"IGNITE THE WAY: TRAINING OF FACILITATORS IN DISCERNMENT IN COMMON"

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The final document of the Synod on Synodality, outlines a vision for a more inclusive, and participatory Church. It emphasizes a "synodal conversion" through spiritual, relational, procedural, institutional, and missionary transformation. It calls for a profound shift in the Church's culture and structures, moving towards a more collaborative and listening approach. It stresses the importance of listening to all the members of the Church (inclusivity and participation), particularly those on the margins, and fostering a sense of belonging. The process highlights the need for open dialogue, prayerful discernment, and shared decision-making. It recognizes the importance of ecumenical and interreligious relations in the synodal journey. It connects synodality with caring for creation and recognizing the interconnectedness of all things. The document also emphasizes the need for ongoing formation to equip all members of the Church to live out synodality. It is in this regard Pope Leo states, "We are a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges and encourages dialogue, a Church ever open to welcoming, like this Square with its open arms, all those who are in need of our charity, our presence, our readiness to dialogue and our love." While the *Episcopalis Communio* asserts that "the Synod Assembly itself must be followed by the implementation phase, so as to initiate the reception of the Synod's conclusions in all the local Churches (no. 7)."

The Society of Jesus has taken a major initiative to support the Catholic Church's synodal process to build capacity across the Church in the discernment processes. The international project has been envisioned in three phases: Starting (2025), Sharing (2026-2027), and Strengthening (2028+). With the assistance of Fr. Joseph Cardozo from the Goa Jesuit Province, the project is steered under the leadership of Fr. John Dardis. While highlighting the project, Arturo Sosa, the Superior General states, "this is a project rooted in Vatican II. While it goes back a long time, this vision is as relevant now as it was years ago. That vision is for a synodal church: a church walking together, a humble church, and a pilgrim church. All of us are going together hand in hand trying to bring liberation, reconciliation, and justice to a wounded world. It is the vision of the Beatitudes." Thus, in Salamanca, Spain, from 23 November until 3 December 2025, ninety-seven people, comprising Jesuits, laity, religious sisters-brothers, and Diocesan priests will be initiated into the project, "Ignite the Way: Training of Facilitators in Discernment in Common". Though it will be held in English, yet subsequent translation in French and Spanish will be provided for the participants. There will be eleven participants from India. The participants will be trained to deepen Discernment in Common and towards promoting synodal transformation. It will serve as a launchpad for the systematic development of the Jesuit congregation's approach to the 'Discernment in Common' method. The overall goals and aims of the colloquium will be to: develop essential skills in training for facilitation of common discernment; explore the diverse discernment in common approaches in our organisations and cultures; explore rules for discernment of St. Ignatius as applied to groups; arrive at an agreed core curriculum; build awareness of other initiatives on Synodality; and decide on how we can support each other to go forward.

The project is envisaged in the style of a colloquium with the idea that we share expertise with each other, arrive at a deeper appropriation of discernment in common both at the theoretical and practical levels by using methodologies, presentations, silent reflections, and spiritual conversation. Besides the daily liturgical celebrations, interactive sessions will be conducted on listening to our stories of accompanying discernment in common, Theological, and biblical foundations by linking it with synodality. How can the Society and my organisation/Diocese implement and support synodal reforms? History and graces of discernment in common, building a sense of a shared mission, indifference, discerning spirits in a group, case studies, arriving at a core curriculum through conference, and organisational group sharing.

A key outcome of the colloquium will be the formation of teams, who will train facilitators in 'Discernment in Common' at the regional level, both within the Society of Jesus, and in the wider Church.

Personally, I have found it inspiring to be part of this

global initiative, and I feel it is a real privilege. I have found it motivating to meet the various participants online, to hear their joys, sorrows, and their dreams. Already, we are building a movement. I think this project will contribute in however humble a way as it offers the Church some ways of discerning in common. It is not just a project for Jesuits; it is a project that also helps dioceses, other congregations, parishes, and even lay-led organizations who want to build a different culture, a culture of discernment. Together we can make a new dream. In a world where public discourse is so divided, I am convinced that the Church and the way of the Gospel, with its humble listening, has so much to offer.

Thus, in moving forward from here and going back to their own different cultures and places of work life, the participants will be able to transform their cultures, societies, organization, and the Church. This colloquium can be like a stone thrown into a pond with ripples across continents and cultures.