



**European Forum of National Laity Committees  
Forum Européen des Comités Nationaux des Laïcs  
Europäisches Forum der Nationalen Laienkomitees**

**Pilgrims of hope, walking together in a synodal church**

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Some key ideas from the lecture by Alphonse BORRAS, about some implementation tracks of the Final Document “For a Synodal Church”, Prof. em. of the Université catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain), Consultor for the General Secretariat of the Synod

Without concrete changes in the short term, the vision of a synodal Church will not be credible, and this will alienate those members of the People of God who have drawn strength and hope from the synodal journey. Local Churches need to find ways to implement these changes. (Final Document 94)

What would be the role of the European Lay Forum (ELF) in implementing the Final Document of Synod 2021-2024 with a view to the Ecclesial Assembly in October 2028? Borras suggested a few things to think about in order to encourage the local Churches - the dioceses and their various components, pastoral councils and coordination of the lay apostolate - in implementing the Final Document.

***1. Adopting the method of conversation in the Spirit***

*Conversation in the Spirit* is a three-stage method of dialogue rooted in faith, involving the sharing of experiences, reflection on a question, and preparation for decisions. It emphasizes listening, respect, and discernment, aiming to recognize God’s voice through Scripture and the events of life. Guided by the Holy Spirit, it helps communities respond concretely to what God is calling them to here and now.

***2. Entering the triple conversion dynamic***

The Pope calls for a *triple conversion* that is not just personal but deeply communal and ecclesial. Conversion involves walking with others in the Church, fostering co-responsibility, and engaging in collective discernment. Decision-making must be rooted in trust and real listening, where pastoral leaders take the voice of the faithful seriously. Relationships within the Church must be renewed through mutual exchange of gifts and charisms. Forming missionary disciples involves integrating knowledge, practical skills, and personal witness, with formators accompanying others in a shared learning journey. All of this points toward a Church sent on mission, already sharing in the joy of the Risen Lord.

***3. Starting from the common condition of all the baptised***

The Church is formed by all the baptised, who through baptism become full members and share in the mission of Christ. Each contributes according to their unique role—lay, consecrated, or ordained—making all co-responsible for the Church’s life and mission. This shared responsibility is central to **synodality**, understood as Christians journeying together

with Christ toward God’s Kingdom. Synodality involves listening, dialogue, and discernment, with decisions made in unity and respect for diverse roles. A truly synodal Church depends on the active participation of all the faithful in communion and mission.

#### ***4. Promoting participatory bodies***

A truly synodal Church must promote active listening by pastors, and the full participation of all members, and shared responsibility in its mission and governance. It highlights the urgent need to renew participatory structures to support missionary transformation. Additionally, it stresses the importance of transparency, accountability, and evaluation in all ministries, not just for laypeople but also for clergy, including bishops. While universal legislation is lacking, canon law—especially at the diocesan and episcopal conference levels—can help implement these principles effectively.

#### ***5. Restoring confidence in God’s people***

The synodal process revealed a strong call for **transparency** in the Church as a foundation for **trust and credibility** in its ministers and institutions. Transparency supports the Church’s mission, not only in addressing abuse and clericalism but also in how pastors lead and respect human dignity. Trust in the church depends on the **reliability** of individuals and institutions, which requires **competence**, **benevolence**, and **integrity**—including truthfulness and authenticity.

#### ***In conclusion***

The Synodal process now enters its crucial phase of reception and implementation. Moving forward requires shared discernment between pastors and the faithful. The synodal process calls all baptized members to listen, dialogue, and discern together through Scripture and the signs of the times. This process of reception is gradual and demands committed, ongoing effort. The Jubilee Year offers a timely opportunity to renew our shared resolve to walk together in faith and hope.