</sup>

Even though the actual synodal event might occur in a matter of a few hours or days, the period leading up to it is still equally important. In addition to a synodal work-plan, another essential element of the process is the establishment of a realistic timeline to guide it.<sup>7</sup>

In the United States, when a diocesan bishop formally announces the convocation of a synod, he also usually indicates the approximate time when the actual event will be celebrated. This occurred in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo.<sup>8</sup> Prior to the announcement, much planning had already been done to

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process explaining the future stages. In addition, newspaper articles kept the general public informed.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Appendix V for the Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo synod timelines.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. B. LAW, *Pastoral Letter on the Archdiocesan Synod*, p. 1. When Archbishop B. Law initially announced his intention to convoke a synod no specific date for celebrating the event was mentioned. Two years later he formally established a two-year preparatory process prior to the synod.

Cf. ANO, *Minutes of the Priests' Council Meeting*, meeting of September 20, 1984, p. 2. At the time Archbishop P. Hannan discussed the synod with the Priests' Council, he indicated to them that it would take about one year after the formal announcement of the synod for the final drafts to be completed. Msgr. E. Gauthreaux, the Chairman, later indicated (cf. "Archbishop calls for Archdiocesan Synod", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, January 24, 1985, p. 1) that the process would likely take one year to eighteen months.

enable the coordinators of the process to have a fair idea of the time necessary to complete the tasks before them.

The formulation of a timeline can be of help in a number of ways. Organizationally speaking, it provides a focus point for those involved in the process and assures them that it will not continue on and on; this could be counter-productive. It also is of assistance in the preparation of a synodal budget.

Although a timeline serves as a framework to the synodal process, it is important that it not be adhered to rigidly. While the various phases and components of the synodal process should remain constant, flexibility is essential when it comes to establishing the period of time in which the tasks are to be completed. As in most other dioceses which have celebrated synods, the coordinators in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo came to understand this principle early in their processes.”

The amount of time necessary to complete a synod will depend upon the goals to be achieved. If, for example, a census or survey is to be undertaken in the diocese, then, naturally, the process will last longer. The extent of consultation will also affect the length of the process, as well as the number of people involved.

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Cf. J. HOFFMAN, "Synod '89, Together in Christ". In his pastoral letter announcing the convocation of a diocesan synod, Bishop J. Hoffman of Toledo indicated the specific dates on which the convocation would occur.

”Cf. A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", pp. 12-14.

Boston's process lasted two years, New Orleans' extended over eight years, and Toledo three years.

Although it is incumbent upon the synodal coordinator to adhere to the synodal timeline, he or she should also be open to evaluating it periodically. Document writers may complain that the time given them to compose their drafts is too limited. If consultation on the drafts is included in the process, it is not uncommon for some persons to indicate that the period allotted for such discussion is insufficient. It would be wise, though, before a coordinator decides to lengthen the synodal process, if he or she ascertains the *sensus fidelium*, so to speak.<sup>100</sup> Occasional inquiries to deans and diocesan department directors may be helpful in getting a true picture of benefits or drawbacks of the timeline.

### **3. Communications and public relations**

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, when diocesan synods consisted basically in the establishment of statutes to regulate clerical activity and pastoral practice, implementation of the legislation rested with parish priests. Today it is entirely different. In contemporary synods, dioceses in the United States engage a far greater number of persons in the process than in previous years -- most especially the laity. The majority of particular churches articulate a vision or mission in the

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<sup>100</sup>It would be possible, for example, for a synod to be held in phases. Perhaps a particular theme could be dealt with each year over the period of a few years.

light of which recommendations or mandates are to be understood. Finally, the implementation of synodal documents rests with more persons than the parish priests. For these reasons, it is advisable that every effective means be used to inform fully those potential and actual participants in the synodal process.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, after its completion, it is necessary to communicate the synodal vision to them and encourage its acceptance. Thus, good public relations are essential in a contemporary synodal process.<sup>102</sup> The printed media,<sup>103</sup> television, and

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<sup>101</sup>Cf. CONCILIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Decretum de Instrumentis Communicationis Socialis: 'Inter mirifica'", n. 3, in *AAS*, 56 (1964), p. 146; c. 822; *DPME*, n. 164, pp. 160-161. Cf. also R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", p. 4.

<sup>102</sup>It is important for the staff of the synod office to maintain close contact with the communications representative of the diocese, if there is one. That person can certainly act as liaison between the office and the media personnel. The Diocese of Toledo secured the services of a professional to serve in the capacity of Synod Public Relations Director.

<sup>103</sup>Even though some might suggest that the printed media are no longer as significant today as in the past, synodal office communiques, newspaper reports and a synodal logo can be very helpful. It is also important that contact be maintained with diocesan department personnel and parishes about the progress of the various phases of the process. Cf. P. McINERNEY and M. DOYLE, *Publicity packet*, Synod Archives, Boston, 1987, 16p; AB, "Synod Update", Synod Archives, Boston, June, 1988; DT, "Synod Update to Department Directors", Synod Archives, Toledo, December 4, 1987. Cf. also *DPME*, n. 164, pp. 160-161.

One item which can be of particular benefit to a synod process is the synod prayer. In all three dioceses studied in this paper, a special prayer composed specifically for the synod was circulated to parishes and other diocesan institutions.

Perhaps the most frequent form of synodal coverage was found in the newspapers. This was indeed the case in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo where the diocesan newspapers featured regular articles.

To help visualize the theme of the diocesan synod, in a number of dioceses in the United States a special logo was designed. Cf., for example, Boston, Corpus Christi, Harrisburg, Green Bay, La Crosse, Milwaukee, and Toledo. This logo was



radio<sup>104</sup> can be of great assistance in celebrating a successful synod.

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used on synod office stationary, on posters, banners, brochures, TV programs, billboards, surveys and census forms. Diocesan newspapers often used the logo when reporting on the progress of the synod. The use of the symbol, distinct from the diocesan coat-of-arms, enables the synod to be recognized as a special event. It also serves to remind people constantly of the process.

In all printed material, serious consideration should be given to producing multi-lingual communications when possible so that the maximum audience can be reached.

<sup>104</sup>Although it is certainly far more expensive to publicize the synodal process via the TV and radio, the audience and consequent benefits are usually far greater than the printed media can supply. The Diocese of Toledo invested heavily in these media.

In preparation for the diocesan-wide census and survey, radio time was purchased on local stations throughout the Diocese to encourage popular participation in the endeavor. This was supplemented by purchasing space on billboards. A television program was also produced to introduce the synod. Cf. DT, "Who We Are: The Catholic Church in Northwest Ohio", Television program, Synod Archives, Toledo, 1987. Four additional programs were produced which presented attitudinal data gleaned from the survey and provided catechesis on the seven document areas.

Even though a diocese may not be able to afford the expense of producing radio or television programs, it is possible today to produce rather inexpensive educational video programs which can be used by parishes to promote the synod throughout and subsequent to the process.

The Diocese of Toledo produced six separate videos which were to be used in parishes to educate people on some of the conciliar documents of Vatican II. Cf. K. MORMAN, Letter to Parish Administrators, Associates, and Staff Members in charge of Adult Education, November 24, 1987, Synod Archives, Toledo.

To promote the synodal initiatives, both Boston and Toledo produced video programs. Cf. AB, "Parish Pastoral Councils", Video program, Synod Archives, Boston, 1988; AB, "The Synod at Work", Video program, Synod Archives, Boston, 1988; DT, "Pastoral Plan for the Implementation of the Synod", Video program, Synod Archives, Toledo, 1990.

#### 4. Synodal expenses

Considering the expanded synodal processes through which dioceses in the United States have gone since the Second Vatican Council, it is safe to assume that the costs involved in undertaking those processes are far greater than in previous years. Depending upon the various components which can be a part of the process, the expenses can be quite high. Because the current code regulates the expenditure of certain sums of money, the diocesan bishop and coordinator need to be attentive to the law.

##### a. Consultation

Because the costs to be incurred in operating a synod can be significant, it would be advisable for the bishop to consult with the finance council beforehand. It is even possible that norms relating to extraordinary administration or to acts of major importance would apply.<sup>105</sup>

##### b. Types of expenses

When a particular church contemplates the convocation of a synod, six general expenses categories which should be considered are: 1) the office and personnel costs;<sup>106</sup> 2) professional consultant fees;<sup>107</sup> 3) the public relations

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<sup>105</sup>Cf. c. 1277.

<sup>106</sup>The main expenses in this category would include the salaries of the office

expenditures;<sup>108</sup> 4) census and survey costs;<sup>109</sup> 5) the expenses involved in

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personnel, costs for office rental, committee meetings, postage, equipment, printing, initial liturgical celebrations and travel.

Cf. S. YANKOVICH, Financial Director, ANO, Interview held in New Orleans, December 19, 1990. While there is no breakdown of the \$20,000.00 spent on the synod in New Orleans, the bulk of the actual synodal costs in New Orleans was in the area of printing and distributing the final documents.

Cf. AB, "Synod Budget (Three Years)", Synod Archives, Boston, pp. 1-2. Over the three-year synodal process in Boston (1986-89), the general office expenses incurred amounted to approximately \$258,000.00. This did not include the salaries of the office personnel: the Executive Secretary for the Synod, the Associate Director for the Synod and the staff secretary. Approximately \$159,000 of the total office budget was for printing.

Cf. DT, Synod Budget file, Synod Archives, Toledo. In the three-year synodal process of Toledo (1986-89), the amount budgeted for office expenses was nearly \$177,000.00. This included the salaries of a full-time secretary over the three years, the Vicar for the Synod and part-time Administrative Associate in the second and third years, and a Public Relations Director and part-time secretary in the final year.

<sup>107</sup>Cf. *ibid.*; DT, "Agreement...between the Catholic Diocese of Toledo, Ohio and Bannon Associates, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio [second draft]", December 9, 1987, pp. 1-3. The Diocese of Toledo secured the services of two professional consultants for a portion of the synodal process. Initially it was the intention of the Synod Steering Committee to secure the services of the consultants for the entire synodal process, but later it was decided to utilize the diocesan department staff to perform those services rendered by the consultants. The projected consultant fee for the three year period was \$112,600.00. The amount paid for their services after fifteen months was nearly \$81,000.00. This figure does not include the consultants' fees for the census and survey portion of the synodal process.

<sup>108</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Budget", pp. 1-2. The public relations expenses in Boston were basically for posters and photographic services. This amounted to approximately \$10,500.00.

Cf. DT, Synod Budget file. Toledo spent a considerable amount more on public relations in the production of TV and radio programs, the purchasing of billboard and newspaper space during the diocesan-wide census. The total cost was nearly \$114,000.00.

<sup>109</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Budget", p. 1. The costs for printing the half-million synod surveys in Boston was included under the office expense category. The analysis of

celebrating the synodal event;<sup>110</sup> and 6) the implementation costs.<sup>111</sup> Even though a particular diocese's funds may be limited, all of these elements should be discussed prior to embarking upon the formal process. And too, while a diocese may decide not to spend funds, for example, on public relations, it is far easier to consider the matter at the beginning of the process than later when the monies are not budgeted.

The costs involved in celebrating the synods in Boston, New Orleans, and

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the questionnaires and final reports cost approximately \$20,000.00. The expenses were reduced because the analysis reports for each parish were done by the Archdiocese itself rather than through contract services.

Cf. DT, Synod Budget file. In addition to the door-to-door survey in Toledo, a telephone survey was also administered. The total amount budgeted for the preparation, printing, distribution and analysis of both surveys, as well as the final reports to all parishes, was \$146,000.00. The fees for the professional consultants who aided in the design were included in this amount.

<sup>110</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Budget", p. 2. The costs for the celebration of the synodal events in Boston were approximately \$30,000.00. This included four synod meetings for 350 delegates and the cathedral costs for the closing celebration.

Cf. DT, Synod Budget file. Toledo's synodal event extended over two days. Nearly 1700 delegates gathered to discuss the implementation of the synod and vote on the documents. The total budgeted cost for this event was approximately \$109,000.00, although each participating diocesan institution was asked to pay the registration fee (\$35.00) of each delegate representing it. Thus, the actual cost to the Diocese was less than the total expense.

<sup>111</sup>Because the synodal process continues long after the actual event, expenses will also remain. The post-synodal expenses in New Orleans were borne by the respective diocesan departments whose responsibility it was to oversee the implementation. Cf. AB, "Synod Budget", p. 2. Because Boston's synod was celebrated in November, 1988, a portion of the implementation costs were included in the budget for that fiscal year which ended in June, 1989.

Cf. DT, Synod Budget file. Toledo's Synod Office closed in January, 1989, and the Diocesan Policy Review Committee Office was established to oversee the implementation of synodal directives. The budget for the first year, which basically covered the salary of an executive secretary and office expenses, was \$28,000.00.

Toledo varied greatly due to the emphasis each placed on the above noted components. Furthermore, New Orleans did not formally budget for the actual synodal process because, for the most part, expenses incurred were borne by the diocesan departments which contributed services during the process.<sup>112</sup>

### **Conclusion**

It is clear that the considerations involved in the preparatory stage of the diocesan synod go far beyond what is indicated in c. 461. The personnel involved and the structures which are established are to be guided by related canons, but also equally important is the experience of other particular churches which have ventured into often uncharted territory.

Background elements of synodal preparation such as the role of the diocesan bishop, prior consultation, the establishment of secretariates and the appointment of commissions are not new to the process, but so much more is involved in integrating these elements today than before Vatican II. Timelines and budgets surely received attention in the past, but not to the extent that they do now. Synods today will usually last longer and cost more than in the past. In post-1917 *CIC* diocesan synods, the importance of maintaining good relations was recognized, but

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<sup>112</sup>The breakdown of expenses involved in the first phase of the synodal process in New Orleans is not available.

it is safe to say that public relations were not a primary concern in the process. While it is possible today to relegate both areas to a minor place on the synodal agenda, the consequences of such an action may, at best, mean non-reception of the documents, and, at worst, prove to be deleterious to the process altogether.<sup>113</sup>

Laying a good foundation for the synod will take a significant amount of time, but it is time well spent. In comparison to the post-synodal period, though, the time is short. It must be remembered that the initial stage is indeed only one of preparation. What follows is the heart of the process. The design of fine synodal instruments which can help renew a diocese, and the celebration of events which can inspire future appreciation and involvement in the Church are the purposes of the intense preparation.

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<sup>113</sup>Cf. J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod, An Instrument of Renewal for the Local Church", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), p. 88.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **THE CELEBRATION OF THE SYNOD**

Subsequent to the appointment of personnel to guide the synodal process and the establishment of structures by which the work of the synod can be conducted, the actual synodal "business" can commence. For the work to bear fruit, however, careful attention to a number of details is suggested. A creative application of the law is possible in the celebration of a synod, but because the law does not directly consider all the technicalities connected with this stage, the experience of others can again be of great assistance. When the law and experience go hand-in-hand, exciting possibilities for the synodal celebration can appear. The approaches taken in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo are good examples of such creative possibilities.

This chapter will consider, then, two aspects of that work: 1) the preliminary activities in the synodal process; and 2) the formalities surrounding the convocation.

#### **A. Preliminary activities**

The preparation of synodal documentation today involves far more than the gathering of committees to ponder areas in need of particular legislation.<sup>1</sup> Similar

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF TOLEDO (hereafter: DT), *Acta et Decreta Synodi Dioecesis Toletanae Prima*, 1941, pp. 10-11. The Bishop instructed the deans to organize committees from among the clergy of the respective deaneries who were

to the preliminary work of the Second Vatican Council, persons connected with the synod today can contribute vast amounts of time and energy producing visionary documents and directives. Two components of these preliminary activities are popular consultations and the development of the documentation.

### 1. Popular consultations

Since the Second Vatican Council, it has become increasingly common for bishops in the United States, prior to embarking upon a synodal process, to examine the attitudes and needs of the people within their dioceses regarding their relationship to the Church and its teaching. The *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* recommends that

the diocesan bishop do all within his power to promote highly important socio-religious surveys in his diocese... for these surveys show what the times are like and how people act, and can give pastors information on common and popular attitudes and on Christian life and practice.<sup>2</sup>

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then to submit written reports in statutory form. After later discussion, the suggested statutes were voted upon by the priests and then submitted to the Bishop.

<sup>2</sup>CONGREGATIO PRO EPISCOPIS, *Directorium de Pastoralis Ministerio Episcoporum* (hereafter: *DPME*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973, n. 102, p. 100 (Cf. *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* (hereafter: *DPMB*), Translation prepared by the Benedictine Monks of the Seminary of Christ the King, Mission, B.C., Ottawa, Publications Service of the Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974, p. 53. This translation will be used for all English version quotations from the Directory in this study): "Pervestigaciones sociales-religiosas, quae maximi sunt momenti, in sua dioecesi... pro viribus promovet Episcopus: nam tempora et mores illustrent et animarum pastores edocere valent de vulgari popularique sensu deque christianae vitae actione et exercitatione." Cf. *DPME*, n.



Likewise, the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* acknowledges the right of the "Christian faithful... to make known their needs, especially spiritual ones, and their desires to the pastors of the Church."<sup>3</sup>

Two means in particular have been used by bishops to arrive at knowledge of the popular opinion of the people of God in their dioceses: diocesan-wide listening sessions or "town hall" meetings, and surveys.<sup>4</sup> New Orleans engaged in the former, while Boston and Toledo employed the latter.

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34, pp. 38-39.

Cf. also CONCILIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Decretum de Pastoralis Episcoporum Munere in Ecclesia: 'Christus Dominus'" (hereafter: *CD*), nn. 16-17, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (hereafter: *AAS*), 58 (1966), pp. 680-682; PAUL VI, *litt. ap.* "Octogesima adveniens", in *AAS*, 63, 1971, pp. 401-441.

<sup>3</sup>*Codex Iuris Canonici Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus* (hereafter: 1983 *CIC*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1983 (Cf. *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, Translation prepared under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1983, xlii-668p. English translations of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* are taken from this edition): "Can. 212, §2. Christifidelibus integrum est, ut necessitates suas, praesertim spirituales, suaque optata Ecclesiae Pastoribus patefaciant."

Cf. also CONCILIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia: 'Lumen gentium'" (hereafter: *LG*), n. 37, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), pp. 42-43.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", in *Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Convention/Canon Law Society of America*, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1987, p. 12; J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 7.

a. Town hall meeting

The "town hall" meeting is basically an event which is designed to assist communities or organizations to address the challenges which lie before them. The event, which can last from three hours to an entire day, is a very popular means of engaging a community in strategic planning for the future. Participants in the process: 1) recall past history and accomplishments of the community or organization; 2) identify major issues of concern; 3) articulate hopes and dreams for the future; 4) make practical proposals for collaborative action; 5) determine specific and concrete steps to make the dream a reality; and finally, 6) celebrate the commitment to the dream.<sup>5</sup> Although this vehicle has been used mostly in civic planning, it can be used equally well as a consultative tool in other settings such as a diocesan synod.

The New Orleans town hall meetings were designed to engage everyone "in assessing the present pastoral situation in the Archdiocese and in expressing hopes for the future."<sup>6</sup> They were followed by an Archdiocesan Assembly<sup>7</sup> and the

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, "When You Want More Cooperative Action for Progress in Your Community", Brochure on planning a town hall meeting, New Orleans, Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2p.

<sup>6</sup>P. HANNAN, Letter to priests of the Archdiocese of New Orleans (hereafter: ANO) on the town hall sessions, [nd], Synod Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana. Thirty town hall sessions were planned by the Archdiocesan Assembly Steering Committee. Cf. ANO, Brochure explaining the town hall sessions, New Orleans, 1980, 4p. Persons were given the opportunity to sign up for two town hall sessions. Three to five parishes were invited to join together for the events. The first gathering allowed for an evaluation of the particular church. The second included

formation of an implementary committee. However, not long after the implementary committee made its final recommendations to Archbishop Hannan in 1984, he decided to incorporate them into the synod.

In effect, the Archdiocesan Assembly in New Orleans was tantamount to the actual synodal convocation held in other dioceses. Although discussion did not occur on previously developed "declarations and decrees", the gathering itself served as an occasion when representatives from the particular church could freely discuss issues pertaining to its future.

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a "dream" session about the future of the Archdiocese. At the completion of each gathering, every parish grouping selected a delegate to the Archdiocesan Assembly. Cf. ANO, Town hall session instruments: "Assessment of Present Situation of Church in our Archdiocese" and "Feeling Indicator Sheet", Synod Archives, New Orleans. Cf. also ANO, Minutes of the Archdiocesan Assembly Steering Committee Meeting, meetings of September 6, 27, October 10, 31, November 21, and December 11, 1979, Synod Archives, New Orleans.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. "200 delegates expected at Archdiocesan Assembly", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, January 15, 1981, p. 1; "Second Archdiocesan Assembly opens February 6", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, February 5, 1981, p. 3. The second stage of the goal-setting process occurred on two weekends in early 1981 when two hundred delegates convened. The material gathered in the town hall sessions was interpreted, and some preliminary directional statements for the following four to five years were developed. Specific recommendations were also made for the Clergy Senate and Pastoral Council relative to diocesan priorities.

Cf. M. RUSSO, Letter to Archbishop Hannan, December 10, 1980, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans. The chairman of the Assembly Steering Committee indicated to the Archbishop why his presence at the Assembly would be important: "As you may remember, yourself along with the Auxiliaries are to exercise the role of Official Observers at the Assembly. It is important to really hear the Delegates express their thoughts and opinions as to see them, first hand, developing recommended Goals for the Archdiocese. In this way you will be personally and intimately knowledgeable of their work."

b. Diocesan surveys and census<sup>8</sup>

Although town hall meetings can indeed be fine vehicles to enable the people of God to experience a sense of participation in the future operation of the diocese, when it comes to collecting data which can be useful in the preparation of synodal declarations and decrees, the meetings have certain drawbacks. For instance, relative to the total number of persons in a diocese, the number of people who usually participate in the sessions is small. For this reason and others, some particular churches preparing for a synod have decided to conduct diocesan-wide surveys to obtain rather accurate and useful information for those writing the synodal documents.<sup>9</sup> In Boston and Toledo, such surveys were especially helpful.<sup>10</sup> In addition, Toledo decided to use the occasion to initiate a census throughout the diocese.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Cf. Appendix I for examples of the Boston and Toledo surveys.

<sup>9</sup>Cf., for example, Green Bay, Joliet, Miami, Milwaukee, New York, and Steubenville. Cf. also R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. E. CARROLL, J. PFISTER, and V. BOWERS, "Summary report on the survey on Holy Days of Obligation", ANO, New Orleans, September 13, 1985, 1p. One of the document subcommittees in New Orleans developed a survey on holy days of obligation to which 95 parishes in the Archdiocese responded.

<sup>11</sup>The census, in fact, can be an even greater undertaking than a survey, because its goal is to identify every Catholic -- practicing or non-practicing. Cf. BANNON ASSOCIATES, INC., "Perspectives on Diocesan Synod Process, Diocese of Toledo", Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, February 15, 1987, p. 9. Cf. also DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, Synod Archives, Toledo, 1987, pp. 46-54. The data gleaned from a diocesan census can be extremely sensitive material. Pastors may be far more

However, before undertaking a survey in conjunction with a diocesan synod, consideration should naturally be given to the type of survey to be used,<sup>12</sup> its preparation,<sup>13</sup> distribution,<sup>14</sup> and analysis.

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comfortable collecting the data if they are assured that a diocese will discretely use it. It may be helpful if the diocese were to establish and publish some procedures and policies on the use of the census generated data. Cf. DT, "Proposed Procedures and Policies: Census and Survey Data Use", Synod Archives, Toledo, December 30, 1987, 4p.

<sup>12</sup>For example, door-to-door or telephone surveys.

<sup>13</sup>The development of a useful instrument requires the assistance of individuals who are skilled in particular areas. Without this help, the data which is received may indeed be incomplete. Three qualities which should be present in the person or team which creates the survey are marketing knowledge, sociological expertise, and theological training.

The questionnaire which was used in the Archdiocese of Boston was designed by a committee which included theologians, a sociologist, and the members of the Synod Executive Committee. Cf. P. McINERNY, Interview held in Boston, Massachusetts, November 19, 1990. The Synod Steering Committee in Toledo was given the responsibility to design the survey instruments and the census, but the group was guided by a professional consulting firm. Cf. DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, pp. 24, 42-43. Cf. W. McCREADY, Letter to D. Ross, May 1, 1987, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo. When designing a survey, it is suggested that information already available from other sources not be duplicated so as to maximize the benefits of the survey. Cf., for example, J. CASTELLI and J. GREMILLION, *The Emerging Parish: The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Life Since Vatican II*, San Francisco, Harper and Row, 1987, x-222p.

<sup>14</sup>Prior to the distribution of a survey, it is advisable for a draft to be tested on a representative sample within the diocese. This occurred in Boston where a draft was sent to a group of 102 persons which included pastors, parochial vicars, deacons, diocesan agency directors, women religious, and laity. An evaluation instrument was also provided. Cf. P. McINERNY, Letter to draft questionnaire respondents, September 5, 1986, Synod Archives, Archdiocese of Boston (hereafter: AB), Boston. Cf. also, M. DOYLE, Letter to respondents of the test questionnaire, October 15, 1986, Synod Archives, AB, Boston; AB, "Evaluation of the Synod Questionnaire", Synod Archives, Boston, 2p.

The diocesan survey distributed in Boston focused on eight areas: education, evangelization and communication, family life, inter-religious and ecumenical affairs, parish life, ministries, worship, and social concerns.<sup>15</sup> Since the survey was to be used to establish diocesan priorities, the questions were designed to measure needs rather than attitudes.

Toledo designed two surveys in conjunction with the synodal process: a door-to-door or broadbase questionnaire,<sup>16</sup> and a telephone or baseline instrument.<sup>17</sup> The broadbase survey, which, unlike Boston's, sought to measure popular attitudes, was not divided according to specific categories, although the questions touched upon

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<sup>15</sup>Cf. AB, *Archdiocesan Survey*, Synod Archives, Boston, 1986, 6p. The survey contained 60 questions, 10 of which were requests for demographic information.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. DT, *Diocesan Synod Survey, Diocese of Toledo* [broadbase], Synod Archives, Toledo, 1987, 6p; DT, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, pp. 42-45. This type of survey can be distributed to as many people as desired in the diocese. Its value in the synodal context is that it can create a greater sense of ownership for the process. It is usually self-administered. The data gleaned from the broadbase survey is valid to a degree. The questionnaires are usually completed only by persons who are regularly practicing Catholics. Thus, the statistical value is somewhat skewed.

<sup>17</sup>DT, *Diocesan Synod Survey, Diocese of Toledo*, [baseline], Synod Archives, Toledo, 1987, 30p. The validity of the baseline lies with the persons who are chosen, e.g., according to specific race, gender, age, current affiliation or non-affiliation with the church, geographic area, etc. This same accuracy cannot be obtained by using the broadbase method. This survey, though, can be ineffective in reaching some elderly, handicapped, poor (who do not have telephones), and, for instance, non-English speaking persons. Cf. W. McCREADY, Workshop on the synod surveys for diocesan personnel and document subcommittee chairpersons, June 29, 1988, Recorded on cassette tape, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo.

Cf. also "Highlights of Archdiocese Survey", in *Miami Herald*, September 7, 1986, p. 6G. The Archdiocese of Miami conducted a baseline survey of almost one thousand Catholic households in 1986, two years prior to its synodal convocation.

the following areas: parish life, worship, spirituality, family life, vision of Church, social concerns, education, stewardship, and demographic information.<sup>18</sup>

The telephone survey covered specific categories similar to those of the broadbase instrument.<sup>19</sup> The sociologist who administered the survey helped the Steering Committee to formulate the questions.

Nearly 400,000 surveys<sup>20</sup> in five languages were distributed throughout the Archdiocese of Boston.<sup>21</sup> Of that number, over 43,000 were returned.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>The broadbase survey contained 117 attitudinal questions and 19 demographic questions.

Some pastors in Toledo were of the opinion that the survey did not address specific central city issues. Thus, a supplemental survey for the central city area was designed. Cf. DT, *Toledo Synod Broadbase Survey, Central City Supplement*, Synod Archives, Toledo, 1987, 2p; DT, *Toledo Broadbase Survey, Central City Supplement, Final Report*, Synod Archives, Toledo, 12p.

<sup>19</sup>The telephone survey contained 157 questions, 12 of which sought demographic data.

<sup>20</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Budget", Synod Archives, Boston, 2p.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. P. McINERNY and M. DOYLE, Letter to deans concerning the diocesan survey, September 29, 1986, Synod Archives, AB, Boston. Realizing the enormity of the survey task, the Synod Office called upon the deans to contact the pastors within their regions and encourage them to follow the proper procedures to maximize survey returns. Pastors were also sent information which could help them in their distribution of the surveys. Cf. P. McINERNY and M. DOYLE, "Notes for Catechesis on the Synod", Synod Archives, AB, Boston, 3p. The Synod Office also decided to print the questionnaire in the diocesan newspaper, *The Boston Pilot*.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. AB, "How to Read This Tabulated Report", Synod Archives, Boston, 27p.

Professional assistance was sought in examining the data, and a report was prepared for the document writing subcommittees.<sup>23</sup>

Of the 390,000 broadbase instruments distributed in two languages in the Diocese of Toledo, 61,500 were returned. Of the total number interviewed in the telephone survey, 1109 met the specific established criteria for the survey. A professional consultant studied the data gleaned from both surveys, and prepared general reports to the Synod Office, diocesan directors,<sup>24</sup> and pastors,<sup>25</sup> as well as specific reports to each of the seven document subcommittees.<sup>26</sup> The data was utilized in the synod documents.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>At the initial training meeting of the document subcommittees, J. Donovan ("Report on the Synod Questionnaire", Synod Archives, AB, Boston, 8p.) offered an overall analysis of the information from the survey. Specific areas requiring attention in the documents were also noted. Each of the subcommittee members personally read and tabulated the comments directed to their specific area.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. W. McCREADY, Workshop on the synod surveys for diocesan personnel and document subcommittee chairpersons, Cassette tape.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. W. McCREADY, *Diocese of Toledo, Broadbase Survey, Final Report*, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, 1987, 76p; W. McCREADY, *Synod Baseline Survey, Diocese of Toledo, Final Report*, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, 1987, 35p; W. McCREADY, *Executive Summary, Diocese of Toledo: Broadbase Survey & Baseline Comparisons*, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, 1988, 11p; W. McCREADY, *Diocese of Toledo, Broadbase Survey: Survey Results by Deaneries*, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, 1988, 136p.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. W. McCREADY, "Writing Committee Survey Memos", Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, 1988, 28p.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. DT, "Proposed Procedures and Policies: Census and Survey Data Use", p. 2. As with the census data, sharing the information gathered from the survey should be controlled to some degree.



## 2. Document writing process

The "work" of the diocesan synod normally has been the composition of "declarations and decrees"<sup>28</sup> in whatever form these might take.<sup>29</sup> Since Vatican II, though, the process of document composition has expanded considerably. Two facets of this process which will now be considered are: 1) the selection of document topics; and 2) the composition process itself.

### a. Selection of topics in general

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the general principle relative to legislation in the diocesan synod was that matters concerning doctrine and enactments contrary to the universal law were beyond the competence of the synod.<sup>30</sup> It was suggested that possible topics could include public prayers and exhortations, sermons, election of synodal judges and examiners and appointment

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<sup>28</sup>Cf. c. 466. Cf. also Appendices II-IV for extracts of the synodal documents of Boston, New Orleans and Toledo.

<sup>29</sup>For an interesting analysis of the development of synodal constitutions, cf. S. FERRARI, "Diritto canonico e vita della Chiesa: Introduzione allo studio della legislazione [sic] sinodale", in *Revista española de Derecho canónico*, 43 (1986), pp. 493-510.

<sup>30</sup>Cf. J. ABBO and J. HANNAN, *The Sacred Canons: A Concise Presentation of the Current Disciplinary Norms of the Church*, vol. 1, St Louis, Herder, 1957, p. 382; A. CANCE, *Le Code de droit canonique*, vol. 1, Paris, Lecoffre, p. 339; F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod: An Historical Conspectus and Commentary*, Canon Law Studies, 74, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1932, p. 88; I. NABUCO, *Pontificalis Romani Expositio Iuridico-Practica*, Paris, Desclée, 1962, p. 768.

of other diocesan officials, determination of cases reserved to the bishop, the cathedraticum, taxes, stole fees, Mass stipends and abuses regarding them, the diocesan seminary, pastoral conferences, the administration of Church property, and enforcement of the 1917 code.<sup>31</sup> In the midst of the theological and canonical debates subsequent to Vatican II, I. Fürer noted that while the 1917 code did not permit the synod to deal either with particular laws and pastoral regulations which exceeded episcopal competency or with doctrinal questions, discussion of these issues in post-conciliar synods could not be halted even though the members had no authority to act in such matters.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Cf. J. ABBO and J. HANNAN, *The Sacred Canons*, vol. 1, p. 382; C. AUGUSTINE, *A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law*, vol. 2, St. Louis, Herder, 1936, p. 386; BENEDICT XIV, *De Synodo Dioecessana*, vol. 1, lib. V, cc. 1-12, Mechliniae, P. Hanicq, 1842, pp. 304-397; F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, pp. 90-91. For a more extensive listing of topics, cf. I. NABUCO, *Pontificalis Romani Expositio Iuridico-Practica*, pp. 708-709. Of course, a number of these topics no longer come under synodal law, e.g., Mass stipends (c. 952), and stole fees (c. 1264).

M. Cabreros de Anta, A. Lobo and S. Moran, (*Commentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico*, vol 1, Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1963, p. 678) proposed that the bishops carefully examine the general ecclesiastical law, the decrees of the Roman congregations, and the statutes of their predecessors while reinforcing their observance.

<sup>32</sup>I. FÜRER, "De Synodo Dioecessana", in *Periodica*, 18 (1973), pp. 129-130.

H. Heinemann, ("Zur Reform der Diözesansynode: Eine kritische Überlegung zu cc. 356-362 CIC", in *Ecclesia et Ius, Festgabe für A. Scheuermann zum 60 Geburtstag*, K. Siepen, J. Weitzel, and P. Wirth, eds., Paderborn, Schöningh, 1968, pp. 216-223) observed that while synods should be concerned with formulating diocesan legislation, their purpose extends also to the spiritual and pastoral welfare of the people in the diocese. He held that the bishop has more effective ways of establishing laws than through such large assemblies, and suggested a more creative use of the pastoral and presbyteral councils.

The 1973 *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* reaffirmed the long-standing purpose of synods in declaring that in the synod the bishop was to adapt the universal norms to local circumstances.<sup>33</sup> It also advocated the selection of diocesan officials during the synod if possible:

During the synod, if the bishop deems it opportune, the priests' council could be set up or revised and also the members of the commissions and offices of the diocesan curia could be [s]elected.<sup>34</sup>

Shifting the synodal focus from a purely ecclesiological perspective to a broader eschatological one, P. Collins held that the questions on which the synod will concentrate should deal with the Reign and not just the Church:

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<sup>33</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 163, p. 162. J. Coriden ("The Diocesan Synod: An Instrument of Renewal for the Local Church", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), p. 89) noted that the topics of synodal discussion should be at least as extensive as those of the diocesan pastoral council referred to in *CD*, n. 28, namely: matters concerning pastoral activity and practical conclusions regarding them.

T. Green (*A Manual for Bishops: Rights and Responsibilities of Diocesan Bishops in the Revised Code of Canon Law*, Washington, U.S.C.C., 1983, pp. 34-36) offers a listing of matters which are referred to the diocesan bishop by the code for particular legislation. These could possibly be considered by a diocesan synod if the bishop so chooses.

<sup>34</sup>Cf. *DPME*, n. 165, p. 162: "In Synodo, si id Episcopo opportunum videatur, Consilia sive Presbyterale sive Pastorale constitui aut renovari poterunt, atque etiam Commissionum et Officiorum Curiae dioecesanæ membra eligi."

For an extensive treatment of the appointments that a synod could recommend, cf. S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1970, pp. 53-76. Regarding the establishment of tenure for vicars forane during the synod, cf. J. JANICKI, in *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* (hereafter: *CLSA Commentary*), J. Coriden, T. Green, and D. Heintschel, eds., New York/Mahwah, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 441. Cf. also H. SCHMITZ, "Die Diözesansynode: Ihre geplante Zukunft in kirchenrechtlicher Sicht", in *Archiv für Katholisches Kirchenrecht*, 144 (1975), pp. 453-454.

The primary focus for synodal questions should not be *laos tou theou* but *basileia tou theou*. Kingdom questions should prevail over Church questions...

If the Church is to serve the Reign of God and not itself, then it is accurate to say in the synodal process: Ask not what you can do for the Church but what can the Church do for the world where God's Kingdom is budding forth. Our concern for the Church must be genuine and deep but always a concern for a means rather than an end.<sup>35</sup>

The selection of document topics should not be something done without mature consideration. The following matters need to be weighed: 1) the type of documentation to be produced by the synod; 2) the process for selecting topics; 3) who will select the topics if the type is other than statutory revisions; and 4) the number of topics.

#### 1) Type of documentation

One of the first issues which must be addressed is the type of decrees and declarations to be produced. This determination could be made by the bishop in so far as he is the one who convokes the synod,<sup>36</sup> or he may wish to seek the advice of others. Synodal documents in the United States are generally of three varieties: 1) diocesan statutory revisions; 2) visionary statements; or 3) a combination of the two.

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<sup>35</sup>P. COLLINS, "The Diocesan Synod - An Assembly of the People of God", in *The Jurist*, 33 (1973), pp. 409-410.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. c. 462. Cf. also A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", pp. 11-12.

## 2) Process for selecting topics

If synodal documents are to result in statutory revisions and in the elaboration of diocesan policies, topical considerations would usually be appropriate. In this case, the *Code of Canon Law* may serve as a convenient organizational model.<sup>37</sup>

If topics of a visionary nature are to be written up, the process for deciding which should be treated by the synod can be quite extensive.<sup>38</sup> Since the diocesan bishop is obliged to seek the advice of the presbyteral council regarding the convocation of the synod,<sup>39</sup> he, or whoever selects the topics, might wish to return to this body to request assistance in choosing them. The recommendations of the diocesan pastoral council might also be sought,<sup>40</sup> or even the opinion of others called to be members of the synod.<sup>41</sup> Depending upon the size of the diocese and other factors, though, these options might be impractical. If the procedure utilized

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<sup>37</sup>Cf., for example, DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE, *The Bishop With His People: Fourth Synod of the Diocese of LaCrosse*, LaCrosse, Wisconsin, Worzalla Publishing Co., 1987, xi-328p.

<sup>38</sup>Cf. *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, p. 60.

<sup>39</sup>Cf. c. 461.

<sup>40</sup>Cf. PAUL VI, *Motu proprio, Ecclesiae Sanctae*, III, August 6, 1966, in AAS, 58 (1966), n. 20, p. 787.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. c. 463.

in the preparation of the Second Vatican Council<sup>42</sup> is any indication as to how a diocese might proceed, then topic selection should certainly be preceded by at least minimal consultation.

Because the purpose of the town hall meetings and the diocesan survey is to surface the felt needs or attitudes of the people of the particular church, that process would certainly qualify as sufficient pre-synodal consultation, and should be taken into consideration when deciding which topics should be selected. Although a host of concerns might be expressed in those meetings or surveys, a decision to focus or limit the number of topics should be made for the sake of synodal organization. Who should be entrusted with this responsibility?

### 3) Responsibility for selection

If synodal documents are to be visionary statements and even include statutory revisions, then somebody will need to be charged with selecting the specific topics for consideration. The bishop himself could perhaps choose the areas or provide that others do so.

Because they have been selected and entrusted with the responsibility to guide the synodal process, it may be appropriate for the members of the central

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<sup>42</sup>Cf., for example, CONCILIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano Apparando*, 1, vol. 2, pt. 1, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960-1969, pp. 513-514, in which topical suggestions for conciliar consideration are offered by the bishops and others.

coordinating committee to decide the actual areas which the synodal documents will cover if they are other than statutory revisions. If the synod is preceded by some sort of diocesan-wide consultation, the review of the large volume of data that may emerge from that process may be done best in a smaller grouping such as the central coordinating committee. After corporately studying the data, the central coordinating committee would most likely develop a broader view of the particular church and thus be well suited to choose timely topics. This was the case in Toledo, and, to a degree, in Boston and New Orleans.

**4) The number of topics**

The number of topics chosen should also be a consideration, depending upon the type of documentation which the synod will produce. While there are many facets to church life, serious consideration ought to be given to combining related matters into general categories. This is recommended especially if visionary statements are to be composed. The advantages would be a reduction in the number of committees, and the likelihood that the fewer documents actually would be read once they are written. The disadvantage is that the documents might not tend to focus on specific concerns but rather remain quite broad.

5) Selection procedures in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo

The particular churches of Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo considered the four above-noted elements in selecting their synodal topics, yet each approached the task in a different manner.

a) Boston

The general purposes of the synod in Boston were initially proposed by the Ante-Preparatory Committee of the Presbyteral Council in 1985.<sup>43</sup> It was decided that the synod would develop a mission statement and revise the diocesan statutes. A third subcommittee was established to prepare guidelines on parish pastoral councils in conjunction with the synod.<sup>44</sup>

The mission statement, divided into twenty-six topical areas, was the primary visionary document of the synod. The topical areas themselves were recommended to Cardinal Law by the members of the Synod Executive Committee,<sup>45</sup> after

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<sup>43</sup>Cf. AB, Minutes of the Presbyteral Council Meeting, meeting of September 13, 1985, Diocesan Archives, Boston, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. P. McINERNEY, Interview held on November 19, 1990, Boston. Cf. *Eighth Synod, Archdiocese of Boston: Pastoral Plan for Mission*, Boston, Daughters of St. Paul, 1989, 71p. The twenty-six topical areas are: 1) aging; 2) diocesan organization; 3) black Catholics; 4) campus ministry; 5) Catholic schools; 6) clergy; 7) communications; 8) culture; 9) people with disabilities; 10) ecumenical, interreligious affairs; 11) evangelization; 12) family; 13) higher education; 14) Hispanics; 15) justice and peace; 16) laity; 17) new peoples; 18) parish; 19) religious education; 20) religious; 21) priestly and religious vocations; 22) respect life; 23) social services, health care; 24) women in the Church; 25) worship; and 26) youth.



consultation with the clergy, presidents of Catholic colleges, major superiors of religious, and diocesan department directors in the particular church.<sup>46</sup> This was done, though, prior to the diocesan survey.

b) New Orleans

In New Orleans, two sets of document topics were considered: those of the first phase, which were raised through the town hall sessions and the Archdiocesan Assembly,<sup>47</sup> and those of the second phase, which were selected by the Central Committee.

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<sup>46</sup>Cf. P. McINERNEY, Letter to clergy, presidents of Catholic colleges, major superiors of religious and diocesan department directors, May 27, 1986, Synod Archives, AB, Boston.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. ARCHDIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL AND CLERGY SENATE, Memo and final report to Archbishop P. Hannan, August 18, 1981, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans, 1p. The results of the Archdiocesan Assembly deliberations were given to representatives of the Clergy Senate and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council who met to: 1) select some goals for the Archdiocese for the next four to five years from the Assembly recommendations; 2) develop specific objectives for each of the goals; and 3) recommend possible programs which could aid in achieving the objectives. The goals were in the following areas: 1) spiritual renewal; 2) lay participation in all areas of church service; 3) clergy renewal; 4) youth ministry; 5) social justice; and additional recommendations in the areas of religious education, evangelization, family life, social ministry, and Catholic school ministry.

Cf. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR IMPLEMENTATION, *Final Report*, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans, August 21, 1984, 12p. The Executive Committee for Implementation met over the next two and one-half years to discuss working papers, reports and recommendations for action. In August, 1984, the final report of the committee was given to the Archbishop. The above-noted topics remained the same, but the recommendations were reduced in number.

As the Archdiocesan Assembly was similar to a synodal convocation in many respects, so the goals and objectives which were developed by the Pastoral Council and Clergy Senate were somewhat comparable to the documents which were issued in some post-Vatican II diocesan synods held in the United States.<sup>48</sup> Nearly one month after the Executive Committee for Implementation of the Assembly gave its final report to Archbishop P. Hannan,<sup>49</sup> he announced the convocation of a synod noting that "for ease of development we would use the new Code as the basis for the synod."<sup>50</sup> Shortly thereafter, the Synod Chairman and the members of the Executive Committee for Implementation decided upon a central and subcommittee structure according to topics which were to be considered.<sup>51</sup> Nine general topical committees were established corresponding to themes developed in the *Code of Canon Law*.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Cf., for example, DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY, *That All May Be One, Synod 1988*, 1988, 83p; DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo: Pastoral Plan for Implementation*, Toledo, 1990, 56p. The objectives which were listed also included timelines for their completion.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. ANO, Minutes of the Priests' Council Meeting, meeting of September 20, 1984, Diocesan Archives, New Orleans, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup>Cf. E. GAUTHREAU, Memo to members of the Executive Committee for Implementation of the Assembly, October 4, 1984, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans.

<sup>52</sup>Cf. ANO, "Suggested Structure for the 8th Synod of the Archdiocese of New Orleans", Synod Archives, New Orleans, 23p. In each of the general topical committees, three to eleven subcommittees were constituted. They were: 1) Church and family; 2) women in the Church; 3) minorities in the Church; 4) priests:

## c) Toledo

The Synod Steering Committee in Toledo defined the synodal topic areas in conjunction with the Bishop and his cabinet of advisors. Subsequent to the distribution of the results of the diocesan survey and census which the Steering Committee had previously designed, the members selected areas for the documents corresponding somewhat to the areas covered on the surveys.<sup>53</sup> Upon the recommendation of the Bishop and his cabinet, the areas were reduced to seven.<sup>54</sup>

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recruitment and formation; 5) priests: incardination; 6) priests: relationship of priests to bishop, other priests and laity; 7) priests; development; 8) priests: life style; 9) priests: rights and benefits; 10) deacons: diaconal ministry; 11) deacons: structure of permanent deacon program; 12) deacons: formation; 13) deacons: ministry after ordination; 14) deacons: family life; 15) deacons: future visions; 16) religious institutes; 17) societies of apostolic life and secular institutes; 18) mutual relations between bishops and institutes of consecrated life; 19) relationship of bishop to his clergy; 20) council of priests; 21) college of consultors; 22) the pastoral council; 23) pastors and associates; 24) episcopal vicars and vicars forane; 25) chaplains; 26) preaching; 27) religious education; 28) Catholic schools; 29) Catholic colleges, universities and secular universities; 30) communication; 31) evangelization and the missionary activity of the Church; 32) ecumenism; 33) sacraments of initiation; 34) healing sacraments; 35) marriage; 36) divine worship; 37) funerals and cemeteries; 38) days of obligation and penance; 39) finance committee and financial administrator, parish taxation, acquisition and administration of goods; 40) parish corporations, insurance and pension plan, clergy salary; 41) stole fees and stipends, pious foundations, planning and development; 42) poverty; 43) peace and justice; 44) education (social); 45) elderly; 46) immigration, refugees; 47) employment, jobs; 48) prisons; 49) housing; 50) hunger; 51) handicapped; 52) racism, discrimination; 53) health, mental health; 54) processes in the Church.

<sup>53</sup>Cf. DT, Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting, meeting of November 15, 1987, Synod Archives, Toledo. Cf. also DT, "Definition of Document Areas", Synod Archives, Toledo, 2p.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. DT, "Revised Synodal Document Areas", Synod Archives, Toledo, November 30, 1987. The seven areas were: 1) Christian formation; 2) evangelization; 3) Church life and ministry; 4) stewardship; 5) social concerns; 6)

b. Document composition process

The customary process of document composition (visionary paper or statutes) in the United States today is one wherein drafts are prepared by writing committees and then reviewed by others in the course of one or two years.<sup>55</sup> This procedure usually occurs at least once, but often two or three times prior to the time they are signed by the diocesan bishop. Those who will eventually vote on the documents are often expected to participate in some fashion in the document development.<sup>56</sup>

The principle which underlies any document writing process is that of free discussion of the topics. Canon 361 of the 1917 *CIC*<sup>57</sup> provided that all proposed synodal questions were subject to free discussion during the preparatory sessions.<sup>58</sup> The 1983 code does not distinguish between solemn and preparatory sessions, but rather speaks of individual sessions in canon 462, §2. Nonetheless, the principle is

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worship; and 7) ecumenism.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, Roma, Università Lateranense, 1986, pp. 99-104; I. FÜRER, "De Synodo Diocesana", p. 128.

<sup>56</sup>Cf. J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", p. 7.

<sup>57</sup>*Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi Iussu Digestus Benedicti Papae XV Auctoritate Promulgatus* (hereafter 1917 *CIC*), Westminster, Maryland, Newman Press, 1957, xlvii-786p.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. P. CORONATA, *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, vol. 1, Taurini, Marietti, 1949, p. 486; F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 86; P. JONE, *Gesetzbuch der lateinischen Kirche, Erklärung der Kanones*, vol. 1, Paderborn, Schöningh, 1950, p. 328.

the same. There should be a free exchange of ideas on the issues subject to discussion in all preparatory work for the synod.

The 1983 code refers to the rights of all Christians in Book II (cc. 208-223). Specifically mentioned are the right to declare their needs and desires to the Church's pastors (c. 212, §2); to make known their opinion (212, §3); to be instructed in the faith so as to develop Christian maturity (c. 217); and to have a right to freedom of inquiry if they are engaged in theological studies (c. 218).<sup>59</sup> These rights should most certainly be honored in a synod. As J. Alesandro notes:

The process for a successful synod must seek to promote the exercise of these and other human and ecclesial rights by careful planning, the collection of accurate data and its communication to all members, procedures to facilitate collegial discussion and the drafting of background papers and proposed decrees, and a process of interaction with the diocesan bishop to assist him in making the final legislative decisions.<sup>160</sup>

### B. The Formalities

While the *Code of Canon Law* stipulates that certain formalities are to be observed in the celebration of the diocesan synod, those formalities do not refer to liturgical elements, but rather to the persons who are to be called to the synod and to incidental factors relative to its celebration. The synodal protocols to be

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<sup>59</sup>Cf. J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 381.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*

considered in this section include: 1) membership; 2) the appointment and presence of observers; 3) the obligation to attend; 4) the profession of faith; 5) the actual convocation; and 6) the cessation of the synod.

### 1. Membership in the synod

Prior to the 1983 code, synodal membership was reserved to priests. The current law, in the spirit of Vatican II, goes far beyond the previous discipline and requires the presence of laity at synodal functions.<sup>61</sup> It even permits non-Catholics to be present as observers.

#### a. Those obliged to attend

The 1983 code lists those clerics who are obliged and have a right to be present at the synodal gathering.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>J. Passicos ("Le retour du synode diocésain: un épiphénomène?", in *Le Synode diocésain dans l'Histoire et dans le Code*, Paris, Faculté de droit canonique, 1989, p. 38-39) observes that synodal membership is to be considered in the broader context of the entire diocesan church. Cf. also A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", pp. 10-11; D. MOGAVERO, "Il sinodo diocesano", in *Chiesa Particolare e Strutture di Comunione*, A. Longhitano et al., eds., Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1985, pp. 67-68; L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", p. 341.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 163-164.

1) The coadjutor and auxiliary bishops

The right and obligation of coadjutor and auxiliary bishops to attend the diocesan synod is new in the 1983 code.<sup>63</sup> In the former law, they were neither obliged to attend nor did they have the right to do so.

2) The vicar(s) general, the episcopal vicar(s), and the judicial vicar

Because the vicar(s) general, the episcopal vicar(s), and the judicial vicar share extensively in the power of the diocesan bishop, they too should attend the diocesan synod.<sup>64</sup>

3) The canons of the cathedral church

Canon 463, §1, 3°, affirms the right and obligation of the canons to attend the diocesan synod, but in many dioceses there are no such chapters, and thus this particular number would not be applicable.<sup>65</sup>

Canon 503 views the role of cathedral canons largely in terms of the celebration of the more solemn liturgical functions in the cathedral or collegial church. The former advisory role of the canons is now often entrusted to the

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<sup>63</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 165-168.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 168-173.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 173-177.

presbyteral council and, in specific cases, to the college of consultors whose members are chosen from the council.

4) The members of the presbyteral council

Canon 463, §1, 4°, notes that all members of the presbyteral council are obliged and have a right to participate in the diocesan synod. Since the bishop must consult with the presbyteral council before deciding whether to convoke a synod, it is entirely proper that its members also be present at the gathering.<sup>66</sup>

5) The members of the Christian faithful and institutes of consecrated life

There is probably no greater change in the revised canons on the synod than the one which specifies that members of the lay Christian faithful have a right and obligation to participate in it.<sup>67</sup> The current law has incorporated a more

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<sup>66</sup>Cf. 461, §1. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 177-183.

Cf. c. 495, §2. Presumably, in apostolic vicariates and prefectures, the members of the council to be established by the vicar or prefect would have a right and obligation to be called to the synod.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. CONGREGATION OF THE COUNCIL, "Diocesan Synod: Lay Persons May Be Invited as Observers, September 22, 1959", in *Canon Law Digest* (hereafter: *CLD*), T. Bouscaren and J. O'Connor, eds., vol. 5, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1963, pp. 307-308.

In 1967, the Congregation of the Council permitted the Bishop of Hildesheim to invite laity to participate in his diocesan synod. Cf. "Responsum Nuntiaturae Apostolicae in Helvetia", September 22, 1969, as cited in H. SCHMITZ, "Die Diözesansynode: Ihre geplante Zukunft in kirchenrechtlicher Sicht," pp. 446-447.



comprehensive approach to decision-making than its predecessor. As H. Schmitz notes:

With the opening of the diocesan synod to participation on the part of the laity, a substantial desire has been fulfilled... At the same time, [though], the synod is not a representative assembly of the diocese or of the members of the diocese.<sup>68</sup>

Canon 463, §1, 5°, indicates that those lay persons who are called to the synod are to be members of the Christian faithful. In light of paragraph 3 of the

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Cf. also *DPME*, n. 164, p. 160. F. Donnelly ("The New Diocesan Synod", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), pp. 396-399) argued that the *DPME* did not oblige bishops to invite laity to the diocesan synod as representatives of the pastoral council, but rather was simply affirming some guidelines.

In the discussion leading up to the draft schema *De Populo Dei*, the members of the *coetus* wanted to be sure to distinguish between the priesthood of the ordained and the priesthood of the laity. Cf. *Communicationes*, 6 (1974), p. 46. Canon 270 of the 1977 schema describing the diocesan synod included among the membership some other Christian faithful besides selected presbyters. Canon 273, §1, 4°, listed the laity among those to be called and obliged to attend a synod. These canons remained substantially the same in the 1980 schema(cc. 379 and 382). It was later suggested that the canon on membership stipulate that the number of laity not exceed the number of presbyteral council members, but this was not accepted. Cf. PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO CODICI IURIS CANONICI RECOGNOSCENDO, *Relatio Complectens Synthesim Animadversionem ab Em.mis atque Exc.mis Patribus Commissionis ad Novissimum Schema Codicis Iuris Canonici Exhibitarum, cum Responsonibus a Secretaria et Consultoribus Datis*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1982, pp. 109-110.

Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 183-192.

<sup>68</sup>H. SCHMITZ, "Die Konsultationsorgane des Diözesanbishops", in *Handbuch des katholischen Kirchenrechts*, J. Listl, H. Müller, and H. Schmitz, eds., Regensburg, F. Pustet, 1983, p. 355: "Mit der Öffnung der Diözesansynode für Teilnehmer aus den Reihen der Laien, ist ein wesentliches Desiderat erfüllt...; gleichwohl ist die Diözesansynode keine die Diözese oder die Diözesanangehörigen repräsentierende Versammlung."

same canon, it is implied that those laity are to be Catholics.<sup>69</sup> The canon declares further that besides the laity, members of institutes of consecrated life are to be called to the synod.

Both the lay members and those from religious and secular institutes are to be selected by the diocesan pastoral council, if one exists. The manner of selection and the number of such members are to be determined by the diocesan bishop. If such a council does not exist, the bishop still determines the manner of selection. The lay members and those from institutes of consecrated life do not necessarily have to come from the pastoral council itself.<sup>70</sup> The participants from the institutes of consecrated life are selected by the pastoral council too, if one exists, because they are represented on it.<sup>71</sup> Priests are also represented on the pastoral council, but they are selected to attend the synod according to other criteria. It is interesting to note that deacons, as a group of clerics, are not specified explicitly as having a right to send members to the synod.

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<sup>69</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 14 (1982), p. 157, where "christifideles" is assumed to refer only to Catholics.

<sup>70</sup>W. Aymans ("Las corrientes sinodales en CentroEuropa después del Concilio Vaticano II", in *El Concilio de Braga y la función de la legislación particular en la Iglesia*, Salamanca, Instituto San Raimundo de Peñafort, 1975, pp. 435-438) offers criteria for selecting lay representatives.

<sup>71</sup>Cf. c. 512, §1.

6) The rector of the diocesan major seminary

Because he is responsible for guiding and educating future priests of the diocese, it is only appropriate that the rector of the major seminary be invited.<sup>72</sup>

7) The vicars forane

Canon 463, §1, 6°, requires that the vicars forane or deans be called to the synod and indicates they have a right to attend.<sup>73</sup>

8) A presbyter from each vicariate

In the current discipline, at least one presbyter from each deanery is to be chosen to be a member of the synod by all who have the care of souls in that vicariate forane. Under the 1917 *CIC* code, only parish priests could be selected.<sup>74</sup> The current law would thus permit a religious priest exercising the care of souls in the deanery to be selected as a member. An additional presbyter is to be chosen in case the first one is impeded from attending the synod.

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<sup>72</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 60.

<sup>73</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 195-199.

<sup>74</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 199-202.

9) The superiors of religious institutes

Canon 463, §1, 9°, states that "some" superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life are to be called in a manner determined by the diocesan bishop.<sup>75</sup>

With regard to the selection of the superiors who will attend the synod, the current law does not specify the selection process. It merely indicates that the bishop is to determine both the manner of the process and number to be selected.<sup>76</sup>

b. Other members

Canon 463, §2, gives the bishop the power to invite practically any other church member to participate in the synod.<sup>77</sup> Specifically mentioned are clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and lay members of the Christian faithful.

Although c. 463, §1, does not explicitly oblige lay members of societies of

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<sup>75</sup>Cf. cc. 607-709 and 731-746 of the 1983 *CIC* relative to religious institutes and societies of apostolic life. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 202-207.

<sup>76</sup>Cf. c. 463, §1, 5°. Canon 273, §1, 8, of the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei* said that the manner of the selection process and the number to be selected could also be specified by the conference of bishops, but this was deleted in the 1980 schema. Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 317. Cf. also c. 499 which refers to the manner of electing members of the presbyteral council.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 208-209; L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", pp. 346.

apostolic life, deacons, and moderators of secular institutes to attend, they could be included under c. 463, §2.

The persons whom c. 463, §2, indicates may be invited are also referred to as members. Since c. 466 does not distinguish between those obliged to attend and those invited, all members of the synod possess a consultative vote.

**c. Synodal members in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo**

In each of the particular churches which are the focus of this study, a formal invitation was sent to those who were to be members of the synod.<sup>78</sup> Cardinal B. Law invited to the eighth synod all those whom the 1983 *CIC* required and other members of the laity.<sup>79</sup> Priests and deacons in the particular church were permitted to elect a certain number from their respective groups to represent them in the synodal deliberations.<sup>80</sup> Some of these persons also served on synodal document committees.

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<sup>78</sup>I. Nabuco (*Pontificalis Romani Expositio Iuridico-Practica*, p. 706) urged that each delegate was to receive a personal letter noting the time and duration of the synod along with other pertinent information. Under the present law, J. Alesandro (*CLSA Commentary*, p. 380) recommends that the convocation be in writing, as should be the acceptance of the members. Cf. cc. 37 and 156.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. B. LAW, Letter of invitation to participate in the synod, January 20, 1988, Synod Archives, AB, Boston.

<sup>80</sup>Cf. P. McINERNEY and M. DOYLE, Letter to deacons for synodal elections, March 22, 1988, Synod Archives, AB, Boston; B. LAW, Letter to priests for synodal elections, March 23, 1988, Synod Archives, AB, Boston.

Archbishop P. Hannan of New Orleans invited to the synod all those required by law as well as all other parish priests, all permanent deacons, members of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, and members of the Synod Central Committee.<sup>81</sup>

Bishop J. Hoffman of Toledo invited not only all those required by law to be present at the synod, but also all priests and deacons in the Diocese, members of the Sisters' Council, Synod Steering Committee, Diocesan Pastoral Council, Parish Synod Teams, document subcommittees, diocesan department personnel, and other diocesan consultative bodies to the Bishop (Finance Council, etc.). Pastors were asked to submit the names of those parish staff members who would be interested in attending, and these were also invited. Each Catholic high school was invited to send a delegation of students to participate in the final convocation. The Bishop sent personal invitations to all delegates.<sup>82</sup> The rationale for inviting such a large number to the convocation was that these persons were the leaders in the Diocese who would be involved in the implementation of the documents, and thus they should be a part of the process of formally accepting them.

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<sup>81</sup>Cf. P. HANNAN, Letters to invited synodal members, May 15, 1987, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans.

<sup>82</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, Letter of appointment to synodal delegates, October 2, 1989, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo.

d. Observers

According to c. 463, §3, if the diocesan bishop thinks it opportune, he may invite to the synod as observers some ministers or members of churches or ecclesial communities which are not in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>83</sup>

J. Alesandro notes that this list of observers is not taxative and thus others - even the unbaptized -- could be invited as observers,<sup>84</sup> though the bishop is not obliged to do so. Their invitation would not give them the right to a consultative vote since they are observers and not members.

Both Boston and Toledo did invite ecumenical observers to their synodal convocations.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>For a proposal of Cardinal C. Bafile relative to the number of observers at the synod, cf. *Relatio...* p. 110. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 210-211; L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", pp. 346-347.

<sup>84</sup>J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 381.

<sup>85</sup>Cf. B. LAW, Letter to ecumenical observers, [nd], Synod Archives, AB, Boston. Cf. D. ROSS and D. BRUNNING, Letter to ecumenical leaders, March 23, 1989, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo. The synodal coordinator and the diocesan ecumenical officer jointly invited ecumenical leaders to critique the drafts of some synodal documents in preparation for the synodal assembly to which they would be invited. Cf. J. HOFFMAN, Invitation to ecumenical leaders, October 25, 1989, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo.

## 2. Obligation to attend

Canon 464 declares that those who are obliged to attend the synod cannot send a substitute if they are legitimately impeded from attending.<sup>86</sup>

The phrase "who must be present at the synod" in c. 274 of the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei* was later replaced by the term "synodal members" to make clear that those present at the synod by right and those "others" called could not send a substitute.<sup>87</sup> J. Alesandro holds that

these persons [others] do not have the same obligation to participate as those listed in paragraph one [of c. 463, §1], but they have some responsibility to accept the bishop's designation since they are not simply invited but convoked.<sup>88</sup>

Except for the case mentioned in c. 463, §1, 8°, the current discipline states that one who is unable to attend cannot send a substitute. If one were legitimately unable to attend, the bishop is to decide if the person could be excused. Canon 463, §1, 5° and 9°, permits the diocesan bishop to allow substitutes if he so desires in the cases of laity, members of institutes of consecrated life, and the superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life which have a house in the diocese.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Cf. D. MOGAVERO, "Il sinodo diocesano", p. 68; L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", p. 348.

<sup>87</sup>"Qui synodo interesse debet..." was changed by the *coetus* to "synodi sodalis". Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 317.

<sup>88</sup>J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 381.

<sup>89</sup>Cf. *ibid.*



Canon 464 explicitly mentions that a proxy cannot be sent in place of a synodal member; yet there is no mention of this relative to observers. Thus, they may send substitutes in their place, although it would be prudent and helpful if they would so inform the bishop.<sup>90</sup>

### 3. The profession of faith

Canon 833, 1°, requires those present at a diocesan synod with a right to vote to make a profession of faith in the presence of the president or his delegate. The presider would do so before all the synodal members.

Even though the pre-Vatican II *Roman Pontifical* notes that the profession of faith should occur at the end of the first solemn session of the synod, in fact, in many cases today it occurs prior to voting on the synodal documents.<sup>91</sup> The formula to be used would not be the one currently found in the *Pontifical*, but rather

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<sup>90</sup>Cf. *Communicationes* (1980), p. 317. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 211-213.

<sup>91</sup>Cf. *Pontificale Romanum*, vol. 3, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1962, pp. 26-29. The profession of faith was made in Boston at the first working session of the synodal body. In Toledo, it was made prior to voting on the documents. In New Orleans, the profession was made before Archbishop Hannan signed the documents.

the new one issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1989.<sup>92</sup>

The profession is to be made personally.<sup>93</sup>

#### 4. The assembly

According to the traditional legislation, the diocesan synod was to be celebrated in the cathedral church in three general congregations.<sup>94</sup> It was Clement VIII who developed a somewhat detailed description of the celebration of the diocesan synod.<sup>95</sup> A number of authors offered very precise commentaries on the

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<sup>92</sup>Cf. CONGREGATIO PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI, "Professio Fidei et Iusiurandum Fidelitatis in Suscipiendo Officio Nomine Ecclesiae Exercendo", in *AAS*, 81 (1989), pp. 104-105.

<sup>93</sup>Cf. c. 833.

<sup>94</sup>Benedict XIV (*De Synodo Dioeclesana*, vol. 1, lib. V, cap. 1, n. 2. pp. 304-305) notes: "Synodali celebritati triduum, veteri ritu, praestitutum esse...; fas esse Episcopo, pro rerum gerendarum ratione, Synodum ultra triduum protrahere."

L. de Echeverria ("La Legislación particular canónica en la época moderna", in *El Concilio de Braga y la función de la legislación particular en la Iglesia*, Salamanca, Instituto San Raimundo de Peñafort, 1975, pp. 337-339) observes that many details which have developed in connection with the celebration of the synod have gone beyond that which is actually needed.

<sup>95</sup>Cf. P. JOURNAL, "La célébration du synode diocésain", in *L'Année canonique*, 31 (1988), pp. 291-301.

Authors suggest that ceremonies for the celebration of diocesan synods can be traced back to the eleventh century. Cf., for example, M. RIZZI, "De Synodis Dioeclesanis et de Constitutionibus Synodalibus", in *Apollinaris*, 28 (1955), p. 303; J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod", p. 73. The first known ceremonial has anonymous authorship and is found after the *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms. Cf. *J. Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (hereafter: *PL*), J. Minge, ed., vol. 140, Paris, J. Minge, 1844-1855, pp. 1061-1066. The writer noted that the synod was to take place in four sessions with special ceremonies and prayers. The author used the order that Pseudo-Isidore proposed for a general council, accommodating

subject.<sup>96</sup> In the United States, Cardinal J. Gibbons approved the use of a revised ceremonial which included reference to the synod.<sup>97</sup> A revised episcopal ceremonial was issued in 1984 which included a much less detailed description of the diocesan synod.<sup>98</sup> It contains only sketchy directions for the liturgical celebrations which surround the event. The manner of discussion and voting which traditionally are central to the synodal celebration are not considered.

a. Place

Benedict XIV said that the cathedral was the most suitable location for celebrating the diocesan synod since it was the "mother and head of the other churches."<sup>99</sup> It was also specifically mentioned in both the *Roman Pontifical*,<sup>100</sup>

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it to suit a diocesan synod. The second ceremonial is located in the *Decretum* of Ivo of Chartres. Cf. *PL*, vol. 161, pp. 318-322. M. Rizzi ("De Synodis Dioecesanis et de Constitutionibus Synodalibus", p. 303) observed that "synodal ceremonials generally included three elements: 1) synodal prayers; 2) reading of the gospel; and 3) synodal sermons.

<sup>96</sup>Cf., for example, J. CATALANO, *Caeremoniale Episcoporum in Duos Libros Distributum Clementis VIII et Innocenti X Auctoritate recognitum a Benedicto XIII in multis correctum...*, vol. 1, Parisiis, A. Jouby, 1860, pp. 563-576.

<sup>97</sup>*Ceremonial for the Use of the Catholic Churches in the United States of America*, W. Milholland, rev., Philadelphia, H. Kilner and Co., 1894, pp. 390-395.

<sup>98</sup>Cf. *Caeremoniale Episcoporum, ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatum* (hereafter: *CE*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1984, pp. 277-278. Cf. also P. JOURNAL, "La célébration du synode diocésain", pp. 305-310.

<sup>99</sup>BENEDICT XIV, *De Synodo Dioecesana*, vol. 1, lib. I, cap. 5, nn. 5-6, pp. 64-67.

the former *Episcopal Ceremonial*,<sup>101</sup> and the 1917 *CIC*.<sup>102</sup> The 1983 code makes no mention of the location for the celebration of the synod, but the newly revised *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* does presume that the cathedral is the normal place for the celebration.<sup>103</sup>

b. Synodal liturgies<sup>104</sup>

The *Episcopal Ceremonial* indicates that the synodal convocations are more than mere occasions of ecclesiastical governance; they should also manifest the unity present in the Mystical Body of Christ. Since liturgical celebrations can be the greatest expression of this unity, it is recommended that the synodal assemblies commence with the celebration of a Mass or the liturgy of the hours or a scriptural

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<sup>100</sup>*Pontificale Romanum*, vol. 3, p. 21.

<sup>101</sup>J. CATALANO, *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, vol. 1, p. 572.

<sup>102</sup>Cf. c. 357, §2, 1917 *CIC*.

<sup>103</sup>Cf. *CE*, n. 1171, p. 277: "et proceditur ad ecclesiam... Praeses... ad cathedram accedit."

G. Corbellini (*Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, p. 122) suggests that the cathedral is still the most appropriate location for the synod.

The synodal sessions in Boston were held in a local auditorium, but the Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated in the diocesan cathedral. Because of the large number of participants in the Toledo synod, all activities, including the closing Mass, were held in the local convention center. New Orleans celebrated its closing synodal Mass in the diocesan cathedral.

<sup>104</sup>The episcopal act of signing the synodal texts will be considered in the following chapter.

service.<sup>105</sup> The *Ceremonial* further suggests the type of prayers to be offered at a gathering place prior to the eucharistic liturgy and encourages the formation of a procession leading to the church. The profession of faith could be taken by the president of the synod and the members during the opening ceremonies.<sup>106</sup>

Because Boston and Toledo formally began their lengthy synodal processes with eucharistic liturgies, they did not open their actual convocations with a Mass;<sup>107</sup> instead scripture services were celebrated.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, because the synodal celebration in Toledo extended over a two day period, the liturgy of the hours was celebrated at particular times,<sup>109</sup> and special prayers were offered during the voting session<sup>110</sup> and prior to small group gatherings.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>105</sup>Cf. CE, n. 1174, p. 278. Cf. also DPME, n. 165, p. 161; G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, p. 109-110; D. MOGAVERO, "Il sinodo diocesano", pp. 60-61.

<sup>106</sup>Cf. CE, n. 1173, p. 278.

<sup>107</sup>New Orleans did not have an actual convocation other than that connected with a closing synodal Mass.

<sup>108</sup>Cf. AB, "Eighth Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston", Voting session, November 19, 1988, Synod Archives, Boston, 4p; DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo*, Synod Archives, Toledo, pp. 5-10.

<sup>109</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 12-15.

<sup>110</sup>Cf. *ibid.* pp. 17-20.

<sup>111</sup>Cf. *ibid.* p. 21-23.

c. Working sessions

The structure of a working session depends upon the number of people who have been invited to participate in the synod. Many convocations in the United States have lasted from one to six days.<sup>112</sup> The greater the number of persons the more difficult it is to design a session which allows for substantive discussion of the issues at the celebration itself.

1) Document discussion

As in the period of document composition, the discussions during the synodal sessions are to be free. Canon 465 states that the proposed questions at the synod are subject to the free discussion of the members.<sup>113</sup> To achieve this, a certain order in the sessions is surely required for them to be effective. The presider should chair the discussions according to pre-established regulations.<sup>114</sup> Nearly 1700 delegates were present for the Toledo synod; Boston had 350. The manner in which

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<sup>112</sup>Cf. R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", p. 3.

<sup>113</sup>In the 1980 schema, c. 385 stated that the proposed questions at the synod should be freely discussed by all "present". At the *plenarium* when this canon was considered, it was suggested that discussion of the synodal questions be limited to synodal members (*sodalium*) only "... quia nulla videtur ratio cur hospites, etiam non catholici, ius habere debeant in disceptationem interveniendi." This suggestion was accepted. Cf. PONT. COMM., *Relatio*, p. 111. Nonetheless, it would seem that the diocesan bishop could certainly dispense from this restriction so that observers might participate fully in the synodal process.

<sup>114</sup>Cf. DPME, n. 165, p. 161-162. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 111-116.

each approached the event was different. New Orleans did not have a specific session for delegates other than at the closing synodal liturgy.

a) Boston

Synodal discussions in Boston occurred in five "working sessions" at which Cardinal Law was present. Each of the documents was presented twice; once in a working session in which the *synodales* could seek clarification of a statement, propose amendments, and cast a test vote for consensus,<sup>115</sup> and a second time at the final session when they were presented to the body for a final vote.

Because of the number of delegates, the members were encouraged to make their suggestions for changes in writing. Discussion on the floor was reserved for comments which were helpful to the whole group. All amendments submitted in the five working sessions were presented to the Committee of Reference for consideration or decision.<sup>116</sup>

b) Toledo

The synodal assembly in Toledo was held in the presence of the Bishop over a two-day period. Because of the large number of people involved, the delegates were not permitted to offer observations on the documents in the general sessions.

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<sup>115</sup>Cf. AB, "The Synod Procedure", Synod Archives, Boston, June 18, 1988, 4p.

<sup>116</sup>This Committee had the responsibility for editing the text of the documents.

All *synodales*, though, had been able to comment upon the documents at least four times during the writing process.<sup>117</sup> Thus, at the actual synod convocation, delegates were not allowed to propose further amendments.

Because the Toledo synodal assembly included not only a vote on the synodal documents but also small-group discussions on their implementation, a considerable amount of time was allotted throughout the celebration for delegates to meet in both deanery and parish groupings to consider the impact of the documents on both levels.<sup>118</sup>

## 2) Voting procedure<sup>119</sup>

Voting at a synodal assembly could be guided by the canons found in the present code.<sup>120</sup> Only those who have been legitimately called to the event have

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<sup>117</sup>Throughout the document composition period, delegates were permitted to offer observations on the document outlines, and on the first, second, and final drafts.

<sup>118</sup>Cf. DT, Synod Convocation Process file, Synod Archives, Toledo. Similar parishes, i.e., in terms of size, location, etc., were asked to convene to consider the documents from their particular perspectives. A similar process was designed for other non-parochial institutions, e.g., high schools, religious houses, and hospitals.

<sup>119</sup>The role of the diocesan bishop as the sole legislator will be considered in the next chapter.

<sup>120</sup>Cf. DPME, n. 165, pp. 161-162. The *Directory* suggests that some practical rules for "orderly conduct of the sessions" should be established. This presumably would include regulations on the voting procedure. Even though the voting on the declarations and decrees at the synod is not considered to be a "collegial act", cc. 119 and 165-179 could be used as guidelines. Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 111-116.



the right to cast a vote on the declarations and decrees.<sup>121</sup> The vote is merely consultative and not binding upon the bishop.<sup>122</sup> In both Boston and Toledo, an absolute majority of votes was necessary for a document to pass. Voting on documents in New Orleans was done by the members of the Priests' Council in the presence of Archbishop Hannan at a series of meetings prior to the promulgation of the decrees which occurred at a later date.<sup>123</sup>

a) Boston

Delegates cast separate votes on the three documents in Boston. Two options for registering a vote were permitted regarding the *Pastoral Plan for Mission* and the *Archdiocesan Statutes*. Option A was to be chosen if an individual approved or did not approve the entire plan or book of statutes. Option B was to be selected if a person wished to register a "no" vote on one or more of the sections of the plan or statutes. The *Statement on Parish Pastoral Councils* received a simple "yes" or "no" vote.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup>Cf. c. 466.

<sup>122</sup>Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>123</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, p. xiv.

<sup>124</sup>Cf. AB, *Official Ballots, Eighth Synod of Boston, Synod Archives, Boston.*

**b) Toledo**

After each presentation on the seven documents at the Toledo synod, delegates were asked to vote "acceptance", "non-acceptance" or "acceptance-with-reservation" with color-coded cards which corresponded to each intention. Those accepting a document with reservation were permitted to offer the Bishop their comments on a special response form.<sup>125</sup>

**5. Cessation of the synod**

Canon 468 notes that it is within the competence of the diocesan bishop to suspend or dissolve the synod if he prudently judges to do so. In light of c. 462, §1, since the diocesan bishop has the right to convoke the synod, it seems consistent that he should be the one to suspend or dissolve it. J. Alesandro observes that the procedure for suspending the synod should include a decree noting the fact which is sent to all the members. This decree should mention the duration of the suspension.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>Cf. "Synod Voting Process", Synod Archives, DT, Toledo, 2p.

<sup>126</sup>J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 382. Cf. also L. JENNINGS, "A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", pp. 352-353.

Since the bishop is obliged to consult the presbyteral council prior to convoking the synod, it seems fitting that he should do so again before interrupting or dissolving it even though technically he is not bound to do so (c. 468, §1).<sup>127</sup>

Canon 468, §2, mentions the possibility of a vacant or impeded see. In such a case the synod is interrupted *ipso iure* until the succeeding diocesan bishop has decreed that it be continued or be terminated. One who governs the diocese *ad interim* cannot reconvene the synod according to c. 462, §2.<sup>128</sup> J. Alesandro suggests that the successor may wish to dissolve it and convoke another, or alter it in some way.<sup>129</sup> The new diocesan bishop may make his decision and act upon it after taking canonical possession of his office.<sup>130</sup> Furthermore, he should issue a decree announcing his decision.

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<sup>127</sup>Cf. CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, *Initial Report of Task Force Committee on the Draft of the Canons of Book Two: The People of God*, U.S.C.C. Publications, 1978, p. 31. The need for consultation with the presbyteral council prior to suspending or dissolving the diocesan synod is "comparable to norm 315, §3 [of the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei*] on consultation with the college of consultors about dissolving the presbyteral council. Likewise some specification of the seriousness of the cause for suspending or dissolving the synod seems in order *a pari* with the above mentioned provision on the dissolution of the presbyteral council: 'Si... munus sibi in bonum dioecesis commissum non amplius adimpleat aut eodem graviter abutatur...?'"

<sup>128</sup>Cf. cc. 405, §1 and 409, §2. The coadjutor or auxiliary bishop as well as another bishop who temporarily administers the diocese could continue the synod during an impeded or vacant see if the competent authority provides for it.

<sup>129</sup>J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 382.

<sup>130</sup>Cf. cc. 379 and 382.

### Conclusion

A simple perusal of the canons dealing with diocesan synods in no way gives an indication of the significant number of elements involved in the event. The tremendous amount of consultation incorporated today into the process of selecting of topics would most likely have been unheard of in pre-Vatican II synods. Many are beginning to wonder, though, how much consultation is necessary, and if the extensive amount of money spent today is equal to the results achieved.

The declarations and decrees, too, are rarely similar to those which were produced under the pre-Vatican II synods. If visionary elements are incorporated into them today, as is usually the case, then the vision must not be the work of just one or two persons, but must extend to as many as possible in the particular church. For, in the end, the documents are to represent and guide the people of God therein.

Today the composition of the synodal body is far more eclectic and thus probably more challenging than in the past. The blend of laity, religious and clergy ensures that many viewpoints will be represented at the event, and perhaps more tension will also be visible. This can be the Church at its best.

The focus of the synodal convocation today does not seem to be on the casting of ballots; rather, it is on the experience of inspiration as a dynamic group gathers to consider seriously the future of a diocese. An educational dynamic is also at work as greater numbers come to understand the complexities of ecclesiastical operations.

**Finally, it is a celebration of faith. The Spirit has to be at work when so many gather during these days! The inspiration, education, and celebration do not end, though, with the assembly; it is there that they begin.**

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYNOD**

The real test of a diocesan synod's success is not found primarily in the pleasant memories of the lengthy and exciting process which the participants experienced; rather, it is in the successful implementation of the declarations and decrees which have been produced in the process. All who are involved in the synod should be aware of this fact from the moment it is convoked by the diocesan bishop. At the same time, though, long before the bishop signs any synodal documentation, those who are responsible for guiding the process should develop a dynamic implementary plan.<sup>1</sup> Without attention to these elements, the synodal efforts can actually be counter-productive to future diocesan organizational functioning because participants may consider their labors were for naught when the euphoria engendered by the process fades, and nothing substantive takes its place.

This chapter will address, then, the implementary phase of the synod from the moment that the documents are signed by the diocesan bishop and throughout the period of their practical application in the diocese. In addition, the relative value of the diocesan synod as an instrument for future planning will be considered.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", in *Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Convention/Canon Law Society of America*, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1988, p. 14.

As in previous chapters, the processes employed in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo will be examined.

### A. Signing the documents

Synodal documents today are usually products of the pooled wisdom of many individuals in the particular church. Nonetheless, it is left to the diocesan bishop to make them binding upon those entrusted to his care.<sup>2</sup> His role in the synodal deliberations is quite explicit in the current code. This section will consider, then, the bishop's right to sign the synodal texts, and his duty to communicate the declarations and decrees to others.

#### 1. The diocesan bishop as sole legislator

In the contemporary Church, the diocesan bishop certainly needs the advice of others if he is prudently to guide the people of God committed to him.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>2</sup>*Codex Iuris Canonici, Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus* (hereafter: 1983 *CIC*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1983 (Cf. *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, Translation prepared under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1983, xlii-668p. English translations of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* are taken from this edition), c. 466.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", pp. 9-10.

assistance of consultative bodies such as presbyteral and pastoral councils can indeed contribute greatly to the bishop's effective leadership.<sup>4</sup>

The diocesan decision-making process generally demands collegial efforts.<sup>5</sup>

I. Fürer observed that, even though the idea was opposed to Catholic teaching, some canonists held that contemporary synods should be like parliaments.<sup>6</sup> But, after the promulgation of the 1983 code, L. de Echeverria declared that

in no way must the synod be interpreted as a kind of parliament where questions are resolved by the majority of votes. Notwithstanding, the way in which the bishop exercises his authority holds great importance in the synod, recognizing the services and the charisms of the others...<sup>7</sup>

In post-Vatican II synods held in Vienna,<sup>8</sup> Germany,<sup>9</sup> and Switzerland,<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Cf. E. CORECCO, "The Bishop as Head of the Local Church and Its Discipline", in *Readings, Cases, Materials in Canon Law: A Textbook for Ministerial Students*, J. Hite, G. Sesto and D. Ward, eds., Collegeville, Liturgical Press, 1980, p. 151.

<sup>5</sup>S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, Canon Law Studies, 473, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1970, pp. 123-124.

<sup>6</sup>I. FÜRER, "De Synodo Dioecesana", in *Periodica*, 62 (1973), p. 126.

<sup>7</sup>L. de ECHEVERRIA, *Código de Derecho Canónico*, Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1983, p. 254, fn. 467: "Nunca debe interpretarse el sínodo como una especie de parlamento donde las cuestiones se resuelven por mayoría de votos. No obstante, tiene gran importancia el modo como el Obispo ejerce su autoridad en el sínodo, reconociendo los servicios y carismas de los demás..."

<sup>8</sup>Cf. H. KRÄTZEL, "De synodo dioecesana Vindobonensi ab a. 1969 usque ad a. 1971 celebrata", in *Periodica*, 62 (1973), pp. 149-157. Cf. also J. PROVOST, "Preparing for Particular Legislation to Implement the Revised Code", in *The Jurist*, 42 (1982), pp. 373-374.



the members exercised greater responsibility in the decision-making process than was foreseen in the 1917 code.

The 1973 *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* said that in the synod

the bishop draws up the conclusions of the synod from the combined opinions of the commissions and the assembly's sessions and they are put into the form of law, since he alone can give the synod's acts the force of laws or decrees.

It is his prerogative, therefore, to define the juridical force of the synodal orders and decrees, should he judge it opportune. Finally, it is also up to him to promulgate the acts of the synod and set the time and manner in which the decrees take effect.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Cf. K. BRAUN, "De Communi dioecesium rei publicae foederatae Germaniae synodo", in *Periodica*, 72 (1973), pp. 133-141; W. SCHULTZ, "Les synodes régionaux et diocésains: Ehrfarungen und Perspektiven in den deutschsprachigen Ländern", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, 19p. Cf. also J. PROVOST, "Preparing for Particular Legislation to Implement the Revised Code", pp. 374-376.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. I FÜRER, "De Synodis Dioecesanis In Helvetia", in *Periodica*, 72 (1973), pp. 143-148. Cf. also J. PROVOST, "Preparing for Particular Legislation to Implement the Revised Code", pp. 376-378; W. AYMANS, "Las corrientes sinodales en CentroEuropa después del Concilio Vaticano II", in *El Concilio de Braga y la función de la legislación particular en la Iglesia*, Salamanca, Instituto San Raimundo de Peñafort, 1975, pp. 425-447.

<sup>11</sup>CONGREGATIO PRO EPISCOPIS, *Directorium de Pastoralis Ministerio Episcoporum* (hereafter: *DPME*), in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973, n. 165, p. 162 (Cf. *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, Translation prepared by the Benedictine Monks of the Seminary of Christ the King, Mission, B.C., Ottawa, Publications Service of the Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974, p. 84. This translation will be used for all English version quotations from the *Directory* in this study): "Synodi conclusiones e conlatis Commissionum et Coetus sessionum sentiis ab episcopo deducuntur et ad legis formam rediguntur, cum ipse solus eis legum vel decretorum vim tribuere valeat.

Ipsius proinde est vim iuridicalem, si id opportunum censeat, praescriptorum et decretorum synodalium definire. Ipsius denique est acta Synodi promulgare atque tempus modosque statuere, quibus constitutiones vigere incipiant."

When c. 270 of the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei* was being discussed, one member of the commission suggested that in the place of the word *coetus* or gathering, the phrase "representatives of the people of God" be used in reference to the membership of the synod. This proposal was rejected for two reasons, one of which was because the phrase might have suggested that all members possessed a deliberative vote.<sup>12</sup>

Eventually, c. 362 of the 1917 code<sup>13</sup> was divided into two separate canons in the 1977 schema. The proposed c. 277 declared that

the bishop is the sole legislator in the diocesan synod, others enjoying only a consultative vote; he alone signs the synodal declarations and decrees, which can be published only with his authority.<sup>14</sup>

And c. 278 specified that

the decrees are to be promulgated in a manner determined by the diocesan bishop and oblige from that point unless otherwise provided for.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), pp. 314-315.

<sup>13</sup>*Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi Iussu Digestus Benedicti Papae XV Auctoritate Promulgatus* (hereafter: 1917 *CIC*), Westminster, Maryland, Newman Press, 1957, xlvii-786p.

<sup>14</sup>PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO CODICI IURIS CANONICI RECOGNOSCENDO (hereafter: PONT. COMM.), *Schema Canonum Libri II De Populo Dei*, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977, p. 114: "Unus in Synodo dioecesana legislator est Episcopus dioecesanus, aliis voto tantummodo consultivo gaudentibus, unus ipse synodalibus declarationibus et decretis subscribit, quae eius auctoritate tantum publici iuris fieri possunt."

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 115: "Quae modo per Episcoporum determinato promulgentur decreta, eo ipso obligare incipiunt, nisi aliud expresse caveatur."

Canon 277 later was amended by the addition of the phrase "synodal members" after the word "others" to clarify their consultative role.<sup>16</sup> Referring to c. 277, some critics said that limiting the synod to a consultative vote was

a corollary of the somewhat questionable restraint upon the exercise of episcopal legislative authority articulated in norm 102 of the Schema on general norms. Such a principle is inconsistent with the right of councils of priests to receive a deliberative vote under certain circumstances.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 318. The *Lex Ecclesiae Fundamental*, which was to be the fundamental constitution of the Church, dealt with the governing power of the diocesan bishop and how clergy and laity might assist him in this role, but it was never promulgated. Some sections of it, though, were included in the revised Code. Cf. PONT. COMM., *Schema Legis Ecclesiae Fundamental* *Textus Emendatus cum Relatione de Ipso Schemate deque Emendationibus Receptis*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971, cc. 75-82, pp. 108-112; PONT. COMM. *Lex Ecclesiae Fundamental* *seu Ecclesiae Catholicae Universae Lex Canonica Fundamental*, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1980, pp. 45-52. Cf. also *Communicationes*, 5 (1973), p. 221.

<sup>17</sup>CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, *Second Report of Canon Law Society of America Task Force Committee on the Schema Canonum Libri II: De Populo Dei*, U.S.C.C. Publications, 1978, pp. 24-25.

Cf. PONT. COMM., *Schema Canonum Libri I De Normis Generalibus*, in Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977, p. 34, c. 102, §1: "Potestas legislativa exercenda est modo iure praescripto, et ea qua in Ecclesia gaudet legislator infra auctoritatem supremam delegari nequit, nisi quatenus aliud iure explicite caveatur."

Cf. PONT. COMM. *Schema Canonum Libri II De Populo Dei*, p. 125, c. 314, §2: "In causis tamen, in quibus Consilio presbyterali deliberativum concesserit sive ius universale sive, in casibus exceptionalibus ab Episcoporum Conferentia definitis, ipse Episcopus diocesanus, idem Episcopus ut decisiones ferat consensu eget eiusdem Consilii." Cf. also CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, *Initial Report of Task Force Committee on the Draft of the Canons of Book Two: The People of God*, U.S.C.C. Publications, 1978, p. 31.

In the 1980 schema, c. 278 of the former draft was deleted because it repeated c. 9, §3, which dealt with the manner of promulgating particular laws and the time when they begin to oblige.<sup>18</sup>

It would seem that c. 466 should be interpreted more broadly than c. 362 of the 1917 code in light of Vatican II, even though the words are basically the same. Whereas, under the former discipline, consultation did occur during the synodal process, it was not regarded then as significant an ecclesial value as it is today.<sup>19</sup> Prior to Vatican II, the concepts of the fundamental equality of Church members and their co-responsibility in the exercise of the Church's mission were not part of the ecclesiological consciousness of most Catholics.<sup>20</sup> However, the responsibility of the synodal members today seems to be viewed more seriously than in the past. As J. Alesandro notes:

The intent of the synodal process is not merely the articulation of advice. It is a collaborative effort to arrive at acceptable statements and decrees which will be truly beneficial for the diocese. In this sense consultation means more than simply advice; it implies mutual

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<sup>18</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 318.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), p. 90.

<sup>20</sup>D. Mogavero ("Il sinodo diocesano", in *Chiesa Particolare e Strutture di Comunione*, A. Longhitano et al., eds., Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1985, p. 63) observes that it is important to understand that the vote (deliberative or consultative) is not meant to establish victory for a particular group's position, but it is rather a testimony to ecclesial consensus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

responsibilities on the part of all the people of God gathered together in synod.<sup>21</sup>

Introducing a creative element into the process, T. Green observes that

in a time of such significant pastoral change, might not a synod be an appropriate vehicle specifying long range diocesan objectives, to be implemented concretely by the diocesan pastoral council and other diocesan institutions? Although the bishop is said to be the only legislator in canon 466, what would prevent his committing himself as a general rule to sanctioning the determinations of a body such as a synod?<sup>22</sup>

Considering the immense amount of work that is usually involved in synods today, this suggestion respects both the bishop's role in the process and that of the other participants.<sup>23</sup> An earlier version of c. 391, §2, stated that the bishop alone

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<sup>21</sup>J. ALESANDRO, in *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* (hereafter: *CLSA Commentary*), J. Coriden, T. Green and D. Heintschel, eds., New York/Mahwah, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 381.

<sup>22</sup>T. GREEN, "The Diocesan Bishop in the Revised Code: Some Introductory Reflections", in *The Jurist*, 42 (1982), p. 337.

<sup>23</sup>P. Valdrini ("L'évêque seul législateur dans le synode diocésain", in *Le Synode diocésain dans l'Histoire et dans le Code*, Paris, Faculté de droit canonique, 1989, pp. 42-48) notes that while the bishop may be considered a *member* of the synod, he possesses a unique and particular power within that context. According to the author, though, the bishop's power would be somewhat limited in the sense that he would not be permitted to change the contents of the particular laws of the synod before he signed them unless the other synodal members were in agreement with the action. This position, though, would be contrary to the code. D. Mogavero ("Il sinodo diocesano", pp. 68-69) notes that while the members of the synod "collaborate with and assist" the bishop with their consultative vote, he remains the sole legislator.

J. Alesandro (in *CLSA Commentary*, pp. 381-382) observes that, although the bishop cannot delegate members to legislate, he can indicate that, unless he has serious reasons to do so, he would rarely reject the overwhelmingly approved recommendations of the synod.

exercised legislative power either personally or through the diocesan synod, but this latter phrase was subsequently dropped.<sup>24</sup>

a. The manner of promulgating the decrees

Canon 8, §2, specifies that the legislator determines the manner of promulgating particular law. Thus, it would be left to the judgment of the diocesan bishop how he wishes to promulgate the decrees of the synod.<sup>25</sup> It has become customary in the United States for synodal decrees to be promulgated independently from their publication. In keeping with the suggestion of the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*,<sup>26</sup> the synod normally concludes with a eucharistic liturgy. On this

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<sup>24</sup>Canon 391, §2, of the 1983 *CIC* does not refer to the diocesan synod when speaking of the bishop's legislative role, but c. 244, §3, of the 1977 schema did (cf. PONT. COMM., *Schema Canonum Libri II de Populo Dei*, p. 104): "Potestatem legislativam exercet ipse Episcopus sive in Synodo dioecessana sive extra eandem; potestatem executivam exercet sive per se sive per Vicarios generales aut episcopales, ad normam iuris; potestatem iudiciale[m] sive per se sive per Vicarium iudiciale[m] et iudices ad normam iuris constitutos."

T. GREEN (in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 329) notes that this change "reflects a fear on the part of the Commission that the bishop's pastoral discretion would be unduly curtailed if explicit reference were made to other individuals or institutes being involved in the exercise of legislative authority. The Commission apparently feared that undue pressure might be brought to bear upon the bishop in formulating diocesan policies in various areas." Cf. also R. PAGÉ, *Les Églises particulières*, vol. 1, Montréal, Éditions Paulines, 1985-1989, p. 47.

Cf. also c. 135, §2.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, Roma, Università Lateranense, 1986, pp. 161-162.

<sup>26</sup>*Caeremoniale Episcoporum, ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatum* (hereafter: *CE*), in *Civitate Vaticana*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1984, n. 1175, p. 278 (Cf. *Ceremonial*

occasion, the bishop, in the presence of the assembled synodal delegates, signs the declarations and decrees and pronounces their force within the diocese. Such was the case in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo.<sup>27</sup>

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*of Bishops* [hereafter: *CB*], Translation prepared under the auspices of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, Collegeville, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1989, 339p. This translation will be used in this study for all English quotations from the *Ceremonial*).

<sup>27</sup>The concluding Mass of Thanksgiving was held in Boston a few weeks after the final synodal session when voting on the documents occurred. The more than 350 delegates present signed a statement attesting to their acceptance of the synodal documents. Cf. Archdiocese of Boston (hereafter: *AB*), *Mass of Thanksgiving for the Closing of the Eighth Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston, November 27, 1988*, Synodal Archives, Boston, p. 1 [insert]. After reading his decree of promulgation, Cardinal Bernard Law signed the decrees. The chancellor also countersigned them.

After the synodal Mass in New Orleans, the Chairman of the Synod called the proceedings to order, and the profession of faith was made by all the assembled delegates. The officially invited were recognized, and Archbishop Philip Hannan signed the decree of promulgation. After a concluding exhortation from the Archbishop, a closing prayer was offered and the gathering was dismissed. Cf. Archdiocese of New Orleans (hereafter: *ANO*), *Mass for the 8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans, June 9, 1987*, Synod Archives, New Orleans, 7p. Cf. also E. GAUTHREAU, Memo to E. DePriest, May 20, 1987, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans; E. GAUTHREAU, Introductory text for the 8th Synod of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans, 3p.

At the concluding Mass in Toledo, subsequent to his homily, Bishop James Hoffman formally signed the synodal documents. Those assembled were asked to voice their acceptance of the documents by responding in song to statements of affirmation. Cf. DIOCESE OF TOLEDO (hereafter: *DT*), *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo, November 10 and 11, 1989*, Synod Archives, Toledo, p. 28; *DT*, "Order of Service for the closing liturgy of the Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo", Synod Archives, Toledo, pp. 5-7.

b. The effective date of the decrees and declarations

Canon 7 states that "[a] law comes into existence when it is promulgated."<sup>28</sup> The decrees begin to bind one month from the date of promulgation unless the diocesan bishop determines otherwise.<sup>29</sup> After the laws take effect, the local ordinary can dispense from them for a just and reasonable cause.<sup>30</sup> These laws could be abrogated by any future decree of the diocesan bishop; yet, until that time, they are considered to be perpetual.<sup>31</sup>

There was a four month *vacatio legis* in Boston between the promulgation of the synodal decrees and the time they took effect.<sup>32</sup> The period was twenty days in New Orleans.<sup>33</sup> The synodal directives were effective immediately in Toledo.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>"Lex instituitur cum promulgatur."

<sup>29</sup>Cf. c. 8, §2.

<sup>30</sup>Cf. cc. 88 and 90.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod: An Historical Conspectus and Commentary*, Canon Law Studies, 74, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1932, p. 114.

P. Palazzini (*Dictionarium Morale et Canonicum*, vol. 4, Romae, Officium Libri Catholici, 1968, p. 441) states: "Statuta synodalia statim promulgari possunt, quin S. Sedi recognoscenda transmittantur; eaque ratione legis perpetuae etiam post mortem episcopi obligationi recipiunt."

<sup>32</sup>Cf. B. LAW, "Letter of promulgation of the synodal statutes", in *Eighth Synod, Archdiocese of Boston: Pastoral Plan for Mission*, Boston, Daughters of St. Paul, 1989, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup>Cf. P. HANNAN, "Letter of promulgation of the synodal statutes", in *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, New Orleans, ANO, 1987, p. xi.



## 2. The force of the synodal declarations and decrees

The current code does not require a diocesan synod to propose legislation, although during the revision process the *coetus* which considered the canons on the subject thought that the synod should "remain the normal institute for the renewal of particular diocesan legislation."<sup>35</sup> While c. 466 implies that legislation continues to be a potential product of the synod,<sup>36</sup> the code does not state that legislation is the only product. Indeed, even a cursory glance at contemporary synodal documents in the United States will indicate that statutes are not the sole products of a diocesan synod. J. Provost notes that a diocesan synod may promote the development of customs, entertain administrative matters and establish diocesan policies which do not have the force of law.<sup>37</sup> As a new variety of documentation emanates from the synodal process, some confusion can arise as to its binding nature.

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, "Letter of promulgation of the synodal directives", in "Order of Service for the closing liturgy of the Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo", pp. 5-6.

<sup>35</sup>Cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 315: "... il Sinodo rimane l'istituto normale per l'aggiornamento della legislazione particolare della diocesi..."

<sup>36</sup>Cf. c. 466: "Unus in synodo dioeclesana legislator est Episcopus dioeclesanus..."

<sup>37</sup>Cf. J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 12.

a. The difference between declarations and decrees

If we follow the style of documents issued by Vatican II, we notice that a declaration is different from a decree. G. Corbellini observes that the former is "a public affirmation with which the authority of the Church manifests a conviction about a problem, and about which she indicates her position and the principles by which she is inspired to resolve it..."<sup>38</sup> In reference to papal and curial pronouncements, F. Morrissey states that there are at least three types of declarations. The first type, simply called a declaration, "is not a new law and must be interpreted in the light of existing legislation."<sup>39</sup> The second variety is the authentic interpretation which is communicated in the form of law and has the force of law. Thus, according to c. 16, §2, it must be promulgated. The third type of declaration is the extensive declaration, "which to a certain extent modifies the law."<sup>40</sup> Canons 16, §2, and 34, §1, for example, use the term "declare" in reference to clarifying the true meaning of a law; c. 112, §1, 2°, as an expression of a person's will; and cc. 212, §1, 749, §2, and 1075, §1, in reference to authoritative teaching.

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<sup>38</sup>G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, p. 159: "un'affermazione pubblica con cui l'autorità della Chiesa manifesta un convincimento su un problema, intorno al quale indica la sua posizione e i principi a cui essa si ispira per risolverlo..."

<sup>39</sup>F. MORRISEY, "Papal and Curial Pronouncements: Their Canonical Significance in Light of the 1983 Code of Canon Law", in *The Jurist*, 50 (1990), p. 117.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

In the context of a diocesan synod, as in Vatican II, it may be best to consider declarations to be "policy statements" which express the mind of the legislator in the particular church on certain matters. Therefore, they would not need to be formally promulgated by the diocesan bishop.

Decrees, on the other hand, are documents which "contain... affirmations of principle, but also decisions and precise choices of a normative nature."<sup>41</sup> According to the code, there are two varieties of decrees. Canon 29 states that general decrees are laws by which "common prescriptions are issued by a competent legislator for a community capable of receiving a law..."<sup>42</sup> An individual decree, according to c. 48, is "an administrative act issued by a competent executive authority in which a decision is given or a provision is made in a particular case in accord with the norms of law..."<sup>43</sup> As F. Morrissey again notes, the term "decree" can refer to diverse matters: administrative, legislative, judicial or even by extension to canonical collections.<sup>44</sup> The term is used, for example, in cc. 29, 31, §1, 48, 49, and in numerous places in Book VII of the code to indicate a definitive decision or

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<sup>41</sup>G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, p. 159: "contiene... affermazioni di principio ma anche decisioni e scelte precise di natura normativa."

<sup>42</sup>"quibus a legislatore competenti pro communitate legis recipiendae capaci communia feruntur prescripta..."

<sup>43</sup>"[d]ecretum singulare intellegitur actus administrativus a competenti auctoritate exsecutiva editus, quo secundum iuris normas pro casu particulari datur deciso aut fit provisio..."

<sup>44</sup>Cf. F. MORRISSEY, "Papal and Curial Pronouncements...", p. 114.

act on the part of someone possessing the appropriate authority to posit the act. Even though the diocesan bishop "signs" the synodal declarations and decrees (c. 466), technically speaking only the decrees require promulgation because only they have the force of law.

**b. Clarifying the binding nature of the documents**

It would be advisable for the diocesan bishop, before he signs the synodal declarations and decrees, to clarify the manner in which they are to be understood. For instance, are the decrees to be understood in the canonical sense?<sup>45</sup> Do directives have the same force as statutes? Are recommendations and guidelines optional, or are they *expected* to be followed? For the sake of those who must implement the declarations and decrees, some explanation of their juridic character would be helpful either in the documents themselves or through some other official source.

The synod of the Archdiocese of Boston developed three separate types of documents: statutes, policies, and guidelines. In the first working session of the synod, the delegates were apprised of the juridic character of each variety of document. Statutes and policies were considered to be mandated entities, whereas

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<sup>45</sup>Cf. cc. 29-34. Cf. also P. VALDRINI, "L'évêque seul législateur dans le synode diocésain", pp. 48-49.

guidelines were "adaptable and changeable with differing circumstances."<sup>46</sup> It was further noted that in the synod there would be "a clear delineation of what is commanded and what is recommended."<sup>47</sup>

New Orleans developed statutes in its synodal processes. When the Priests' Council reviewed the document drafts, the members "provided specification for the policies and norms which were to be mandated or recommended by the synod."<sup>48</sup>

Toledo developed directives addressed to particular segments of the diocesan population: individuals, diocesan departments, parishes, or even the Bishop himself. These directives were initially considered to be recommendations,<sup>49</sup> but the language employed in them made them appear to have a greater force.

As an aid to understanding better the binding character of synodal documentation, it would be helpful for document writing committees to consider well the language which is used in any particular text.

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<sup>46</sup>Cf. D. BURNS, "Report of the Canonical Consultants Committee at the First Working Session of the Eighth Synod of the Archdiocese of Boston", June 18, 1988, Synod Archives, AB, Boston, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>48</sup>Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, p. xiv.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. DT, "Meeting with document writing subcommittees", November 12, 1988, Synod Archives, Toledo, p. 5.

### 3. Precision in terminology

It is not uncommon to discover terminology in synodal decrees and directives which is not precise.<sup>50</sup> Even though the binding character of the decrees might be certain, the terminology employed might imply otherwise. Thus, some statutes which are intended to be obligatory may indeed be difficult to enforce because of the imprecise or even equivocal terminology used.

On the surface, the statutes of the Boston synod *seem* to give a clear indication of the mind of the legislator, and, at the same time, provide the parameters whereby one can judge whether or not the obligation has been met. Typical of the statutes would be this example:

A priest *is* [emphasis added] appointed pastor of a parish by a letter from the Archbishop in which the effective date of the appointment is specified.

An announcement of the appointment, together with the effective date, *is to be made* at Sunday Masses in the parish.<sup>51</sup>

Or again:

Priests incardinated in the Archdiocese of Boston and in good standing, together with other priests who have Archdiocesan faculties, *have* the faculty to assist validly at marriages within the boundaries of the Archdiocese.

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<sup>50</sup>Cf. L. BONNET, "Les actes du synode: aspect formel", in *Le Synode diocésain dans l'Histoire et dans le Code*, Paris, Faculté de droit canonique, 1989, pp. 66-75. Cf. also G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 158-161.

<sup>51</sup>AB, *Statutes, Parish Pastoral Guidelines, Book I*, Boston, 1988, p. 8.

In order to assist licitly, the permission of the proper pastor, in accord with Canon 1114, is required.<sup>52</sup>

It is evident that the tenor of the statutes is obligatory. Those who are given the responsibility to call others to accountability for complying with these statutes have clear parameters by which a judgement can be made. Yet, despite the fact that the Boston statutes were to be "mandated entities", the following examples do not appear to demonstrate this in such a clear fashion:

Appropriate and proper liturgical music *should* be provided at all Sunday Masses.<sup>53</sup>

Or again:

Catholics, in cooperation with the Archbishop, *are* to support the establishment and continuance of Catholic schools in which students can receive an education that integrates religious formation, personal development and preparation for life in society.<sup>54</sup>

Although one might argue that these are indeed obligatory statutes, it could also be said that they appear to be more exhortative in nature. In both cases, it would be difficult to judge the extent of compliance with the statutes.

The mandates issued through the synod in New Orleans, like Boston's, appear to be precise in most cases. For example, it is mandated that

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<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 14.

[p]riests from other dioceses or from other religious communities be considered for incardination into the Archdiocese of New Orleans only after they have served at least three (3) years in the Archdiocese.<sup>55</sup>

But a few seem more like exhortations. The synod mandates that

[w]ithin the limitations of the approved guidelines, the language, cultural heritage, and liturgical expression of particular groups be respected in their very diversity within the parishes of the Archdiocese.

Particular attention [is to] be given to the elimination of prejudice or indifference toward minorities.<sup>56</sup>

The use of the term mandate in New Orleans was meant to convey an obligation. One might encounter some difficulty, though, in judging the extent to which accountable parties might have fulfilled the obligations mentioned in the last two statutes.

Although the directives prepared for the Toledo synod were initially to have been recommendations, a number of them appear to be obligatory in character. Like Boston and New Orleans, though, the parameters whereby one could be called to accountability for fulfilling the obligations are nebulous. For example, one directive clearly notes:

By 1992 the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs *will have prepared* an "Ecumenism Resource Handbook." This handbook will provide suggestions for ecumenical involvement by local congregations, descriptions of other Christian churches in the Diocese, and sources of ecumenical materials (books, videos, etc.). It will also

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<sup>55</sup>ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.



have a section that will encourage the spouses in an interfaith marriage to make their marriage truly ecumenical, and a section with directives for reception of sacraments. The National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers Handbook could be adapted to the particular needs of this Diocese.<sup>57</sup>

This directive appears to be clear and precise. The following, though, is rather ambiguous:

Parishes *should* immediately take steps to promote a spirit of inclusiveness in all aspects of worship...

Parishes *should* utilize the insights and skills of programs such as the Laity Leading Prayer Workshop offered by the Toledo Diocesan Liturgical Commission which demonstrate ways that deacons and lay people can further minister to the assembly.<sup>58</sup>

The use of the term "should" seems to convey the tone of a recommendation, but it could also be construed as an obligation.

The purpose for utilizing precise terminology in synodal declarations and decrees is not to narrow the parameters within which persons can operate, but rather to clarify those parameters so that a person might legitimately exercise his or her rights appropriately. In any case, when interpreting the synodal products, it is important to remember that, as in the universal code, different literary forms may be utilized in the statutes, decrees or directives.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo: Pastoral Plan for Implementation*, Toledo, p. 39.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. c. 17. Cf. also J. CORIDEN, "Rules for Interpreters", in *The Art of Interpretation: Selected Studies on the Interpretation of Canon Law*, Washington, The Canon Law Society of America, 1982, pp. 1-27; L. ORSY, in *CLSA Commentary*,

#### 4. Publication of the documents

It is unfortunate that, subsequent to a number of diocesan synods, the pooled wisdom which a particular church accumulates during the celebration of the process is often kept within the diocesan boundaries and is not shared with others. The wisdom lies in more than just the declarations and decrees, but also in the details associated with the entire experience. This section will consider, then: 1) the publication of the synodal documentation; 2) the communication of the declarations and decrees to the metropolitan and the conference of bishops; and 3) sharing the details of the synodal experience with other dioceses.

##### a. Within the diocese

Although the actual synodal event in most dioceses will receive wide coverage, at least through the diocesan newspapers,<sup>60</sup> the documentation, too, needs to be distributed. This should be done not only to those parties who are directly affected by the individual statutes and recommendations and who are called upon to

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pp. 41-42.

<sup>60</sup>Cf., for example, "Cardinal approves Synod documents", in *The Boston Pilot*, December 2, 1988, pp. 1 and 24; "Documents of Eighth Synod reflect issues, concerns of archdiocese", in *New Orleans Clarion Herald*, June 18, 1987, p. 7; *Special Synod Issue*, in *Toledo Catholic Chronicle*, November 24, 1989, pp. 1-4, 12-14, 16, 19-21, 33, 35.

implement them, but also to other interested persons.<sup>61</sup> Because the vision which is established is for the entire particular church, as many as possible should be made aware of the synodal product.

Subsequent to the synod in Boston, the two synodal documents were communicated to the parishes, diocesan agencies, and other institutions in the Archdiocese. In addition, a four-part television series was presented through the Boston Catholic Television Center.

The documents of New Orleans were distributed to all parishes and diocesan institutions. Accompanying them were the recommended policy statements of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and other previously enacted policies of the Archdiocese of New Orleans which were reaffirmed by the synod. In lieu of publishing copies of the synodal texts for wide-spread distribution, a booklet was prepared which explained very concisely the work of the synod and its effect on the life of the particular church.<sup>62</sup>

The publication of the synodal documents in Toledo was delayed until the Bishop, in conjunction with his cabinet, prepared an implementation plan. Six months after the completion of the synod, both the documents and plan were issued

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<sup>61</sup>L. Jennings ("A Renewed Understanding of the Diocesan Synod", in *Studia canonica*, 20 (1986), p. 351) recommends that a brief "message" or "synodal letter" could be given to the members of the diocesan family.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. ANO, *What Does the 8th Archdiocesan Synod Mean to Us?*, New Orleans, 1987, 15p.

to parishes and diocesan institutions. Toledo also produced a videotape which explained the documents.<sup>63</sup> It was suggested that this be shown to interested parties in parishes on the Sunday dedicated to beginning the synodal implementation process.

**b. To the metropolitan and the conference of bishops**

A new feature of the 1983 code is c. 467 which states that the texts of the synodal declarations and decrees are to be communicated to both the metropolitan and the conference of bishops.<sup>64</sup> The purpose of this action is not to seek their approval, but rather to share information which may be helpful to others.<sup>65</sup> The whole process manifests the collegial nature of particular churches common in the early Church. L. de Echeverria states:

It [c. 467] is a norm unknown in the previous law, but very much in the line of the collegial affect and the impulse to common pastoral action, which nourishes the establishment of groupings in particular churches.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Cf. DT, "Pastoral Plan for Implementation of the Synod", Videotape, Synod Archives, Toledo.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 224-237.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 382.

<sup>66</sup>L. de ECHEVERRIA, *Código de Derecho Canónico*, p. 255, fn. 467: "Es una norma desconocida en el derecho anterior, pero muy en la línea del afecto colegial y del impulso hacia una acción pastoral común, que alienta la constitución de agrupaciones de Iglesias particulares."

Under the old code, it was not necessary to communicate the synodal texts to any higher authority. M. Coronata noted that, while the Holy See did not have to receive the decrees, if a particular bishop wanted to report the condition of his diocese to it, a congregation would have been happy to accept them, although they did not need a particular congregation's explicit approval.<sup>67</sup> Both the 1977 schema *De Populo Dei*<sup>68</sup> and the 1980 schema<sup>69</sup> included a canon stating the necessity of communicating the synodal decrees as soon as possible to the Apostolic See as well as to the metropolitan and the conference of bishops of the region. In a later revision, the need to transmit the text to the Holy See was deleted because it manifested excessive centralization and was not imposed by the 1917 code.<sup>70</sup> The requirement of communicating the decrees as stated in c. 467 in no way should be construed to mean seeking approbation.<sup>71</sup>

Regarding the manner by which the metropolitan and the conference of bishops are to receive copies of synodal decrees and declarations, J. Provost holds

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<sup>67</sup>Cf. M. CORONATA, *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, vol. 1, Taurini, Marietti, 1949, p. 487.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. c. 279.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. c. 387.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. PONT. COMM. *Relatio Complectens Synthesim Animadversionum ab Em. mis atque Exc. mis Patribus Commissionis ad Novissimum Schema Codicis Iuris Canonici Exhibitarum, cum Responsionibus a Secretaria et Consultoribus Datis*, in *Civitate Vaticana, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis*, 1982, p. 111.

<sup>71</sup>Cf. J. ALESANDRO, in *CLSA Commentary*, p. 382.

that, in light of c. 455, §1, the conference of bishops could issue a general decree indicating how this should occur.<sup>72</sup> Since this has not yet been done in the USA, it is left up to the diocesan bishop to decide how to communicate the texts of his synod.

c. To the wider Church

Although the code does not require that the synodal documentation be communicated to other dioceses, it would be helpful if this were done. As the number of dioceses in the United States which are contemplating a synod increases, the shared information can be most valuable indeed. Not only are the decrees and declarations themselves helpful for those dioceses, but the elements of the synodal process are equally important.<sup>73</sup>

It is safe to say that the synodal texts and information about the process which could be shared with other particular churches considering the celebration of a synod could save them much effort in both preliminary planning and finances.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Cf., J. PROVOST, in *CLSA Commentary*, pp. 370-371.

Most of the dioceses in the United States which have celebrated a synod recently have not communicated the texts of their declarations and decrees to the national conference of bishops. New Orleans, in fact, has done so. Cf. S. EUART, Associate General Secretary, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Telephone conversation held on March 20, 1991, Washington, D.C.

<sup>73</sup>Cf. A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", p. 14.

<sup>74</sup>Cf. J. PROVOST, "Diocesan Synods", in *Center Papers*, n. 1, New York, National Pastoral Life Center, Summer, 1984, p. 6. The National Pastoral Life Center in New York offered its services as somewhat of a "clearing house" for

**B. The practical implementation of the synod**

Although a fair number of works have considered synodal legislation and celebration, very little has been written about the success of synodal implementation subsequent to Vatican II and the promulgation of the revised code. One thing, though, which is constantly mentioned relative to synods, is the fear that the fruits of the process will be placed upon shelves and forgotten.<sup>75</sup> To allay such fears, it is advisable that two elements in particular be considered before the diocesan bishop signs the synodal documents: 1) the parties responsible for document implementation; and 2) long-term implementation in the diocese.

**1. Responsibility for the process of implementation**

At the conclusion of the diocesan synod, it should be fairly evident whose responsibility it will be to implement the declarations and decrees. It should be clear not only who will call others to accountability for implementation, but also who will be held accountable. While good will on the part of those who must implement

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synodal information.

<sup>75</sup>Cf. J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", p. 7; R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, pp. 3 and 6.

the documents should be presumed, the best of intentions alone may not bring to fruition what the synod calls for.<sup>76</sup>

Even though it is not particularly necessary, it is advisable for an individual or a diocesan office to have the responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the declarations and decrees.<sup>77</sup> The person or office can serve a twofold function: coordination of the implementation in an effective manner, and, perhaps, calling others to accountability for implementing the documents.

A fair amount of tension may well be experienced by synodal participants as they prepare for and celebrate the process. Working within a specific timeframe, the revision of documents can be hectic. One might be tempted to think that the period of implementation will be free of frustration. In fact, just the opposite may be the case. The post-synodal phase is one wherein persons will have to be challenged to complete the good work which has been begun. Although much consultation may have occurred in the preparation of the documents, the vision and directives contained in them may not always be readily accepted. It is an easy temptation to depend upon the diocesan bishop to call others to accountability when persons fail to comply with particular directives. He does possess the authority to

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<sup>76</sup>Cf. G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Diocesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 118-120.

<sup>77</sup>In some dioceses, a special committee was established to implement the synodal recommendations. Cf. R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", p. 6.



do so,<sup>78</sup> but the responsibility should also be assumed by others within the diocesan community.<sup>79</sup>

The synodal documents of Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo, called upon various persons or groupings to implement the recommendations, statutes, policies, guidelines, or directives.

a. The diocesan bishop

In so far as it is the diocesan bishop who convokes the synod, usually presides over it, and signs the synodal declarations and decrees, it is he who is ultimately responsible for their implementation.<sup>80</sup> In some dioceses, like Toledo, the Bishop, with the aid of his cabinet, developed an implementation plan.<sup>81</sup> Both Cardinal Law in Boston<sup>82</sup> and Archbishop Hannan in New Orleans<sup>83</sup> were involved to some degree in the implementary phase of their synods.

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<sup>78</sup>Cf. c. 392.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. cc. 212; 519; 529, §1.

<sup>80</sup>Cf. cc. 386, §1; 391; 392. Cf. also R. PAGÉ, "Les synodes diocésains: expériences et perspectives", p. 6.

<sup>81</sup>Cf. DT, "Pastoral Plan for Implementation of the Synod", Videotape.

<sup>82</sup>Cf. B. LAW, Remarks at meeting with parish and diocesan department personnel regarding synodal implementation, May 1, 1989, Synod Archives, AB, Boston.

<sup>83</sup>Cf. P. HANNAN, Letter to the people of the Archdiocese of New Orleans concerning the diocesan synod, June 9, 1987, Synod Archives, ANO, New Orleans.

The synods in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo also called upon the Bishops of those particular churches to put particular directives into practice.<sup>84</sup> In the implementation plan developed in Toledo, the Bishop himself assumed responsibility for carrying out certain directives.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Cf. AB, *Eighth Synod, Archdiocese of Boston: Pastoral Plan for Mission*, p. 59: "Each Bishop [is] to be cognizant of and sensitive to the conflicting values and tensions experienced by priests, religious and lay people in today's society and to respond pastorally as he leads them in truth and love."

Cf. ANO, *8th Synod, Archdiocese of New Orleans*, p. 29: "the Synod mandates [sic] that... the Archbishop publish an annual report in the Clarion Herald detailing the spiritual condition of the Archdiocese."

Cf. DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo: Pastoral Plan for Implementation*, p. 15: "The Bishop shall inaugurate (1990) the development and implementation of a collaborative process of *pastoral planning* in all parishes and related institutions."

The synod of Paterson (DIOCESE OF PATERSON, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Paterson*, 1971, pp. 1-103) called upon the Bishop to establish at least eleven diocesan and parish offices, and reaffirmed the work currently done by existing offices. Cf. also, ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI, *Sixth Synod, Archdiocese of Cincinnati*, 1971, pp. 1-241. In some recent diocesan synods, although the bishop is not mentioned directly when the establishment of a commission or program is called for, it is presumed that he will be the one who implements the directive. Cf. DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE, *Synod of the Diocese of Charlotte, 1986-1987, 1987*, pp. 12, 20, 42, 60.

<sup>85</sup>Cf. DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo: Pastoral Plan for Implementation*, p. 26. For example, one particular directive of the synod was that a ten million dollar education trust fund be established by 1998 to aid those who wish to attend a Catholic school. According to the implementation plan, the responsibility for initiating the implementation of the directive was to be assumed by the Bishop.

b. The synod office staff

In some dioceses in the United States, the synod staff continued to guide the process through the implementary phase.

In Boston, for instance, it was the responsibility of the synod staff to help parishes to implement the synodal document which mandated the establishment of parish pastoral councils.<sup>86</sup> Since the conclusion of the synod in 1988, this has been the primary work of the staff, although they have also assisted diocesan departments with the development of goals and objectives in the light of the synodal directives.<sup>87</sup> The synod staff does not have the responsibility for monitoring compliance with diocesan statutes. Presumably this rests with Cardinal Law, the vicar general, or some other designated person.

Although the synodal office in Toledo was closed two months after the end of the synod, a Diocesan Policy Review Office was established to oversee the revision of the diocesan policies; a task which was delayed until after the synod.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Cf. R. BANKS, Letter to pastors concerning the establishment of parish pastoral councils, March 13, 1989, Synod Archives, AB, Boston; P. McINERNY and M. DOYLE, Letter to synodal participants, January 2, 1990, Synod Archives, AB, Boston.

<sup>87</sup>Cf. AB, Goals and objectives materials, Synod Archives, Boston, 3p.

<sup>88</sup>Cf. DT, "The Policy Review Process", Synod Archives, Toledo, 8p. The Diocesan Policy Review Committee was established in Toledo during the final stage of the synodal process so that it could begin its work immediately upon the conclusion of the synod.

c. Pastors and diocesan department personnel

Very often in the United States, the majority of synodal directives are addressed to parish priests and diocesan department personnel since they are usually given the responsibility for actually implementing them.<sup>99</sup>

In each of the twenty-six documents of the *Pastoral Plan for Mission* in Boston, a diocesan office or commission and parish -- presumably through the parish priest -- was to implement a particular directive; Toledo did likewise in each of its seven documents. New Orleans entrusted all implementation to either the Archbishop, a diocesan department or to pastors and other priests.

The establishment of synodal statutes or laws affecting the day-to-day operation of parishes and diocesan institutions may be acceptable to those affected; nonetheless, it is advisable to refrain from making parish priests and diocesan department personnel responsible for implementing a significant number of synodal recommendations and mandates in their departments or parishes, especially at the same time. If this is expected, the usual result may be significant frustration on their part. If any implementation occurs, it may be only half-hearted.

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<sup>99</sup>Cf. DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG, *Diocese of Harrisburg, Tenth Diocesan Synod: "Let Christ's Light Shine Through You"*, 1988, pp. 7-12. The responsibility for the implementation of all synodal acts was assigned to specific departments in Harrisburg.

d. Individuals within the diocese

Analogous to the declaration of the particular rights and obligations of all the Christian faithful found in the current code, contemporary diocesan synods in the United States also commonly specify some additional rights and responsibilities of the laity within the particular church.<sup>90</sup> In most cases these obligations are actually expressed in exhortative language. Boston addressed the clergy, the laity and religious as individuals in both its *Pastoral Plan for Mission*<sup>91</sup> and its *Statutes*.<sup>92</sup> Toledo addressed clergy, laity and religious as individuals occasionally in the synodal documents, but primarily in the implementation plan which was connected with a directive.<sup>93</sup> New Orleans did not call upon the laity as individuals to implement any synodal recommendations or mandates.

The best argument for the widest possible circulation of the synodal documents today is that, since so many directives contained in them are addressed

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<sup>90</sup>Cf. cc. 212, §1; 223, §2.

<sup>91</sup>Cf., for example, AB, *Eighth Synod, Archdiocese of Boston: Pastoral Plan for Mission*, p. 36: "The Synod calls... [e]ach Catholic through prayer and study of the Scriptures and the Church teachings, to be informed on all issues that affect the sacredness of human life, and to form one's conscience accordingly."

<sup>92</sup>Cf. AB, *Statutes, Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines*, p. 3: "Every effort is to be made by Catholics to communicate clearly the importance of the lay vocation for the life and mission of the Church."

<sup>93</sup>Cf., for example, DT, *Second Synod of the Diocese of Toledo*, p. 14: "Directive #1: By 1992 all parishes are to have developed a pastoral staff." The implementation plan then specified that "[i]ndividuals will belong to, register in and be supportive of a parish. It is in the parish setting that they will both share their personal gifts and receive their spiritual nourishment."

to all the Christian faithful within the diocese, they can follow the directives only if they are aware of them.

## 2. Long term implementation

The diocesan bishop may specify a *vacatio legis* between the time the synodal documents are promulgated and the time they take effect, but, unless they are statutes which direct day-to-day activities, synodal documents normally require a considerable amount of time to be fully implemented. Three elements in particular which deserve attention in this regard are: 1) the implementary timelines for directives; 2) the relationship between synodal implementation and on-going diocesan programs; and 3) future reference to the synodal directives.

### a. Implementory timelines

Recommendations, mandates, directives, guidelines, and policies which are the products of quite a number of diocesan synods celebrated since Vatican II do not give any indication as to when their implementation will commence.<sup>94</sup> The

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<sup>94</sup>Cf. ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI, *Sixth Synod, Archdiocese of Cincinnati*, pp. 1-231; DIOCESE OF PATERSON, *Second Synod, Diocese of Paterson*, pp. 8-95; DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG, *Diocese of Harrisburg, Tenth Diocesan Synod*, pp. 7-12; DIOCESE OF SCRANTON, *Acts of the Scranton Diocesan Synod II*, 1986, pp. 220-239; DIOCESE OF STEUBENVILLE, *Synod 1983, Diocese of Steubenville*, 1983, pp. PG1-DPO7; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK, *Eighteenth Synod of the Archdiocese of New York: Official Directives and Suggestions for Implementation*, 1989, pp. 7-51; DIOCESE OF JOLIET, *Come, Journey Together: Official Documents of the Second Synod of Joliet*, 1989, pp. 3-42; DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI,

consequent expectation on the part of many may thus be that all implementation will happen simultaneously and immediately. To mitigate the possible anger which can accompany delayed implementation of the synodal directives, it is advisable to furnish a timeline for their implementation. It is suggested that the following elements be kept in mind in its preparation: 1) the prioritization of the directives; 2) the duration of implementation; and 3) those responsible for the implementation.

**1) Prioritization of directives**

Because of the practical impossibility of implementing all the synodal directives immediately after the synod, it is important to prioritize them so that the more important ones can be attended to more quickly. This is true especially if a significant number of recommendations or mandates have been issued. The prioritization will, in turn, affect the timeline.

Naturally, the process of prioritization should take into account a number of factors: need, available finances, personnel, relationship to currently existing programs, etc. In some cases, dioceses like Boston required their department

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*Synod 88, Becoming One Body: The Second Synod of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, 1989, pp. 9-265; DIOCESE OF HELENA, Acts of the Synod of the Diocese of Helena, 1989, pp. 15-66; DIOCESE OF LACROSSE, The Bishop with His People: Fourth Synod of the Diocese of LaCrosse, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Wozalla Publishing Co., 1987, pp. 11-233; DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE, Synod of the Diocese of Charlotte, 1986-1987, pp. 8-61.*

directors to prioritize the synodal recommendations directly affecting their agency, and prepare an implementation plan.<sup>95</sup>

## 2) The duration of the implementation

When synods were convoked for the purpose of communicating provincial conciliar statutes to the clergy of a particular church, not too much preparation and follow-up was needed. It is entirely different, though, in most synods in the United States today. Post-Vatican II synods often call for the establishment of diocesan or parish organizations and programs. After these directives have been prioritized, it is advisable to schedule their implementation gradually over a predetermined period. If this is not done, and all mandates or directives are expected to be implemented simultaneously by the bishop, diocesan offices, or parishes, it might be attempted, but the result could very well be disastrous.<sup>96</sup>

The document subcommittees in Toledo were required to suggest a date by which a particular directive was to be implemented.<sup>97</sup> When they were published,

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<sup>95</sup>Cf., for example, W. SCHMIDT, Agency plans for the implementation of the synod, AB, Boston, October 23, 1989, 7p.

<sup>96</sup>Cf. A. REHRAUER, "The Diocesan Synod", p. 14.

<sup>97</sup>Cf. D. ROSS, Memo to document writing subcommittees, June 7, 1988, Synod Archives, DT, Toledo.



the implementation period extended over a ten-year period.<sup>98</sup> Parishes were given the responsibility of determining their own timeline for implementing the directive within the prescribed period.<sup>99</sup>

As the period of implementation progresses, it might be discovered that particular directives which were scheduled to be implemented at a later date have become somewhat passé. Rather than slavishly adhere to the implementation of the directive, it is best if the diocesan bishop, perhaps after some consultation with others, simply dismisses it after having expressed his rationale for doing so.

### 3) Responsibility for prioritization and establishing a timeline

When members of writing subcommittees spend a significant amount of time and energy producing a synodal document, it is understandable that their sense of ownership may lead them to consider their text to be, at least one of, if not *the* most important of all. Consequently, they may not be able to act in an unbiased manner when it comes to deciding the relative weight granted to each synodal directive. At the same time, the subcommittee members may believe that their directives need to be attended to rather quickly, as opposed to some years in the future. Thus, it is

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<sup>98</sup>Cf. also, DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY, *That All May Be One, Synod 1988*, 1988, pp. 6-18; DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT, *Synod V, Diocese of Davenport*, 1986, pp. 3-36.

<sup>99</sup>Cf. DT, *Pastoral Plan on Implementation: Information & Suggestions for Parish Use*, Synod Archives, Toledo, p. 6.

recommended that the decision about the relative importance of directives and the establishment of a timeline for their implementation be left to others. A synodal executive committee or steering committee may be best suited to fulfill this responsibility since the members should possess a broader knowledge of the contents of the declarations and decrees.

**b. The relationship between synodal implementation and on-going programs**

Throughout the course of a diocesan synodal process, parishes and diocesan departments will usually continue to attend to the already established programs for which they are responsible. When the synodal documents become normative, it may well happen that those programs will be affected. It may prove helpful, then, if parishes and offices are notified at the beginning of a synodal process that this may occur. In anticipation of such a possibility, they might even be asked not to initiate any new programs. At the conclusion of the synod, it is advisable for the bishop to indicate to department directors and pastors whether programs decreed by the synod are to take precedence over currently established ones, or if they are to be undertaken in addition to them. In either case, it is important to remind those responsible for implementing an additional program of its place in the general prioritization schema of synodal directives and of the established timeline for implementation, if one exists.

c. Future education on the synodal documents

Quite a number of persons are usually given the opportunity to participate in a synodal process in the United States, and many choose to do so. But, because synods are usually celebrated rather infrequently, and the vision and directives are designed to be implemented over a rather lengthy period, it is possible that some who assume parish and diocesan leadership positions after the synod may not be acquainted with the vision and directives. It would be helpful, then, if future leaders could be well educated about the synod and its documentation prior to assuming their responsibilities. At the same time, any educational endeavors should be extended to other interested parties.

So often during the celebration of a synod, a diocesan bishop will refer to the occasion in his homilies and other addresses. After the process is completed, it is important for him and others to mention the vision and documentation as a constant reference point for any and all diocesan planning.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Cf. J. HOFFMAN, Letter of promulgation of the synodal directives, p. 6: "The vision and directive set forth in these documents will be normative for all future planning in all diocesan departments and institutions until such time that they are revised by the Shepherd of this local church."

### **C. The value of the diocesan synod in the contemporary Church**

Any analysis of the value of the diocesan synod in the life of the contemporary Church should not be undertaken from an idyllic perspective. Synods today are not simple events. Rather, they are often highly complex endeavors which must be viewed in a broad light. To understand their value, they should be considered from a historical perspective, in relation to other diocesan consultative bodies, and as a vehicle for promoting greater co-responsibility in the particular church.

#### **1. From a historical perspective**

With the promulgation of the revised *Code of Canon Law*, diocesan synods were both freed from the past and reconnected with it. The liberation and re-attachment came when centuries-old encrustations -- like the obligation to celebrate synods at specified periods -- were put aside, and the freedom of the diocesan bishop to convoke and guide such an institute was again recognized.<sup>101</sup> Entering into the synodal process as experienced today, participants can gain a sense of connection with both the early Christian community and the entire contemporary Church as well.

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<sup>101</sup>Cf. cc. 461; 463, §2.

Diocesan synods are occasions in which members of the particular church are encouraged to look beyond parochial parameters. When the participants come to an appreciation of the long history of the institute and the developments in it which have been introduced in the revised code, they often tend to assume a greater responsibility for the Church's welfare -- the particular and entire Church. Laity especially often come to see the synod as an officially-sanctioned opportunity to make known their spiritual needs in a manner which, for example, a diocesan pastoral council cannot offer.<sup>102</sup> Thus, those who guide a synodal process should devote sufficient or even significant time and energy to educate synodal participants about the roots of the institute.<sup>103</sup>

Even though a diocesan bishop can issue decrees<sup>104</sup> for the government of the particular church, the synod continues to be a unique and symbolic "venerable institution" for reforming the diocese.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>Cf. c. 212, §2. Cf. also, J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", p. 14.

<sup>103</sup>Cf. P. McINERNEY, "Synod: Some Historical and Canonical Reflections", presentation offered at the orientation meeting for document subcommittees, November 17-18, 1986, Synod Archives, AB, Boston; AB, "Training Session for Program Facilitators of Parish Reflection Sessions", Synod Archives, Boston, 1987, p. 9; DT, "Synod '89: Synod preparation session for Parish Synod Teams", Synod Archives, Toledo, 1989, 24p.

<sup>104</sup>Cf. cc. 29-34.

<sup>105</sup>Cf. J. CORIDEN, "The Diocesan Synod: An Instrument of Renewal for the Local Church", in *The Jurist*, 34 (1974), pp. 69, 91.

## 2. Vis-a-vis other diocesan consultative bodies

Before the increased number of consultative bodies<sup>106</sup> to the bishop were established, the college of consultors would usually have been considered the official "senate or council" to advise him.<sup>107</sup> The synod was that special body convened by the bishop which would discuss and adopt special measures for the welfare of the particular church.<sup>108</sup> Statutes to guide the future organizational operation of the diocese were usually enacted in that forum. In light of all the current consultative bodies, though, are synods still necessary?

According to the code, the presbyteral council is "to be like a senate of the bishop, representing the presbyterate... to aid the bishop in the governance of the diocese..."<sup>109</sup> Besides those duties mentioned in Book V of the code, the diocesan finance council is "to prepare each year... a budget of the income and expenditures foreseen for the governance of the entire diocese in the coming year; moreover at the

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<sup>106</sup>Although the current code requires the bishop to establish only a presbyteral council (c. 495, §1), a college of consultors (c. 502, §1), and a diocesan finance council (c. 492, §1), many dioceses do have a pastoral council (c. 511) and other consultative bodies. Some dioceses have a deacons' council, a sisters' council, a diocesan educational council, and other such bodies. Cf. *The Official Catholic Directory*, Wilmette, Illinois, P.J. Kenedy and Sons, 1991, pp. 1-1146.

<sup>107</sup>Cf. c. 391, §1, 1917 *CIC*. (Chapters of canons were extremely rare in the USA).

<sup>108</sup>Cf. F. DONNELLY, *The Diocesan Synod*, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup>Cf. c. 495, §1: "qui tamquam senatus sit Episcopi, presbyterium representans, cuius est Episcopum in regimine dioecesis... adiuvare..."

close of the year it is to examine a report of receipts and expenditures.<sup>110</sup> The college of consultors serves in varying capacities in the particular church.<sup>111</sup> Normally, though, it advises the bishop regarding certain acts he wishes to place, and at times the diocesan bishop needs their consent to act validly.<sup>112</sup> If one exists, the diocesan pastoral council "is to investigate... all those things which pertain to pastoral works, to ponder them and to propose practical conclusions about them."<sup>113</sup> Each of the consultative bodies has its respective role. Practically speaking, though, their responsibilities will occasionally overlap.<sup>114</sup>

One could argue that, by offering the bishop assistance in the governance of the diocese, the presbyteral council fulfills some of those responsibilities entrusted to the synod. One could also observe that, by investigating those things which deal

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<sup>110</sup>C. 493: "consilii a rebus oeconomicis est quotannis... rationem appare quaestuum et erogationem quae pro universo dioecesis regimine anno venturo praevidentur, necnon, anno exeunte, rationem accepti et expensi probare."

<sup>111</sup>Cf. cc. 377, §3; 382, §3; 404, §3; 413, §2; 419; 421, §1; 422.

<sup>112</sup>Cf. c. 127, §1. Cf. also cc. 272; 485; 494, §1; 1018, §1, 2<sup>o</sup>; 1277; 1292, §1.

<sup>113</sup>C. 511: "ea quae opera pastoralia in dioecesi spectant investigare, perpendere atque de eis conclusiones practicas proponere."

<sup>114</sup>For insight into the role of the presbyteral and pastoral councils in assisting the bishop in an advisory capacity on diocesan matters, cf. also I. FÜRER, "De Synodo Dioeciesana", pp. 130-131; CONGREGATION DU CLERGÉ, "Les conseils pastoraux", in *La documentation catholique*, 70 (1973), pp. 758-761; S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod in the United States of America*, p. 18; J. PROVOST, "The Working Together of Consultative Bodies - Great Expectations?", in *The Jurist*, 40 (1980), pp. 257-281; G. CORBELLINI, *Il Sinodo Dioecesano nel Nuovo Codex Iuris Canonici*, pp. 214-224.

with pastoral works, the diocesan pastoral council acts in a fashion similar to the synodal body. Although, *officially*, none of the above mentioned consultative groups entertains all the matters assigned to the diocesan synod, in fact, taken as a whole, depending upon the particular diocese, they may.<sup>115</sup> What is that distinguishing role of the synod when it comes to future diocesan planning?

a. Larger number of participants

When it comes to sheer numbers, the diocesan synod usually differs from the other consultative groupings. The unique dynamic that is engendered by the gathering of such a large diocesan representation is not easily recreated when the other individual bodies convene. Even though the convocation of a larger number may pose a difficulty, the benefits may be found in greater and more diverse input from the assembled. Dissonant voices may also be more readily heard.

b. Symbolic value

The symbolic value of the entire process is something which cannot be duplicated in the work of the individual consultative groups. The synodal work,

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<sup>115</sup>Cf. S. FERRARI, "Diritto Canonico e Vita della Chiesa: Introduzione allo Studio della Legislacione [sic] sinodale", in *Revista española de Derecho canónico*, 43 (1986), p. 503; M. DORTEL-CLAUDOT, "L'évêque et la synodalité dans le nouveau Code de droit canonique", in *Nouvelle revue théologique*, 106 (1984), pp. 644, 647-654.



extending over one or more years, is often more open and inclusive. This, in turn, helps create a sense of ownership among the participants.

**c. Wider range of topics**

A wider range of topics in a concentrated period of time can be considered by the synod. In the process, participants are led to think in terms of five, ten or more years into the future. This does not always occur in the consultative groups. The interconnection among topics can also be viewed more easily. The combination of these elements can be of great help in future strategic planning.

**d. Ability to be visionary**

It is not uncommon for the various consultative bodies to the bishop to be involved in practical matters which immediately affect them. Occasionally an *ad hoc* committee might investigate a particular topic in depth and report to the entire body so that a policy, for example, might be developed. How often, though, are visionary papers generated by the groups? If they are, the documents may not be comparable to what a synod could produce.

**e. Role of consultative bodies in the synodal context**

Although the diocesan consultative bodies are not usually able to operate on a scale comparable to a diocesan synod, those groups can serve a valuable function

in relation to it. They can help monitor the implementation of the synodal vision and directives. They can advise the bishop over the long period of implementation as to what synodal recommendations and mandates continue to be beneficial for the particular church. The groups can also study, perhaps in greater depth, some of the particular synodal recommendations which, at times, can be rather nebulous. And when the synod is completed these standing consultative bodies can add elements to the vision and directives if necessary.

### **3. A vehicle for promoting greater co-responsibility among the laity**

The synod is such an uncommon event in the life of a particular church. Because of its infrequent celebration, how could it possibly be an effective instrument for promoting greater co-responsibility among the laity in the Church?

When the diocesan survey forms in Boston were returned to the Synod Office the oft-repeated questions on them were: Is this an exercise in futility? Will anyone pay attention to our critiques? Will the reflection sessions make any difference in the final statement?<sup>116</sup> These queries, at least minimally, indicate an interest in the work of the particular church. The fact that such a large number of people cared to reply to the surveys in Boston and Toledo witnesses to some sense of responsibility for their future. And that so many persons in Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo would care to attend consultation sessions throughout the synodal

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<sup>116</sup>Cf. AB, "Synod Update", March, 1988, Synod Archives, Boston, p. 2.

processes shows that the Christian faithful are indeed beginning to assume greater responsibility for the Church's welfare when given the opportunity to do so.<sup>117</sup>

Even though diocesan synods in the United States are rather rare events, the intense effort demanded on the part of so many for them to be successful can lead participants to appreciate the value of their own talents and ideas for the diocese.<sup>118</sup> The synod facilitates in a concentrated manner what may take years for other diocesan entities -- such as a pastoral council -- to do. It can acquaint the

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<sup>117</sup>A number of sources from the early Church to Vatican II have demonstrate that throughout history the laity have, to some degree, assumed co-responsibility for the welfare of the particular church. Cf. CYPRIAN, Epist. XIV, nos. 1-4, in *S. Thrasci Caecilii Opera Omnia*, G. Hartel, ed., in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. 3, Vindobonae, 1866, p. 739; CONCILIIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia: 'Lumen gentium'" (hereafter: *LG*), nn. 33 and 37, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (hereafter: *AAS*), 57 (1965), pp. 39 and 42; S. O'CONNOR, *The Structure of a Post-Conciliar Diocesan Synod*, pp. 77-118. Cf. also H. AYRINHAC, *Constitution of the Church in the New Code of Canon Law*, New York, Longmans, Green and Co., 1929, p. 197; I. FÜRER, "De Synodo Dioecesana", p. 122.

Cf. also CONCILIIUM VATICANUM SECUNDUM, "Decretum de Apostolatu laicorum: 'Apostolicam actuositatem'" (hereafter: *AA*), in *AAS*, 58, (1966), pp. 838-839; *LG*, n. 10, in *AAS* 57 (1965), p. 14; "Decretum de Pastoralis Episcoporum Munere in Ecclesia: 'Christus Dominus'", n. 16, in *AAS*, 58 (1966), pp. 680-681; O. TER REGEN, "The Rights of the Laity", in *Concilium*, vol. 38, pp. 19-20; H. SCHMITZ, "Die Diözesansynode," pp. 444-454; H. SCHMITZ, "Die Diözesansynode: Ihre geplante Zukunft in kirchenrechtlicher Sicht", in *Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht*, 144 (1975), pp. 444-454.

<sup>118</sup>Cf. J. DURAND, "Un regain d'intérêt en France pour les synodes diocésains: Expériences et perspectives", paper presented at the VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international de droit canonique, Paris, September 21-28, 1990, p. 5: "Si le synode... peut être une véritable école des ministères, le synode peut en effet favoriser considérablement la perception par une large frange du Peuple de Dieu que la participation au pouvoir dans l'Eglise peut être très profonde et très complète sans toutefois connaître toutes les procédures en vigueur dans la société civile."

participants -- especially the laity -- with the Church's teaching and internal organizational structure as they enter into consultation on the documents.<sup>119</sup> As they come to experience the equality that exists among them,<sup>120</sup> the result may well be tension;<sup>121</sup> but this tension is a healthy sign. It manifests an interest, an ownership, a love for the Church. Apathy is what is to be feared.

The synod, then, can act as a spark to ignite dormant interest in the Church. For those who already possess a sense of co-responsibility for the Church's future, a synod can be the occasion in which faith in the ecclesiastical structure is tested and hopefully strengthened.

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<sup>119</sup>Cf. *LG*, nn. 30 and 33, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), pp. 37 and 39; *AA*, nn. 2 and 3, in *AAS* 58 (1966), pp. 838-840; *DPME*, n. 95, p. 96.

One of the practical by-products of the Toledo census and survey was the establishment of parish evangelization teams to visit alienated and non-practicing Catholics. Prior to the visitation, the teams were prepared through the Office of Evangelization. Cf. *DT*, "Evangelization: Suggestions and Helps", Synod Archives, Toledo, 15p; *DT*, *Diocese of Toledo Work-Plan*, Synod Archives, Toledo, pp. 82-83. Cf. also J. PROVOST, "The Ecclesiological Nature and Function of the Diocesan Synod in the Real Life of the Church", pp. 17-18.

<sup>120</sup>Cf. *LG*, n. 32, in *AAS*, 57 (1965), p. 38; *Communicationes*, 1 (1969), pp. 82-83; c. 208.

<sup>121</sup>Cf. J. FUENTES CABALLERO, "El sínodo diocesano", in *Ius canonicum*, 21 (1981), p. 565.

### Conclusion

Why have the vast majority of contemporary authors who have written on the subject of diocesan synods not addressed in any depth the implementation of the declarations and decrees signed by the bishop? Is this aspect considered to be less important in their estimation? Or is it simply assumed that the implementation will occur in a timely fashion?

In an earlier period, when statutes were the products of a synod, perhaps their publication was sufficient in the practical operation of the particular church. Maybe their acceptance was just taken for granted. The purpose of the synod -- as witnessed especially in the United States today -- often extends far beyond the promulgation of statutes.<sup>122</sup> The vision and directives in many synodal documents demand significant and constant attention. Surely practical matters are still addressed; not as separate entities, but as part of a broader diocesan picture. The acceptance of the vision and directives cannot be simply assumed.

The short history of diocesan synods subsequent to the Second Vatican Council may not permit many specific observations to be made about the

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<sup>122</sup>It is not uncommon for some writers to consider the signing of the documents to be the end of the synodal process. Cf. *ibid.*: "Por fin, con la asistencia del clero más representativo de la ciudad episcopal -- cabildo y párrocos -- y de las autoridades civiles, tenía lugar la solemne promulgación y publicación de las nuevas sinodales. Era el acto final de todo un proceso, de intereses comunes, de esfuerzos conjuntados, de tensiones superadas."

implementary phase. Nonetheless, it can be safely said that if equal or even greater emphasis is not placed upon the synodal implementation as was exerted in the preparatory and celebratory phases, the institute may soon fall into an even greater desuetude than existed before the Council. Many will simply say, "Why bother?"

In Boston, New Orleans, and Toledo the value of the entire synodal experience continues to be judged in light of the commitment of those responsible for its implementation. As their dedication to the process bears fruit in spiritual and structural renewal in the diocese, many former skeptics slowly consider the experience to have been a worthwhile one. At the same time, as more and more in the diocese reflect upon the synodal vision and recommendations and develop a long-range perspective about their implementation, they become excited about the possibilities for personal and ecclesial growth which lie before them. To promote this long-range thinking, comparisons are being made continually to the implementation of the documents of Vatican II. As people recognize that the process continues in the world-wide Church twenty-five years after the Council, they realize the same must happen in the particular church.

## **CONCLUSION**

**For a long period of the Church's history, synods were expected to be ordinary events in the life of a diocese. But the fact is that in most locations the institute became an extraordinary occurrence. Although they were designed to be of practical value to the bishop in the governance of the diocese, many post-Vatican II synods, at least in the United States, have developed beyond that initial aim to include a more visionary character. Because of their relative infrequency and expanded scope, diocesan synods today appear to be analogous to ecumenical councils. Their preparation and celebration now usually demand far greater attention than before Vatican II. Their fuller implementation also extends over a longer period of time. In addition, the inclusion of laity as members of the synod reflects a greater understanding of the contribution they have a right and duty to offer to the Church. In light of these developments, what could be said about the future of diocesan synods?**

**Under the current code, it is safe to say that synods will continue to be varied in character. Some dioceses will choose to structure their synods as in the past and develop statutes for the good order of the particular church. This might be the case especially in those places where a diocesan pastoral council does not exist. At the same time, where such councils do exist, an increasing number of synods may well concentrate on particularizing the Church's universal vision and mission and on**

long-range planning. Although the Church is not a business, many of the techniques utilized in the world of commerce, such as strategic planning, have been proven to be of great value in the ecclesial sphere. If this latter variety of synods is successful, they might take on a more permanent character in the diocese, thus establishing what the former law was unable to do. If they are permanent, though, large assemblies, such as the one held in Toledo, may not be possible because of the cost, time and energy involved; although, it did much for the morale of that particular church.

In terms of additional research, two important items could be studied from a longitudinal perspective. The first deals with the implementary phase of the synod and the second concerns the possibility of the institute becoming a deliberative event instead of a consultative one.

It is really much too early to evaluate the success of the implementary phase of any synod held in the United States since the promulgation of the current code. Granted, some of those synods held subsequent to Vatican II were conducted in the spirit of the Council, i.e., with laity as members, being of a more visionary variety, etc., but implementation was not considered then to be as important an issue as it is today. Then it was often presumed that good will on the part of the Christian faithful would see to a successful implementation.

As we now look back to the period subsequent to the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, it is apparent that some mistakes were made in the manner in



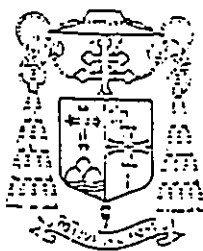
which some conciliar documents were implemented. For example, people were sometimes hurt by well-intentioned but over-zealous implementors. History has hopefully taught us well. The same broader perspective is necessary when it comes to evaluating synodal implementary phases, i.e., the manner of implementation, the personnel involved, etc.

In the event that the diocesan synod does become a more frequent event or even perhaps a permanent institute, the possibility for some sustained tension arises in the particular church. If the recommendations of the participants are regularly not respected or, in most cases, followed, the result could be apathy or disillusion at best. The experience of some diocesan pastoral councils may attest to this. Even though the synodal members recognize the consultative character of the assembly, if they devote significant time and talent to the endeavor, many will expect to be more than heard. At the same time, if the laity are not given an important role in the synodal process, it could well prove to be a useless experience. A service would be done if one would more fully research the possibility and ramifications of the synod becoming a deliberative body in the future.

Finally, this work is meant to be a practical resource for those who are given the task of studying the possibility of holding a synod in their diocese. When they assume this responsibility, in many cases it is like inventing the wheel again. Theoretical information about synods is available. What cannot be easily located is data about *how* the law is applied in the concrete circumstances faced by a

particular church. Hopefully, this work will provide some assistance.

## APPENDIX I: SELECTED EXAMPLES OF BOSTON AND TOLEDO SURVEY INSTRUMENTS



CARDINAL'S RESIDENCE  
2101 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE  
BRIGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02135

October 25, 1976

Dear Friend:

This questionnaire is an invitation to join in the work of the Archdiocesan Synod. By filling out this questionnaire, you will indicate where you feel the Church should focus its attention and energies for the coming years. In this way, you help the Church to plan for the future.

We know, of course, that the Church is not of our creation. So we do not ask ourselves what we want the Church to be; we ask what does the Lord want the Church to be — here, today, in the Archdiocese of Boston.

The Church in Boston does not stand alone; we are joined by a special bond of unity with our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, and we are united in faith and love with all the Churches around the world who are one with the Holy Father. We are guided, therefore, as we plan for the future, by the teaching, tradition, and experience of the whole Church.

As you prepare to fill out this questionnaire, I suggest that you reflect on the principal purpose of the Synod: to focus our attention on Jesus Christ in order to praise Him and to submit to His rule in every aspect of our lives, confident that in Him alone shall we attain true freedom and the fullness of life.

The results of this survey will be shared by me with more than twenty committees who will use the information in preparing a mission statement or plan of action for the Archdiocese. Before this mission statement is presented for final approval, it will be sent to the parishes and people of the Archdiocese for comment.

Please complete the enclosed questions as prayerfully and thoughtfully as possible. After you have completed this form, please return it to your parish or send it to the Synod Office.

Thank you for your important cooperation in this vital work of the Church. I ask that you keep the work of the Synod in your prayers. Implore the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, that we may be faithful disciples of her Son in carrying out His mission.

With warm personal regards and asking God to bless you, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop of Boston

Instructions: Please fill out the questionnaire; be as open and thoughtful as possible. You need not write your name on it.

- The purpose of the questionnaire is to establish priorities.
- The questions are divided into 8 areas.
- There are 6 statements in each area.
- Please choose TWO responses in each area that best reflect your thinking or feeling. Place an (X) in the box next to your choice.
- If one or both of your concerns is/are not reflected in these statements, please add your concerns in the space provided and place an (X) in the box next to your statement.
- There is an additional page for you to express your hopes and expectations for this Archdiocese and your parish.
- The final page asks for some information about yourself. This will be helpful in analyzing the responses according to age groups, vocational status, diocesan regions, education, ethnic background, etc.
- After completing the questionnaire, please return it to your local parish or mail it to:  
 The Synod Office  
 2121 Commonwealth Avenue  
 Brighton, MA 02135.

Many thanks for your help.

REMEMBER: While all the statements may be a concern for you, please choose the TWO that are most important to you at this time.

1. EDUCATION: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  a substantial increase in the priority given to CCD programs for public school children.
- 2.  a realistic program of education for human sexuality based on Catholic teaching.
- 3.  more effort throughout the Archdiocese to raise funds for Catholic schools.
- 4.  a greater involvement of parents and other lay persons on school boards.
- 5.  more of an emphasis on the content of Catholic teaching on every level of Catholic education.
- 6.  religious education programs available to adults in every parish.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

II. EVANGELIZATION COMMUNICATION: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  a greater personal effort made by priests, religious and laity to establish contact with lapsed Catholics and the unchurched.
- 2.  more effective use of the media by the Archdiocese in spreading the Gospel.
- 3.  greater sensitivity in liturgies (Mass and Sacraments), homilies (sermons), and public statements to language offensive to women, racial, and ethnic groups.
- 4.  better sermons; i.e., well prepared, relevant to my life, drawn from the scripture readings of the day.
- 5.  a greater attempt to raise the consciousness of parishioners to the world-wide missionary role of the Church.
- 6.  parish and diocesan outreach programs responsive to the religious needs of persons who are divorced, separated, invalidly married, or others who feel neglected or rejected

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

III. FAMILY: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  much more done by way of church-sponsored assistance to working mothers and single parents.
- 2.  an increase in parish efforts to organize family-centered events.
- 3.  parish programs that enlist volunteers to help families temporarily in need of home assistance because of sickness, disability, etc.
- 4.  special assistance given to parents for the Catholic upbringing of their children and the strengthening of the family.
- 5.  much more done to recognize and foster the spiritual life of married couples and their families.
- 6.  more Archdiocesan resources available to families at times of crisis: substance abuse, critical illness, death, divorce/separation, etc.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

IV. ECUMENICAL AND INTER-RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  more emphasis on prayer, dialogue and cooperation with other Churches and ecclesial communities.
- 2.  programs that would educate Catholics regarding the things which divide us from others, as well as those we share in common.
- 3.  greater cooperation between priests, ministers, and rabbis in areas of concern within the local community.
- 4.  a greater sensitivity and a more substantial support system for mixed marriage families.
- 5.  a greater emphasis on Catholic identity and teaching in ecumenical relations.
- 6.  more effort to eradicate anti-Semitism and to promote Christian/Jewish relations.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

V. PARISH: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  more emphasis on the establishment and utilization of parish councils.
- 2.  greater effort made to involve a wider range of parishioners in the activities of the parish.
- 3.  the establishment of good youth programs in every parish.
- 4.  greater sensitivity of parish priests and staff to the real needs of the laity who face the difficulties of living the Faith in an increasingly secular environment.
- 5.  a detailed periodic report by the Parish Finance Council, concerning the financial situation of the parish: e.g., income, expenses, etc.
- 6.  greater emphasis on family visitations by parish priests, especially at times of death, illness, sacramental moments, etc.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_

VI. MINISTRIES: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  more emphasis on the preparation and formation of individuals for full-time lay ministry.
- 2.  more activity directed toward increasing vocations to the priesthood and religious life.
- 3.  more emphasis on the recognition and utilization of the permanent deacons.
- 4.  greater emphasis on collaborative styles of ministering within the parish: lay men, lay women, religious, deacons and priests.
- 5.  more emphasis given to ministry for those with special needs.
- 6.  better formation for laity who exercise liturgical ministries; e.g., lectors, extraordinary minister of communion.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_

VII. SOCIAL CONCERNS: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  a greater effort to promote equality and justice for women, racial and ethnic minorities, and all who suffer unjust discrimination.
- 2.  a more concerted effort on the part of the Church in addressing social problems such as unemployment, health care, housing, substance abuse, violence, etc.
- 3.  a greater effort to educate the community concerning the evil of abortion.
- 4.  a greater awareness and implementation of the Church's social teaching both within the Church and in the civic community.
- 5.  the establishment of peace and justice committees in each parish.
- 6.  more emphasis in religious education programs on peace issues, the danger of nuclear war and the arms race.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. WORSHIP: I would most like to see: (Check TWO boxes only)

- 1.  the quality of the celebration of Sunday Mass be given top priority in every parish.
- 2.  efforts to help Catholics see the importance of the sacrament of penance in their lives.
- 3.  more appreciation for traditional devotions.
- 4.  special efforts to emphasize the religious nature of weddings, baptisms and funerals.
- 5.  greater openness to and promotion of the newer spiritual movements; e.g., Cursillo, Marriage Encounter, Charismatic Renewal, etc.
- 6.  more emphasis at the parish level on encouraging personal spiritual growth; e.g., missions, spiritual reading libraries, retreats, spiritual direction, etc.

One/both of my concerns is/are not reflected in the above statements. I would most like to see:

- 7.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8.  \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

IX. As I look to the future:

1.  — The ONE thing I would most like to see happen in this Archdiocese is . . .

2.  — The ONE thing I would most like to see happen in my parish is . . .

PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF:

We need this information to evaluate whether we have a representative response among the surveys returned.

- I am —
- Please indicate:
- (A) 1  male ( )  
 2  female
- (B) 1  married ( )  
 2  single  
 3  divorced/separated  
 4  widowed
- (C) 1  under 18 ( )  
 2  18 - 24  
 3  25 - 34  
 4  35 - 44  
 5  45 - 54  
 6  55 - 64  
 7  65 & older
- (D) 1  Layperson ( )  
 2  Sister  
 3  Brother  
 4  Deacon  
 5  Seminarian  
 6  Priest  
 7  Bishop
- (E) Years of education completed: ( )  
 1  1 - 8 (elementary)  
 2  9 - 12 (high school)  
 3  13 - 16 (college/university)  
 4  16+ (graduate school)
- (F) Ethnic/Racial Family Background: ( )  
 1  Asian  
 2  Black  
 3  Caribbean  
 4  European (Irish, Italian, etc.)  
 5  Hispanic  
 6  Middle Eastern  
 7  American Indian
- (G) how often you went to Mass in the last year ( )  
 1  every Sunday or more often  
 2  once or twice a month  
 3  just a few times in the last year  
 4  not at all
- (H) your relationship to the Catholic Church ( )  
 1  very close and comfortable  
 2  fairly close  
 3  not close  
 4  alienated  
 5  angry
- (I) your knowledge of the teachings of the ( )  
 Second Vatican Council  
 1  understand  
 2  partially understand  
 3  unfamiliar
- (J) Which 2 of the Themes are most important: ( )  
 1  Education  
 2  Family  
 3  Evangelization/Communication  
 4  Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs  
 5  Parish  
 6  Ministries  
 7  Social Concerns  
 8  Worship

PARISH \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please do NOT submit more than one of these forms. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.





23. How satisfied are you with the help you have received from your parish in terms of your own spiritual growth?  
(1) very satisfied (2) somewhat satisfied  
(3) not satisfied (4) does not apply
24. How satisfied are you with the work your parish does in terms of sacramental preparation?  
(1) very satisfied (2) somewhat satisfied  
(3) not satisfied (4) I don't know
25. Do you take the instructions of the Pope, bishops and priests as seriously as you did ten years ago?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
26. Please describe your overall knowledge about the Catholic faith.  
(1) it is very complete (2) it is somewhat complete  
(3) it is not adequate (4) I don't know how to judge this
27. Have you ever read any of the documents from the Second Vatican Council/Vatican II?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
28. Do you consider it important that a parish priest visit your home?  
(1) very important (2) important (3) not important
29. Do you consider it important that a member of the parish staff, other than a priest, visit your home?  
(1) very important (2) important (3) not important
30. Are the priests of your parish available to see you at the rectory?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) sometimes  
(4) no regular priest assigned (5) I don't know
31. Do you read the Catholic Chronicle?  
(1) every other week (2) frequently (3) infrequently  
(4) never
32. Do you get helpful information from the Catholic Chronicle?  
(1) much (2) some (3) none
33. If at some point in the future, your parish could not have its own priest, whom would you prefer to lead the regular liturgical celebrations?  
(1) brother (2) deacon (3) lay staff, paid  
(4) lay staff, volunteer (5) priest (6) sister  
(7) any of these (8) none of these
34. Other than a priest, whom would you prefer to lead prayer groups in your parish?  
(1) brother (2) deacon (3) lay staff, paid  
(4) lay staff, volunteer (5) sister (6) any of these  
(7) none of these
35. Other than a priest, whom would you prefer to direct CCD/Religious Education for children in your parish?  
(1) brother (2) deacon (3) lay staff, paid  
(4) lay staff, volunteer (5) sister (6) any of these  
(7) none of these
36. Other than a priest, whom would you prefer to meet your counseling/support needs in times of personal crisis?  
(1) brother (2) deacon (3) lay staff, paid  
(4) lay staff, volunteer (5) sister (6) any of these  
(7) none of these
37. Have you ever participated in any organized "renewal" experience such as RENEW, Marriage Encounter, Christ Renews His Parish, Teens Encounter Christ or Cursillo?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
38. Would you be interested in participating in a small informal group to explore and develop your understanding of your faith?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
39. How often do you go to Mass?  
(1) every week or more (2) two to three times a month  
(3) once a month (4) several times a year  
(5) less than that or never
40. When was the most recent time you received the Sacrament of Penance, (Confession)?  
(1) within the past month (2) within the past year  
(3) more than a year ago
41. Which of the following "styles" of receiving the sacrament of Penance do you prefer?  
(1) privately, with the priest behind a screen  
(2) privately, face to face (3) as a part of a group  
(4) other
42. Which best describes your current situation?  
(1) single, never married (2) single, was married  
(3) married (4) widowed (5) other
43. What is your spouse's religious preference?  
(1) Catholic (2) other denomination  
(3) no religious preference
44. Are any children in your household usually responsible for taking care of themselves and/or other children for a period of time after school before an adult comes home from work?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) does not apply
- Do you agree or disagree with the statements in 45 through 48?
45. Your parish is doing all it can to meet the religious needs of adolescents.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
46. Your parish is doing all it can to meet the religious needs of young adults.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
47. Your parish is doing all it can to meet the social needs (eg. providing a place to gather together) of adolescents.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
48. Your parish is doing all it can to meet the social needs (eg. providing a place to gather together) of young adults.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
49. Have you or a member of your immediate family ever experienced racial discrimination in your parish?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know  
(4) prefer not to answer
50. Have you or a member of your immediate family ever experienced discrimination in your parish because of your ideas?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know (4) does not apply
51. Have you or a member of your immediate family ever experienced discrimination in your parish because of a handicap or disability?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know (4) does not apply  
(5) prefer not to answer
- Do you agree or disagree with the statements in 52 through 60?
52. Being a Catholic is very important to me in my everyday life.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know

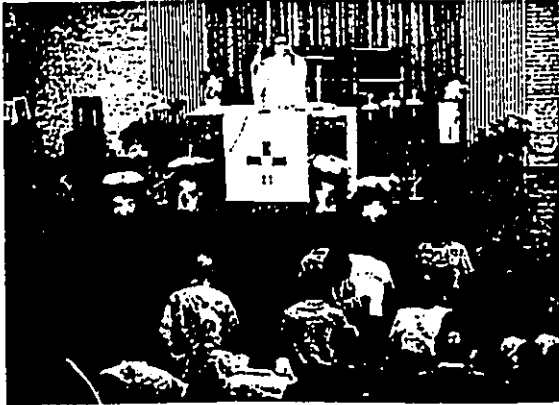
53. My parish meets my need for a faith community very well.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
54. My parish should be more helpful to me in dealing with some "family problem" such as alcoholism, abuse or personal or social relations.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know (7) prefer not to answer
55. My parish should be more helpful to me in my role as a parent trying to raise Catholic children.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
56. Parishioners who experience marriage problems find support and assistance in this parish.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
57. My parish is a force for positive change in my community.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
58. Too many of my parish's services and resources focus on families with children.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
59. Homilies/sermons help me to apply the Gospel to my everyday life.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
60. Because of personal experience, my family can show that an annulment of a marriage can be a very healing experience.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
61. Are you well informed about Natural Family Planning?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) never heard the term
62. Do you think Natural Family Planning is an effective method of birth control?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
63. If you had a son, how would you feel about his becoming a priest?  
(1) I would encourage (2) I would permit but would not encourage (3) I would discourage but permit  
(4) I would not permit
64. If you had a son, how would you feel about his becoming a religious brother?  
(1) I would encourage (2) I would permit but would not encourage (3) I would discourage but permit  
(4) I would not permit
65. If you had a daughter, how would you feel about her becoming a sister?  
(1) I would encourage (2) I would permit but would not encourage (3) I would discourage but permit  
(4) I would not permit
66. Do you favor the participation of priests and nuns in community affairs aimed at solving social problems?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
67. If a social problem affects you or your family (medical, mental, illegitimate pregnancy, unemployment, child-parent troubles), which would you most prefer help from?  
(1) government sponsored agency  
(2) non-sectarian volunteer agency  
(3) Catholic sponsored agency  
(4) any agency with qualified staff
68. Do you think you have been told clearly about the teachings and goals of The Second Vatican Council/Vatican II?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) don't know
69. Do you feel that Vatican II (please choose one)  
(1) did a great deal of good  
(2) didn't settle anything but made steps in the right direction  
(3) started trends in the wrong direction  
(4) made no difference (5) don't know
70. How important to the future work of the Church are programs for training lay ministers?  
(1) very important (2) somewhat important  
(3) not important (4) I don't know
71. How important to the future work of the Church are permanent deacons?  
(1) very important (2) somewhat important  
(3) not important (4) I don't know
72. How important to the future work of the Church are Catholic health care facilities like hospitals and clinics?  
(1) very important (2) somewhat important  
(3) not important (4) I don't know
73. Should your parish be more sensitive to the religious needs of those who are not fluent in the English language?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
74. Do you participate regularly in any civic or community projects that are not directly sponsored by the Catholic Church?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
- Do you agree or disagree with the statements in 75 through 96?
75. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in addressing the needs of the poor.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
76. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in addressing the issue of improving substandard housing conditions.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
77. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in addressing the issue of AIDS by supporting AIDS education programs.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
78. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in addressing the needs of migrant workers.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
79. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in working to eliminate racism.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
80. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in addressing the problems of farmers.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know

81. It is appropriate for my parish and its members to be actively involved in addressing the issues of nuclear disarmament.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
82. The Church's position on social justice issues is very important to my sense of being a Catholic.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
83. The future work of the Church would be greatly benefited by the ordination of women.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
84. The future work of the Church would be greatly benefited by the ordination of married persons.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
85. Priests who are unhappy in their "state of life" are an important reason why young men are not choosing that vocation.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
86. Sisters who are unhappy in their "state of life" are an important reason why young women are not choosing that vocation.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
87. Parents who discourage religious vocations are an important reason why young people are not choosing that way of life.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
88. Friends who discourage religious vocations are an important reason why young people are not choosing that way of life.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
89. A powerful trend toward materialism is an important reason why young people are not choosing religious vocations.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
90. The Church's rule about celibacy is an important reason why young people are not choosing religious vocations.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
91. I would be willing to increase my financial contributions to my parish in order to provide more support for my parish school.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) does not apply  
(6) I don't know
92. Catholic elementary schools are an essential part of the Church's educational mission.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
93. The salaries of the teachers in parish schools should be equal to salaries of teachers in local public schools.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
94. The need for Catholic elementary schools is as great now as it was twenty-five years ago.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know
95. The need for adult religious education, other than classroom instruction, is very great in our parish.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know  
(6) does not apply
96. The need for adult religious education in our own homes using video tapes or cable TV or some such method is very great.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know  
(6) does not apply
97. Should the Diocese of Toledo continue to expect people to support Catholic High Schools?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
98. Should the Diocese of Toledo continue to expect people to support Catholic Elementary Schools?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
99. Please select the one most important advantage of enrolling a child in a Catholic Elementary or High School.  
(1) Christian formation (2) better discipline  
(3) higher academic standards  
(4) more favorable atmosphere  
(5) other (6) no advantage
100. Please select the one most important criticism you have regarding the Catholic School system.  
(1) cost (2) teacher qualification (3) facilities  
(4) athletics (5) distance (6) other (7) no criticism
101. Does your parish have its own elementary school?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
102. If you have any children who are either in high school or will be going to high school within the next five years, would you choose to send them to a Catholic high school?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) does not apply (4) I don't know
103. If you have any preschool children, or anticipate having any within three years or so, would you choose to send them to a Catholic elementary school?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) does not apply (4) I don't know
104. Should the Diocese provide financial help so that children from needy families can attend a Catholic school?  
(1) yes (2) no
105. Have you participated in campus ministry programs on any college campuses within the last five years?  
(1) yes, in the diocese (2) yes, outside the diocese  
(3) no (4) does not apply
106. Was the experience very satisfying, somewhat satisfying or not satisfying?  
(1) very satisfying (2) somewhat satisfying  
(3) not satisfying (4) cannot answer  
(5) not applicable
107. Did participating in a campus ministry program make your participation in your regular parish more satisfying, less satisfying or did it make no difference?  
(1) more satisfying (2) less satisfying  
(3) no difference (4) not applicable
108. Do you have any children in Catholic schools now?  
(1) yes, elementary only (2) yes, high school only  
(3) yes, college only (4) yes, elementary and high school  
(5) yes, elementary and college (6) yes, high school and college  
(7) yes, elementary and high school and college (8) no (9) does not apply
109. If any in elementary, is that school in this parish?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know

110. Do you have any children who are attending a religious education or CCD program or have attended one in the past five years?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
111. If yes to 110, is that program in this parish?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
112. Do you feel that the religious education program for public school children in your parish is?  
(1) excellent (2) adequate (3) inadequate  
(4) I don't know (5) we don't have one
- Do you agree or disagree with the statements in 113 through 116?
113. The teachers in the Religious Education/CCD program in my parish are well prepared.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know  
(6) does not apply
114. The parents of children in my Religious Education/CCD program are very supportive.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know  
(6) does not apply
115. The Religious Education/CCD program in my parish has a very positive effect on students.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know  
(6) does not apply
116. Our parish resources need to be expanded to provide more non-school education programs for young people and adults.  
(1) agree strongly (2) agree (3) disagree  
(4) disagree strongly (5) I don't know  
(6) does not apply
117. How well informed are you about parish finances?  
(1) very well informed (2) pretty well informed  
(3) not well informed
118. What is the approximate amount of financial offering you make when you go to Mass?  
(1) less than \$3 (2) \$3 to \$4.99 (3) \$5 to \$7.99  
(4) \$8 to \$9.99 (5) \$10 to \$14.99 (6) \$15 to \$19.99  
(7) \$20 to \$24.99 (8) \$25 to \$34.99 (9) \$35 or more  
(0) no regular financial offering
119. What is the approximate amount you gave to the Diocesan Development Fund in 1986?  
(1) \$112 (2) \$182 (3) \$252 (4) \$322  
(5) \$462 (6) \$742 (7) none
120. Approximately what percentage of your gross household income did you give to other Catholic charities in 1986?  
(1) 10% or more (2) 6% to 9% (3) 3% to 5%  
(4) 1% to 2% (5) less than 1%  
(6) prefer not to respond
121. Approximately what percentage of your gross household income did you give to charities not related to the Catholic Church in 1986?  
(1) 10% or more (2) 6% to 9% (3) 3% to 5%  
(4) 1% to 2% (5) less than 1%  
(6) prefer not to respond
122. Do you participate in the Sacrificial Giving or Tithing Program which is being used in your parish?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) it is not used in our parish  
(4) I've never heard of it
123. Do you need more information about how the money collected by the Diocesan Development Fund is used or are you well informed?  
(1) yes, I need information (2) no, I am well informed
124. Have you included or do you plan to include your parish in your will?  
(1) yes (2) not yet, but I want to  
(3) no, I don't know how (4) no, I do not plan to  
(5) I prefer not to answer
125. Would you consider a gift of life insurance, real estate, stocks and bonds to help your parish or diocese establish an endowment fund or foundation?  
(1) yes (2) it depends on what the fund is for  
(3) no (4) I have no such resources
126. In which of the following age groups do you fit?  
(1) less than 14 (2) 14 to 16 (3) 17 to 20 (4) 21 to 25  
(5) 26 to 30 (6) 31 to 40 (7) 41 to 50 (8) 51 to 60  
(9) over 60
127. In which of the following "U.S. Census Groups" would you place yourself?  
(1) white (2) black (3) hispanic (4) Asian  
(5) Other
128. How many years have you lived in the Toledo diocese?  
(1) less than 5 (2) 5 to 10 (3) 11 to 15  
(4) 16 to 20 (5) more than 20
129. How many years have you lived in your present parish?  
(1) less than 5 (2) 5 to 10 (3) 11 to 15  
(4) 16 to 20 (5) more than 20
130. Are there any persons living in your household who have a disability or handicap of any kind?  
(1) yes (2) no
131. Are you a registered member of a parish?  
(1) yes (2) no (3) I don't know
132. Would you call yourself a  
(1) very strong Catholic (2) somewhat strong Catholic  
(3) not a strong Catholic
133. What is the highest grade level of education you have reached?  
(1) high school graduate or less (2) some college  
(3) college graduate (4) some post graduate work  
(5) post graduate work
134. How many total years of Catholic schooling have you had?  
(1) less than 5 (2) 5 to 8 (3) 9 to 11  
(4) 12 to 15 (5) more than 15
135. Which of the following categories best describes your household income last year?  
(1) less than \$10,000 (2) \$10,000 to \$19,999  
(3) \$20,000 to \$49,999 (4) \$50,000 to \$69,999  
(5) more than \$70,000
136. Indicate your sex:  
(1) male (2) female

## APPENDIX II: EXTRACT FROM BOSTON SYNODAL DOCUMENTS AND STATUTES

### Worship



*"It is through the liturgy that Catholics are able to express in their lives and manifest to others the nature of the Church."*

According to the Second Vatican Council, it is through the liturgy—most specifically in the sacrifice of the Eucharist—that the work of our redemption is accomplished and celebrated. It is through the liturgy that Catholics are able to express in their lives and manifest to others the nature of the Church.

The Synod reminds Catholics, as they gather to worship, that having become one in Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit for the glory of the Father, they are called to be full participants in the assembly of the faithful. Initiation into Christ begins for most Catholics at baptism in infancy and continues as a lifetime process. For some others, incorporation into Christ's life begins with their participation in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. For the entire assembly of the faithful, however, life in Christ is renewed and reinforced in the paschal mystery, celebrated in a special way in the Easter Vigil.

It is this paschal mystery which Catholics celebrate in gathering for Sunday Mass. It is this same paschal mystery which lies at the heart of the morning and evening prayer of the Church, the celebration of the Sacraments, other prayers and devotions.

Effective Sunday worship calls for the proclamation and preaching of the Word, understanding and observance of the liturgical rites and directives, theological appreciation of the sacred mysteries celebrated, an understanding of the ritual process, including the role of art and music and commitment of resources and personnel to this end. The fullness of parish worship requires that the local community address the cultural diversity which may exist within the parish.

The people who gather for Mass as the believing community are the Body of Christ at worship. Baptized in Christ, they offer themselves as a spiritual sacrifice and offer also Christ's own sacrifice, rendered present sacramentally through the ministry of the ordained priest. Ac-

ording to the Second Vatican Council baptized believers at worship fulfill their liturgical role through "that full, conscious, and active participation...which is demanded by the nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people...have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism."<sup>1</sup>

Implementing this reality calls for some practical considerations. Catholics of every era have built churches for the celebration of the sacred mysteries. According to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, church buildings should "be suited to celebrating the liturgy and to ensuring the active participation of the faithful" (n. 253). Therefore, it becomes the task of every generation to maintain, renovate or replace these physical supports to the life of faith, while maintaining a balance between the beauty appropriate for divine worship and the simplicity of the Church which follows Jesus of Nazareth.

The Archdiocese of Boston has long been a part of the liturgical renewal of the twentieth century. Before the Second Vatican Council, the Sacramental Apostolate called clergy, laity and religious to study and reflection. After the Council, the Liturgical Commission was established to address and implement liturgical changes promulgated by the Council. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Collaborating Committee was established in 1978 and has assisted parishes in implementing the newly promulgated Rite. Most recently, a pastoral letter of Cardinal Law addressed the Sunday Mass and established the Office for Worship.

Parish response to liturgical renewal has included programs of liturgical catechesis; an improved quality of participation in Sunday Mass; the calling of men and women to liturgical ministries; training liturgical ministers both spiritually and functionally; improved use of music to enhance liturgical celebrations; and renovation of sanctu-

aries and assembly space for maximum participation in worship.

On the other hand, a number of concerns remain to be addressed:

- An increasing number of Catholics absent themselves from Sunday Mass.
- Parish Mass schedules that have become unrealistic because of population shifts make community worship difficult.
- A significant number of Catholics are uneasy about liturgical renewal, according to the Synod survey. This points to a continuing need for catechesis and sensitivity.
- A number of parishes have been exclusive in their selection of candidates for liturgical ministries, and some parishes have not developed the level of preparation and support needed for their liturgical ministers.
- Some parishes have yet to consider physical changes in their churches. Archdiocesan direction and training are necessary here to help parishes do an extensive evaluation of their worship space—both sanctuary and assembly areas—over the next several years.

### *The Synod Calls*

1. Each Person in the Archdiocese
  - a. To recognize the gift of life in Christ and to make prayer, Scripture and the Sacraments central in their lives.
  - b. To participate fully in Sunday Mass each week.
  - c. To experience the grace of conversion and forgiveness regularly in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
  - d. To give witness to the significance of the Sabbath rest, not only in word but also by example.
2. Each Parish
  - a. To give first priority to the celebration of the Sunday Mass. This includes:
    - Prayerful preparation and delivery of a homily that flows from the Scriptures read at Mass and that applies to the daily life of parishioners.
    - Attention to both the rubrics and a ritual style that is prayerful, simple and suited to the people gathered.
    - Attentive listening to the Word that is proclaimed with a clarity of voice and expression.
    - Celebration of Communion in a manner that allows the ritual its fullness, with the Body of Christ received in bread consecrated at the Mass. The cup of the Blood of Christ is to be distributed in accord with the discipline of the Church and appropriate pastoral considerations.
    - Recognition of music as normative, with preparation of the congregation for singing and provision of the necessary music.

- b. To consider carefully when calling persons to liturgical ministry the talents necessary for the ministry, and to be inclusive of all in the parish when matching talents and ministry needs.
  - c. To introduce the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.
  - d. To arrange over the next several years for an in-depth evaluation of the environment for worship (sanctuary and main body of the Church) with the help of competent persons. This evaluation should include consideration of audio systems and attention to the needs of people with disabilities.
  - e. To respect copyright laws and the requirements of justice to those who publish music.
3. The Office for Worship
    - a. To assist parishes in their efforts to give first priority to the celebration of Sunday Mass, especially by providing formation and education programs for liturgical ministers.
    - b. To assist parishes in the preparation of a salary scale and guidelines for evaluation of professional musicians/liturgists.
    - c. To assist parishes and institutions in evaluating the liturgical environment and in deciding upon necessary improvements.
    - d. To publish annually an Archdiocesan liturgical calendar.
  4. The Seminaries, Office of Permanent Diaconate and Pastoral Institute to provide training for candidates to Orders and those already ordained, not only in rubrics but also in the development of an effective ritual style. Included in this curriculum should be sufficient attention to preaching, sacred art, architecture and music.
  5. The Catholic School Office and Office of Religious Education to provide training and formation for worship for all age levels as an integral part of the curriculum. Included in this curriculum should be sufficient attention to sacred art, architecture and music.

### NOTES

1. *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium* December 4, 1963), Vol. 1, par. 14, pp. 7-8

BOOK III  
THE TEACHING OFFICE OF THE CHURCH

**III - 1**

The entire Church, clergy, religious and laity, is to hear and respond to the Gospel which has been entrusted to the Church by Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

**III - 2**

All Catholics, in accord with each one's own condition and function, are entrusted with the common mission of spreading the Gospel and calling others to faith in Jesus Christ.

**III - 3**

The bishops, in communion with the Holy Father and one another, are the authentic teachers and instructors of the faith. They speak in the name of Christ and the Church. Catholics are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with religious assent.

**III - 4**

Catholics, by reason of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, are to give witness to the Gospel message by the word and example of their Christian lives.

**III - 5**

Bishops, priests and deacons have as one of their principal duties the preaching of the Gospel. A preeminent form of this is the homily which is part of the liturgy itself and is reserved to the priest or deacon.

By means of the homily, the mysteries of the faith and the norms of Christian living are to be expounded from the sacred texts throughout the course of the liturgical year.

**III - 6**

Bishops, priests and deacons are to set aside sufficient time each week to prepare homilies that are rich in substance, relevant to the lives of their listeners, and responsive to the needs of the times.

**III - 7**

The pastor is to see to it that a homily is given at all Masses celebrated on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. It may not be omitted without serious reason.

At Masses celebrated during the week it is strongly recommended that a homily be given, especially during Advent and Lent.

**III - 8**

Pastors, in consultation with the parish staff, are to arrange, in accord with Archdiocesan norms, for other types of preaching, such as spiritual exercises and missions.



Forums that provide for the people of the parish an increased prayerful awareness and understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, as well as other areas of religious education and formation, are strongly recommended.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### III - 9

Parents have the primary right and obligation to educate and form their children in the faith and practice of the Christian life by word and example. They are to see to it, especially, that their minor children receive a Catholic education in the home as well as in either Catholic schools or other approved religious education programs.

### III - 10

The catechetical ministry of religious educators is to proclaim and teach the doctrines of the mysteries of our Catholic faith, to enable people to worship, to share and foster community and to motivate people to loving service of others.

### III - 11

Pastors, in consultation with the parish staff, are to make provision for catechetical instruction and formation in the Catholic faith for children and young people, with continuing advanced programs being provided for adults.

### III - 12

Pastors are to ensure that those persons to whom the ministry of catechesis is entrusted are adequately prepared in accord with the Archdiocesan policy for certification of catechists.

### III - 13

All who are called to assist in catechetical work are to accept the responsibility willingly. They are to carry it out, in accord with Archdiocesan norms, so that the faith of children, young people and adults will be enlightened, developed and strengthened.

### III - 14

Pastors, in consultation with the parish staff, are to provide specific preparation programs for the sacraments of initiation, penance and marriage.

Programs which are directed to children are to be family centered, involving parents as much as possible.

### III - 15

Pastors, in consultation with the parish staff, are to provide instruction concerning the principal issues of peace and justice, based on the social teachings of the Church.

# APPENDIX III: EXTRACTS FROM NEW ORLEANS SYNODAL DOCUMENTS

## CHAPTER I

### THE PEOPLE OF GOD

#### Part One

#### THE LAITY

#### Introduction

People are by nature spiritual and social beings. They are motivated by an urgent need to exercise a voice in the functions of the societies to which they belong. Grace does not frustrate human nature; rather, it supports, builds upon and perfects it. Therefore, the Archdiocesan Synod supports the participation by members of the laity in meaningful roles of consultation and, where possible, of decision making in the life of the Archdiocesan community.

The concepts contained in this section are intended to supplement the general provisions of the Code of Canon Law by addressing the specific needs and aspirations as well as the responsibilities of the laity in this Archdiocese.

#### A. THE CHURCH AND THE FAMILY

##### 1. Pro-Life

The mission of being the primary vital cell of society has been given to the family by God Himself (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People). The family is what may be regarded as the domestic Church (Pastoral Constitution on The Church in the Modern World).

Any reference to Church and family begins with the concept that the family is where life, both spiritual and physical, begins and is

nurtured. Our concept of Pro-Life must convey our concern for safeguarding life in all its forms. It must be a concern which lasts from conception until death, embracing at all levels both the quality of life and the dignity of life. The defense of the right to life and the dignity of life of even the weakest among us must be equally discernible in support of the old as well as of the unborn.

With these concepts in mind, the Synod mandates that:

1. The U. S. Bishops' "Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities (1975)" be hereby reaffirmed and endorsed (Appendix A).
2. Pro-Life activities within the Archdiocese embrace all phases of life from conception until death.
3. The Archdiocese continue to review school policies regarding student pregnancies in the light of its Pro-Life stance.

The Synod also recommends that:

4. The Archdiocese encourage programs dealing with Pro-Life activities in parishes, schools, institutions and agencies.

## 2. Role of the Church in Parenting

The family finds in the plan of God not only its identity but also its mission. In God's plan the family has been established as an intimate community of life and love. Hence the family has the mission to guard, reveal, and communicate love; this is a living reflection of a real sharing in God's love for humanity and the love of Christ for the Church (The Family in the Modern World).

It is within the family that a person learns to live in community, to know the living God, to serve life, to participate in the development of society, and to share in the life and mission of the Church.

Because the form of the family and of the world itself is rapidly changing today, the Synod mandates that:

1. The U. S. Bishops' "Plan for Pastoral Action for Family Ministry: A Vision and Strategy (1978)" be hereby reaffirmed and endorsed. (Appendix B)

The Synod also recommends that:

2. Special attention be paid by the archdiocesan and parish Family Life Ministries to
  - (a) single-parent families and families in which one or both of the parents have been remarried;
  - (b) families with disabled parents or children;
  - (c) minority families; and
  - (d) working mothers.
3. Curricula on Marriage and Family Living be instituted at the elementary and high school levels; and that the beauty and goodness of human sexuality be a primary focus of such curricula.

### 3. Reaching and Involving Young People

Youth Ministry, as understood in terms of mission and ministry of the Church, should enjoy a high priority in the Archdiocese. Study after study of family life in America reveals the effects which the changes in our society are having on young people. The consequences of divorce and single parenting, the presence of drugs, alcohol, and physical abuse in the home, and the heavy emphasis on sex and violence on television all add up to confuse and distress our youth. Young people are crying out for love, understanding, and guidance.

Despite all these negative influences confronting them, we find the vast majority of youth developing their gifts and potentials. We see them building friendships, growing in empathy for the less fortunate, and turning back to traditional family values. Pope John Paul II expressed his trust and confidence in young people when he said "We are

all looking to you, for all of us, thanks to you, in a certain sense become young again... You young people are the bearers of the yearning for brotherhood and widespread solidarity." (To the Youth of the World, 1985)

In full commitment to our Ministry to Youth, the Synod mandates that:

1. The U. S. Bishops' document "A Vision of Youth Ministry (1976)" be hereby reaffirmed and endorsed as central to youth ministry in the Archdiocese (Appendix C).

The Synod also recommends that:

2. Seminaries offer training in Youth Ministry to seminarians as part of their formation; pastors and associates encourage and support Youth Ministry in their parishes; and youths who are handicapped or disadvantaged, as well as youths who are students in public schools, be included, as far as possible, in archdiocesan and parish youth programs.

3. Efforts be made to afford opportunities for young people throughout the Archdiocese to gather for social, educational, spiritual, and athletic activities.

4. Parishes become aware of the developmental faith stages of youth and include them, at the appropriate time, in the liturgical and community life of the parish.

#### 4. Ministry to Single/Widowed/Divorced/Remarried

As a caring and healing body, the Church must minister to all her people. Because of the traumatic effects on the faithful resulting from separation or divorce or from the death of a spouse, the Church must exert every effort to provide comfort and healing for widowed, divorced and remarried Catholics in a ministry of compassionate love. With a view to achieving this, the Synod mandates that:

1. The Archdiocese endorse and continue the work of its existing ministry to single, widowed, divorced, and remarried Catholics.

The Synod also recommends that:

2. This ministry communicate to those affected that their Church shares in their anguish and welcomes them into the life of the parish community.

#### 5. The Extended Family

Christians are called upon to respect and support the inherent dignity of each person in every family situation. The gifts and contributions of elderly and handicapped family members cannot be ignored, nor can the situation of those without any family connections.

In many nations of the world, the elderly enjoy a unique position in society. Far from being outcasts from the family, or merely tolerated as a useless burden, such persons continue to be present and take, as far as they can, an active and responsible part in family life. The life of the aging helps us better to understand a certain scale of human values. It shows the continuity of generations and marvelously demonstrates the interdependence of all God's people. The elderly often have the charism which enables them to bridge generation gaps: how many children, for instance, have found understanding and love in the eyes and words and caresses of the aging? And how many old people have willingly subscribed to the inspiring thought that the crown of the aged is their children's children?

There also exist countless people who, for one reason or another, cannot in any sense claim membership in a family. Yet Pope John Paul II reminds us: "For those who have no natural family, the doors of the great family which is the Church must be opened even wider. The Church is a home and a family for everyone, especially those who labor and are heavy laden" (The Family in the Modern World).

With these precepts in mind, the Synod mandates that:

1. The Archdiocese and its parishes clearly recognize in concrete actions the value and gifts which the elderly, the handicapped, and those without family bring to society, to the Church and to the family.

The Synod also recommends that:

2. The role of grandparents in the formation of grandchildren be encouraged.

#### 6. Associations in the Church

The life and work of the Church must be grounded in a deep spirituality and the People of God must look to their priests as examples for growth in holiness. The administrative role in parish life should be a shared and cooperative effort of all. It does not serve the Church's mission and purpose to have its priests so occupied with administrative duties that they cannot exercise their role as spiritual leaders.

Associations within the Church (those distinct from Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life), allow the Christian faithful, both clergy and laity, to strive by common effort to promote a more perfect life and foster public worship and Christian doctrine. The purpose of these associations is to engage in efforts toward evangelization, to exercise works of piety and charity, and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit.

#### B. WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

A basic tenet of our faith is that woman and man are made in the image and likeness of God. The Church when considered as the primordial sacrament reveals an image of God which is characterized in both its life and mission by the mutuality of man and woman. It is within

the creativity of this mutuality that the fullness of the image of God is most completely expressed (Gen. 1:27).

The Son of God became man and called all people to a life of freedom grounded in love and justice. "You have clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28).

In the Church there is diversity of ministry but unity of mission. To the apostles and their successors Christ has entrusted the office of teaching, sanctifying and governing in his name and by his power. But the laity are made to share in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ; they have, therefore, in the Church and in the world, their own assignment in the mission of the whole People of God (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People).

Pope John XXIII recognized the changing role of women when he said in the encyclical Pacem in Terris: "Human beings have the right to choose freely the state of life which they prefer, and therefore the right to establish a family, with equal rights for man and woman" (n. 15).

It goes without saying that women have worth as human beings, and as such their gifts and talents should be utilized in the service of the Church. Women should be thought of and treated with equal dignity. (Pope John Paul II, Christian Family in the Modern World, n. 23)

Through us all, Christ gives life to the world. All women have a role to play in this life-giving process. They offer themselves as women of God, grounded in prayer and seeking to discern the movement of the Spirit in their lives. Seeking cooperation, women give themselves in service to the Church and to each other.



Holding fast to the everlasting love that God has for each one of us, the Church must proclaim and give expression to its belief in the unique dignity of each person. It must listen to the voices and concerns of all of its members and give leadership to the institutional changes that must follow shifts in consciousness. It must be a Church which actually seeks the talents of its individual members; a Church which places these talents at the service of humanity; a Church which thus shows more clearly the true image of God.

In view of the common anointing in Baptism by which we share in the mission of Christ as priest, prophet and king (Rite of Baptism), the Synod mandates that:

1. Continued efforts be made toward the recruitment and hiring of women to teach religion at every level of Catholic education.

2. All positions in the Archdiocese be based on qualifications, regardless of gender, as permitted by Canon Law.

The Synod also recommends that:

3. Every effort be made to use, where possible, inclusive language in archdiocesan and parish documents.

4. The leaders in the Church today continue to uphold the dignity of women in every respect.

5. As we enter into a new era of awareness regarding the role of women, studies of the contribution of women to the life of the church and of society be encouraged.

### C. MINORITIES IN THE CHURCH

#### 1. Racism and Discrimination

Catholics in the Archdiocese of New Orleans appreciate and support the richness of the varied cultures which make up our area. Just as support and a sense of identity were given to European immigrants

through the presence of the Church in past decades, so today this attitude and approach should be updated and applied with regard to our three largest minorities: Blacks, Hispanics and Vietnamese.

Because minority Catholics have experienced many hardships and have, as a result, been drawn together, they are blessed with the spirit of community in a special way. Although no evidence of racism or discrimination, whether economic, social, or cultural, is to be found in the Church's official stand, the attention of the clergy and the faithful alike is called to the fact that the manifestation of prejudice and indifference has by no means died out. Any lack of social justice in this area is a contribution toward a particularly dangerous evil of our age. All Catholics are called upon to raise their level of consciousness and to explore methods of countering such evils at the parish level so that true social justice for persons of all races and ethnic backgrounds may be more effectively preserved.

Against this background, the Synod mandates that:

1. Within the limitations of the approved guidelines, the language, cultural heritage, and liturgical expression of particular groups be respected in their very diversity within the parishes of the Archdiocese.

2. Particular attention be given to the elimination of prejudice or indifference toward minorities.

## 2. Representation in Decision Making

The Church and its parishes must guarantee racial and ethnic minorities equal access to all aspects of Church life and should openly welcome those who seek a place there. Forced isolation by race or ethnicity cannot be tolerated. With this observation in mind, the Synod mandates that:

Scrupulous attention be paid at every level of the Archdiocese to ensure that minority representation be implemented and involve authentic sharing in responsibility and decision making.

### 3. Training of Clergy and Religious to Minister to Minorities

At times Catholic parishes in America have reacted to the presence of minority racial and ethnic groups and their cultural expressions and celebrations. These reactions are rooted in unfounded fears for the unity of their parish. Convinced that such fears are without foundation, the Synod mandates that:

The training for the priesthood and permanent diaconate include at least a survey of the history and contributions of minorities as well as an appreciation of their liturgical expression.

### 4. Openness in Liturgy

"The Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not involve the faith or the good of the whole community. Rather she respects and fosters the spiritual adornments and gifts of the various races and peoples" (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy). There is an intimate relationship between the building of community and the celebration of the liturgy. New forms of worship should be developed, in accordance with the Church's legislation on liturgy, with minorities in mind. Such development should complement the formation of community and its expression of fellowship and sharing. The parish community should be a center of life and of support. Any mentality of competition within and between parishes should be changed to one of cooperation and responsibility. Based on these concepts, the Synod strongly urges that:

1. Within the limits of the rubrics and liturgical directives, creative liturgies and other forms of worship which emphasize cultural gifts be encouraged; and that such liturgies make provision for bilingual worship according to the traditions and customs of the people served.

2. A communal sense of responsibility for the goods of the Church be inculcated as part of the sense of belonging and of ownership by all members of the parish community.

## APPENDIX IV: EXTRACTS FROM TOLEDO SYNODAL DOCUMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### WORSHIP

#### Signs of the Times

We are a people who live and pray in community rather than in isolation. Our hope and vision for the future of worship in our diocese is influenced by the realities of life about us. It is with this in mind that we address six "signs of the times."

Changes in society affect all areas of our life. The traditional family structure is disintegrating. Children may spend a weekend with one parent or the other, worshiping in one church or another or maybe none at all. Single parents find it difficult to support their parish. The burdens of their jobs and expense of maintaining their families have a tendency to far outweigh their other commitments.

Then again, our society places a premium on independence so much so that we fail to see the value in interdependence and collaboration. This is true not only of individuals, but also of groups.

Still another example, advances in technology have so heightened our sensitivity to the audio and the visual that the simplicity and beauty of liturgical ritual may pale in comparison.

Society's relationship to Church creates a tension between obligation and need, in choosing to attend worship or not; in celebrating or not the Sacrament of Penance; in wanting change or being satisfied with the religious beliefs of childhood. All these facets have a tendency to confuse the once clear-cut definitions of sin, freedom, and Christian moral life. The number of elderly Catholics is on the increase, but young and old alike are among those who feel they do not need to grow. The Catholic Church used to be the changeless entity for many people. Now even that has changed.

It is obvious that many Catholics "shop around" for a liturgy that meets their spiritual and/or practical needs. In many cases, a sense of belonging to a parish is minimal. The reasons alleged for this "shopping around" are hospitality, community, the type of music, preaching style, the pastor's personality, ethnic sensitivity, convenience of Mass time, the mobility factor for the aged and disabled or simply a desire for non-involvement. Still others are interested in growing in their faith but are unsure how to go about it.

The reality of the experience of the Sacrament of Penance, more commonly known and celebrated as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, speaks volumes. The number of priests to celebrate the sacrament is on the decline. The members of the faithful are choosing in great numbers not to celebrate the sacrament in the private form. Some celebrations of the sacrament using the general absolution form throughout the diocese are meaningful communal celebrations of reconciliation attracting members of the faithful in great numbers. The personal growth effected by good communal celebrations of reconciliation lead people to a need for spiritual direction and growth.

A fourth sign of our times is the renewed awareness of the consciousness-raising issues of social justice. The gospel imperative of justice demands that our worship invite and welcome all regardless of lifestyle, economic or social status, race, or brokenness. An awareness of and an active response to human rights issues that affect our entire world should also flow from our worship.

Lay leadership is a healthy sign of a growing church in our time. Christians are realizing more than ever before that their baptism calls them to a deeper commitment. Programs on the diocesan and parish levels continue to develop the leadership skills of many women and men.

Lastly, the overall picture of worship in our diocese is improving. The leadership by our Bishop reflects a deep respect for ongoing renewal of the liturgy. The Office of Worship is expanding and the Liturgical Commission is operative. Efforts are being made to implement good liturgy on the parish and diocesan level. Quality in worship space is being encouraged. Care is being taken to provide workshops in areas such as funerals, weddings, liturgical music, and the RCIA.

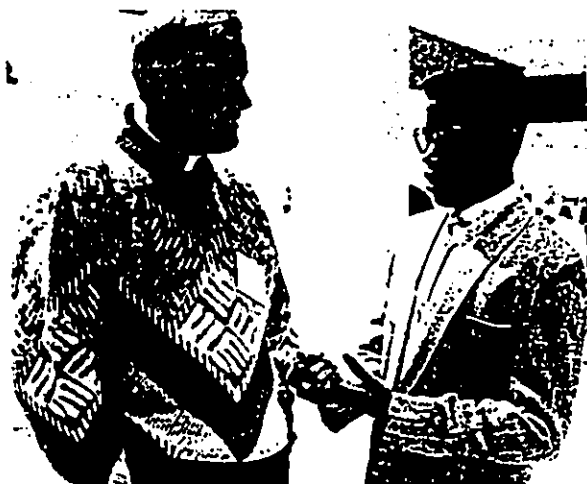
### Vision

*"They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers," (Acts 2:42).*

From the very beginning of Christian history, the brothers and sisters have believed that Christ is with them always. He continues to offer them the fruits of His mighty saving deeds, inviting them to share in His dying and rising by their lives of work, service, and suffering. Each time that they assemble for the celebration of the Eucharist, praying through Him, with Him and in Him, they bring His life and saving power to bear in their own lives.

Full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy and is the right, duty and privilege of all Christians by reason of their Baptism. The religious formation of God's people will focus on a readiness to worship God through the sacred liturgical celebrations with the proper attitude so that their thoughts match their words. The rich symbols of ritual should engage the religious spirit of all who assemble for Word and Sacrament. With Christ the High Priest the People of God give praise and thanks to the Father and call upon God for assistance in every aspect of life.

Distribution of roles, cultural adaptation, attention to the needs of the assembly, adjustment for differences in age, and use of available talent will give evidence of our efforts to improve the quality of worship of our good and loving God. Our goal is to ensure that the celebration of Sunday Eucharist will continue to be available for Catholics in northwest Ohio. We will keep Sunday worship as the primary sign of our identity and unity.



Christ always associates the Church with Himself in the truly great work of giving praise to God and of making people holy. The diocese will continue to search for ways to use and develop the gifts of all called to roles of ministry and committed to loving service.

In virtue of their Baptism all members of the Christian Faithful, lay and consecrated, women and men, are called to minister. To implement this goal, a process for identifying these persons should be established so that they are adequately prepared and formally designated. Moreover, parochial communities should be prepared to accept and support these persons.

The celebration of the seven Sacraments are unique moments when we experience the presence of the Lord and His Spirit. They are milestones on our spiritual journey toward union with God. Since liturgical piety is at the heart of Christian spirituality, the preparation for and the celebration of each of the seven Sacraments must be integrated into the spiritual formation programs in all parishes.

Celebrating the Sacrament of Penance presents several challenges at this time. Recognizing the reality of diminished participation in this Sacrament, we will call the faithful to a renewed appreciation of and participation in this unique vehicle of healing and ongoing conversion which is necessary in the quest for spiritual perfection. The Sacrament of Penance, therefore, should be viewed and experienced as a manner of worship of the merciful God, and of receiving pardon which teaches and empowers us to forgive each other.

Every parish will strive to relate the liturgy to the needs and dreams of young people who are an integral part of the Church now and its future leaders. Parishes will capitalize on their sense of mystery and respect for the transcendent, and invite them to respond actively by participating in the whole life of the Church.

Direction

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Directive #1

THE LORD'S DAY

The parish becomes a vibrant community of loving service only when the Lord's Day Mass is central in the lives of its parishioners, when it not only nourishes their faith but also calls them forth to live the gospel values. Since Sunday liturgy is the focal point of our parish life, we propose that each parish make a real commitment to use its resources to achieve the following goals by 1995. With assistance from the Office of Worship and the Toledo Diocesan Liturgical Commission, we must be willing to make quality liturgy a priority by:

- fostering a better understanding and appreciation of the mystery, sacrifice and meaning of the Eucharist among the faithful of all age groups through effective and ongoing education;
- obtaining appropriate qualified liturgical personnel;
- providing ongoing formation and training of clergy and committed lay ministers, including an active Worship/Liturgy Committee;
- taking the time and effort necessary for planning a quality celebration;
- developing good worship space in consultation with the Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee;
- ensuring that full participation in the Eucharist under both forms is available at all Eucharistic Celebrations;
- providing that all liturgical accoutrements (vessels, vestments, books, hymnals, sound systems, etc.) are of a quality befitting the Sacred Liturgy; and
- allotting financial resources necessary to accomplish these goals.

In the absence of the appointed pastor, a member of the community should be responsible for arranging the celebration of the Eucharist with a visiting presider. In the absence of a priest as a presider, one person should be designated to lead the assembly in worship. Through suitable education parish communities should be prepared for the possibility of liturgical leaders other than priests.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Individuals are reminded of their serious obligation of Sunday Worship. Ordinarily, this should be celebrated within the parish community to which each belongs.

Parish Leaders are called through this Directive to make Sunday liturgy a real experience of worship for all. Each part of this Directive needs to be assessed and implemented according to the unique circumstances of the parish.

The Diocesan Office of Worship and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission will offer resource materials and assistance to a parish as they work to enhance the Sunday Worship.



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## Directive #2

### INCLUSIVENESS

Parishes should immediately take steps to promote a spirit of inclusiveness in all aspects of worship.

The assembly is the primary symbol of the Church, being a rich mosaic of people gifted by the Lord. The first hallmark of hospitality is to welcome each individual, valuing his or her dignity. Members of the gathered community must be willing to recognize the gift of ministry in those who serve them, since it is the Lord Who gives these gifts, Who calls people to use these gifts, and Who sustains them in their ministry. The assembly must support and encourage all ministers in whatever role they fill, understanding the delineation and interdependence of these roles, as well as the contribution these roles make to the overall effectiveness of the liturgy. All persons are called to minister regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic background, handicap or economic situation. These persons must be open to the Holy Spirit, and must be willing to accept proper training, as well as to understand and to realize the limitations of their gifts and talents.

Parishes should utilize the insights and skills of programs such as the Laity Leading Prayer Workshop offered by the Toledo Diocesan Liturgical Commission which demonstrate ways that deacons and lay people can further minister to the assembly.

Parishes will take care to plan liturgies that are inclusive of all persons, regardless of their race or ethnic background, their gender, their age, their economic situation or physical capabilities. This would best be accomplished by attempting to include representatives of each of these groups in the planning process.

Although the language of the liturgy should be inclusive and show a sensitivity to all who are present at worship, we should not take liberties with the official translation of texts. We await the revised approved texts. Those parishes with a significant number of members whose native tongue is other than English will provide opportunities for worship in their language and culture.

Homilists, especially, will endeavor to challenge and inspire the people of God to develop a sensitivity to all people in order to bring about true peace and justice. They should create a welcoming climate by their presidential style, and call the assembly to an ever-fresh application of the timeless message of Christ.

### IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Parishes are encouraged to assess their own practices against the components of this Directive. From this evaluation they are to plan on bringing their parish into one with the welcoming inclusiveness described.

The Diocesan Office of Worship and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission will continue to offer programs, resource material and personal assistance to parishes.



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**Directive #3**

**THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

There are three forms for the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance in the 1975 Rite of Penance. All three forms provide for an extensive use of Holy Scripture. They also provide opportunities for prayer on the part of the penitent.

The first form, The Rite for Reconciliation of Individual Penitents, is a private celebration of the Sacrament which remains the preferred form of celebration in the diocese. This form offers the opportunity for a personal unburdening of our brokenness. It also offers the occasion for counseling and guidance tailored to the needs of the individual's spiritual growth.

The second form, The Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution, highlights more effectively the communal nature of sin and forgiveness.

The third form, The Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with General Confession and the Absolution, has proved to be a meaningful celebration that has led penitents to a need for further spiritual direction and growth. Canon Law, however, restricts the use of this form of the Sacrament (cf. c 961).<sup>1</sup>

On February 28, 1990 Bishop James R. Hoffman promulgated the following policy in the Diocese of Toledo:

Every child, whether in Catholic school or participating in the CCD program, upon coming to age of reason will be catechized for the Sacrament of First Penance. Once First Penance has been received, then the child is to be catechized for First Eucharist. If a child is not prepared to make First Penance, then the reception of First Eucharist is to be delayed until such time as the child has received First Penance. I ask all pastors, pastoral administrators, associates, principals and DRE's, catechists and parents in the Diocese of Toledo to follow this policy.

A Task Force shall be designated by the Toledo Diocesan Liturgical Commission to be responsible for researching, recommending and implementing an educational program for a deeper understanding of the Sacrament of Penance for the faithful. Through this process the faithful will be led to not only a more frequent reception of the Sacrament but also to the inward conversion of heart of which the Sacrament is the outward sign. The Task Force should be in place by September 1990 with elements of the ongoing catechesis beginning by September 1991.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Individuals are reminded about the power of God's mercy and unconditional forgiveness. Each is encouraged to celebrate God's forgiveness of personal sinfulness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

A Diocesan Task Force, designated by the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and approved by the Bishop, will begin its work as soon as possible as outlined in this Directive. Various other diocesan personnel will be made available to assist the Commission as the Task Force's work develops.

This Task Force will be accountable to the Commission. The Bishop will receive periodic progress reports of its work through the Secretary of Parish Life and Worship. For the catechetical section of the Directive the various departments of the Secretariat of Christian Formation will assist.

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**ADDENDUM**

Jesus showed us through His life, death and resurrection how to relate to God. He is the sign and sacrament of God's love for us. He preached God's love and became God's love on earth. In the same sense, the Church is sacrament — commissioned to preach God's love for us, to practice it, and to make it effective. This takes place in special symbolic actions, the Sacraments, which enable us to see, hear and understand how God loves us through Jesus Christ.

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**SACRAMENTS**

The sacramental life of the Church is at the heart of its worship. The Synod document states that the celebration of the seven Sacraments are unique moments when we experience the presence of the Lord and His Spirit. The Bishop and his Cabinet have determined that this addition was necessary.

Baptism is the primary sacrament of initiation. Through it, we enter into a new life in Christ Jesus, are brought into membership in the Church, are made disciples and family members. We are given the rights of the children of God and the responsibilities to continue the work of Jesus.

While the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the norm for adults entering fully into the life of the Church and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIC) is recommended for use with children and youth, the concepts need to be applied also to the Baptism of infants. The preparation for Baptism should include a program for the persons who will be able to support the child in his/her faith development.

The Sacraments of initiation, of healing, and of commitment all need to be seriously prepared for, carefully celebrated, and deliberately followed up.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Individuals are urged to enter fully into the life of the Church by regular and frequent reception of the Sacraments.

Parishes will seriously provide for proper and adequate on-going formation in the theology and practices of the Sacraments. They will also be responsible for the quality of the Sacramental celebrations.

Guidelines for the celebration of the Sacraments will be updated and promulgated following the diocesan policy review.

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### Conclusion

Certain ritual elements of our worship of God are timeless. The longevity of our Catholic tradition depends on a recognition of and respect for our past. It is good, however, to update our worship to meet current needs within that context.

This is not an attempt to have our worship match our cultural fascination with technology, media and entertainment. It is, instead, answering what we see as a responsibility to all persons because we live in an age in which the family unit sometimes is not a dependable link in the process of teaching our faith to our children. Where the family link is not dependable, the societal link, in many instances, is not capable of promoting Church as a life-giving community.

We, as Church, pledge to work to overcome barriers of materialism, disability, poverty, and crime by welcoming all to our celebrations, taking the steps necessary to include all persons regardless of their lifestyle, economic or social status, race or brokenness.

We will strive to celebrate Sacramental liturgies and other forms of prayer that are meaningful to all and that serve well as a channel between us and our God. We will continue to foster Church-related vocations and appropriately train lay ministers who can guide and assist us in our community and personal worship. We take all of these actions in the belief that they will encourage a stronger community of worship leading to the building up of the Kingdom of God in northwest Ohio.

### Endnote

<sup>1</sup>Code of Canon Law, 1983.

Can. 961 - §1. Absolution cannot be imparted in a general manner to a number of penitents at once without previous individual confession unless:

1° the danger of death is imminent and there is not time for the priest or priests to hear the confessions of the individual penitents;

2° a serious necessity exists, that is, when in light of the number of penitents a supply of confessors is not readily available rightly to hear the confessions of individuals within a suitable time so that the penitents are forced to be deprived of sacramental grace or holy communion for a long time through no fault of their own; it is not considered a sufficient necessity if confessors cannot be readily available only because of the great number of penitents as can occur on the occasion of some great feast or pilgrimage.

§2. It is for the diocesan bishop to judge whether the conditions required in §1,n.2, are present; he can determine general cases of such necessity in the light of criteria agreed upon with other members of the conference of bishops.

## **APPENDIX V: BOSTON, NEW ORLEANS, AND TOLEDO SYNOD TIMELINES**

### **A. BOSTON**

<b>March 22, 1984</b>	<b>Archbishop B. Law announces his intention to convoke a synod</b>
<b>August 6, 1986</b>	<b>Cardinal Law issues a pastoral letter on the synod</b>
<b>September 14, 1986</b>	<b>Formal opening liturgy of the synod</b>
<b>October 25, 1986</b>	<b>Diocesan-wide survey begins</b>
<b>October - November, 1986</b>	<b>Synodal committees selected and trained</b>
<b>January - March, 1987</b>	<b>Meetings with parish staffs to explain parish reflection sessions. Pastors begin remote preparations for sessions</b>
<b>February 14, 1987</b>	<b>Document writing subcommittees gather with Cardinal to share document issues raised in their deliberations</b>
<b>May 2, 1987</b>	<b>Document subcommittees gather with Cardinal to critique preliminary drafts</b>
<b>June 5, 1987</b>	<b>First drafts submitted by subcommittees</b>
<b>May - October, 1987</b>	<b>Training sessions for parish reflection sessions leaders</b>
<b>Oct. 25 - Nov. 15, 1987</b>	<b>Parish reflection sessions for particular documents</b>
<b>Dec., 1987 - March, 1988</b>	<b>Document subcommittees receive reports from parish reflection sessions and second drafts prepared</b>
<b>April - August, 1988</b>	<b>Drafts edited by professional editors</b>
<b>May, 1988</b>	<b>Regional reporting sessions held by document subcommittees to explain draft changes</b>
<b>June 18, 1988</b>	<b>First working session of synodal body</b>

September 17, 1988	Second working session
October 2, 1988	Third working session
Oct. - Nov., 1988	Theological committee reviews documents with Cardinal
November 5, 1988	Fourth working session
November 19, 1988	Voting session
November 27, 1988	Synodal documents promulgated

#### **B. NEW ORLEANS**

1980	Town hall meetings held throughout Archdiocese to surface areas of concern
Jan. and Feb., 1981	Archdiocesan Assembly addresses areas of concerned raised in town hall sessions
February - August, 1981	Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and Priests' Council recommend goals, objectives and programs based upon results of Assembly
1982 - 1984	An Executive Committee for Implementation makes recommendations for action on the goals and objectives of Pastoral Council and Priests' Council
September 20, 1984	Archbishop P. Hannan announces synod
November 4-5, 1984	Clergy gather for explanation of synodal process
December 14, 1984	Synodal committees appointed
September 9, 1985	First document drafts received and edited
October 22, 1985	Drafts returned to subcommittees for revision

<b>January 24, 1986</b>	<b>Drafts sent to all priests, deacons, religious superiors, Pastoral Council and archdiocesan departments</b>
<b>June, 1986 - March, 1987</b>	<b>Priests' Council considered all suggestions received and voted on the documents</b>
<b>April - May, 1987</b>	<b>Final consultations with Central Committee, subcommittees, priests, deacons, religious superiors, department heads, and Pastoral Council</b>
<b>June 9, 1987</b>	<b>Synodal documents promulgated</b>
<b>June 29, 1987</b>	<b>Synodal documents became effective</b>
<b>C. TOLEDO</b>	
<b>July, 1986</b>	<b>Establishment of the Synod Office</b>
<b>July - September, 1986</b>	<b>Potential synodal consulting firms interviewed</b>
<b>September, 1986</b>	<b>Information sessions held with priests to acquaint them with synodal process</b>
<b>October - December, 1986</b>	<b>Synod Steering Committee selected</b>
<b>January, 1987</b>	<b>Steering Committee selects consulting firm</b>
<b>March - May, 1987</b>	<b>Census/survey prepared by Steering Committee and consulting firm</b>
<b>June 25, 1987</b>	<b>Bishop J. Hoffman issues pastoral letter on synod</b>
<b>August 3-5, 1987</b>	<b>Meetings with priests to explain diocesan-wide census/survey</b>
<b>August 21-31, 1987</b>	<b>Parish Census Team training sessions around Diocese</b>
<b>October 11, 1987</b>	<b>Official opening of synod at cathedral</b>

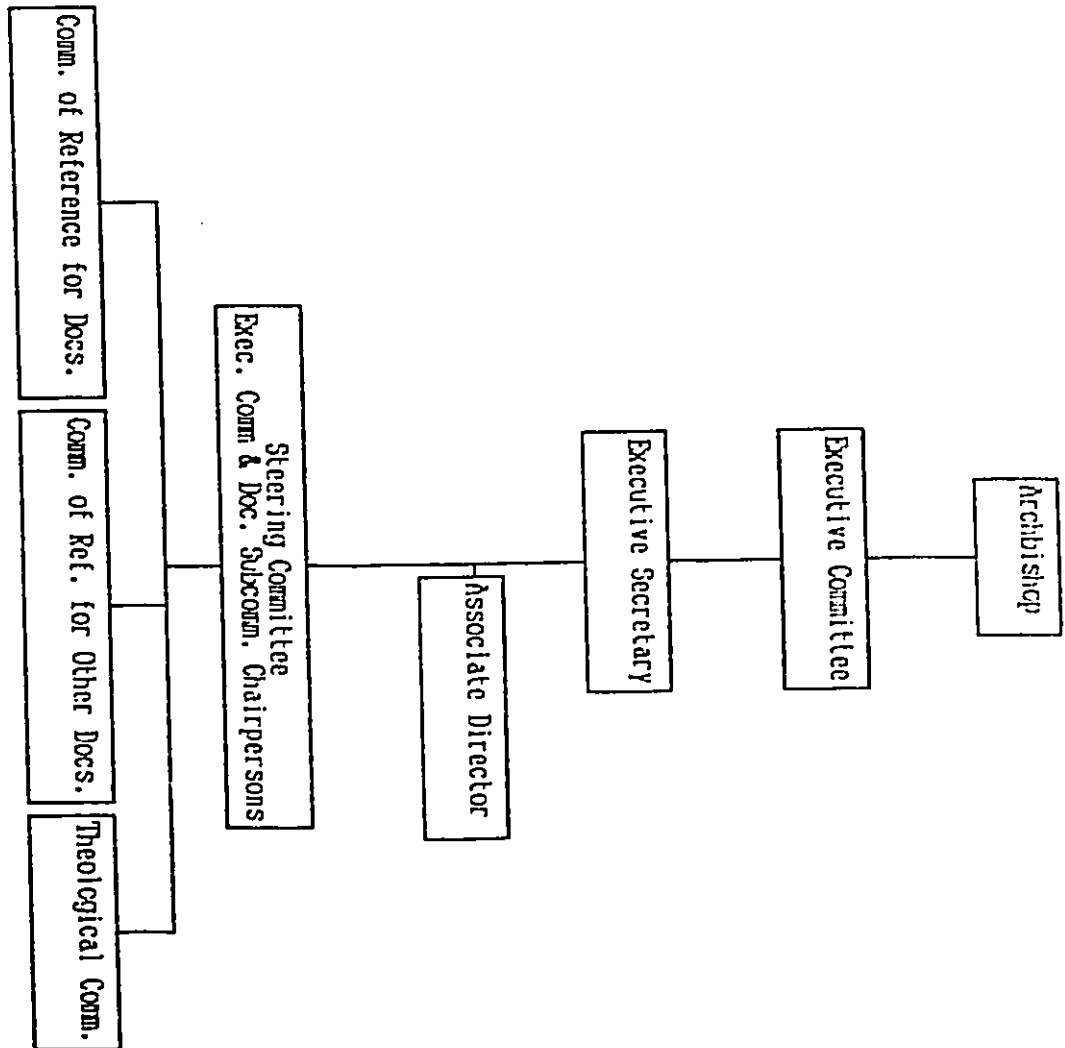
<b>October 11-18, 1987</b>	<b>In-pew parish registration of parishioners/survey distributed</b>
<b>November 8, 1987</b>	<b>Door-to-door census of unregistered Catholics</b>
<b>November, 1987</b>	<b>Steering Committee selects document topics</b>
<b>December, 1987</b>	<b>Census information analyzed</b>
<b>Dec., 1987 - Jan., 1988</b>	<b>Parish Synod Teams formed, document subcommittees selected</b>
<b>February, 1988</b>	<b>Parish Synod Teams trained</b>
<b>February - June, 1988</b>	<b>Synod educational videos distributed to parishes to educate people on Vatican II teaching</b>
<b>March, 1988</b>	<b>Document subcommittees trained</b>
<b>March - April, 1988</b>	<b>Parish Synod Teams review census/survey data</b>
<b>May, 1988</b>	<b>Census/survey data synthesized on deanery level by Parish Synod Teams</b>
<b>June - July, 1988</b>	<b>Document subcommittees draft document outlines</b>
<b>August, 1988</b>	<b>Familiarization sessions with priests and Parish Synod Teams on document outline review process</b>
<b>September - October, 1988</b>	<b>Document outlines reviewed by parishes, directors, religious superiors, and diocesan consultative bodies</b>
<b>November, 1988</b>	<b>Parish Synod Teams convene on deanery level to synthesize information gathered in outline review sessions</b>
<b>Nov., 1988, - Jan., 1989</b>	<b>Document subcommittees write first drafts</b>

<b>January, 1989</b>	<b>Four TV programs on seven synodal document areas aired throughout Diocese</b>
<b>February 6-8, 1989</b>	<b>Familiarization sessions with Parish Synod Teams and staffs on first draft review process</b>
<b>Feb., 20 - May 4, 1989</b>	<b>First drafts reviewed</b>
<b>May 8-11, 1989</b>	<b>Parish Synod Teams convene on deanery level to synthesize information gathered in first draft review sessions</b>
<b>June, 1989</b>	<b>Second drafts written</b>
<b>July, 1989</b>	<b>Parish Synod Teams, diocesan consultative bodies review second drafts</b>
<b>August 12-20, 1989</b>	<b>Deanery synthesis sessions</b>
<b>September, 1989</b>	<b>Final drafts written</b>
<b>September, 1989</b>	<b>Theological and canonical review of drafts</b>
<b>October, 1989</b>	<b>Final document review by Bishop</b>
<b>November 10-11, 1989</b>	<b>Synod convocation held</b>
<b>Nov., 1989 - May, 1990</b>	<b>Synod implementation plan developed by Bishop and cabinet</b>

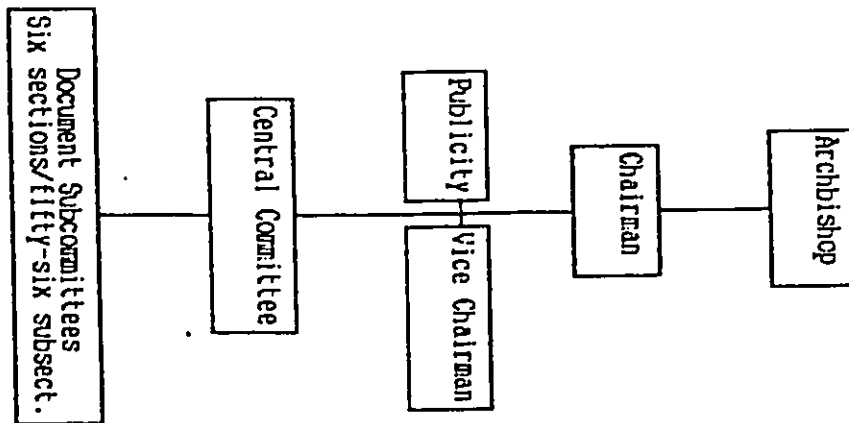


APPENDIX VI: BOSTON, NEW ORLEANS, AND TOLEDO  
SYNOD ORGANIZATION CHARTS

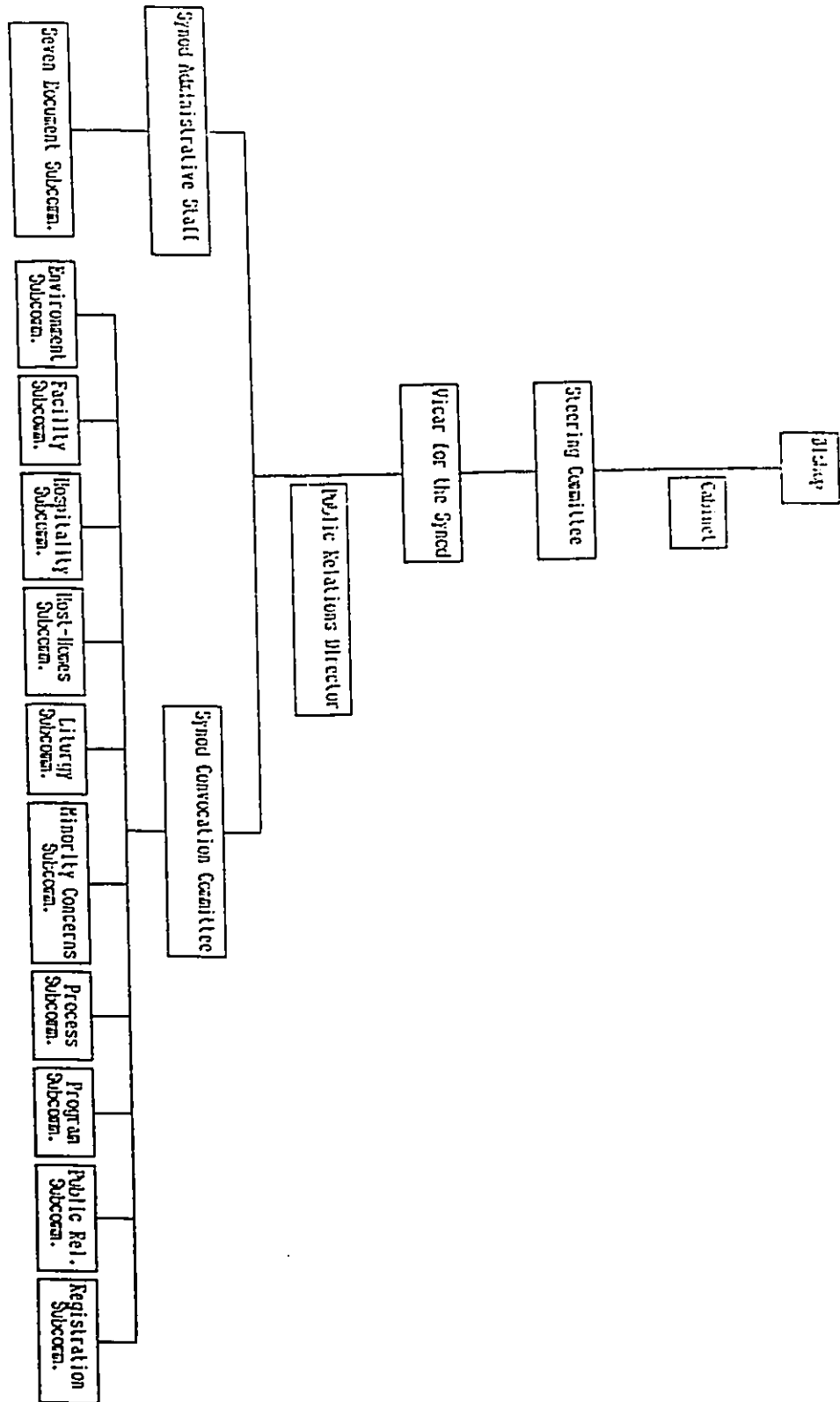
BOSTON



APPENDIX VI  
NEW ORLEANS



TOLEDO



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## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

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