
Synodal path: Bishops from Nordic countries to German Bishops' Conference, "facing new challenges by embracing again the unchanging deposit of faith"

The Bishops of the Bishops' Conference of the Nordic Countries, who are gathered for their plenary assembly these days, sent a letter from Tromsø (Norway) to the German Bishops, who are also holding their plenary assembly this week. "Strong ties unite the Catholics of our countries with the German Catholic Church", the letter reads, because the Nordic Church was revitalised thanks to the material and spiritual support of those German Catholics, priests, men and women religious and bishops who "generously gave their lives for the mission in the north". The point of the letter, however, is how to address the "enormous challenges facing the Church globally", particularly the Nordic Bishops' concern about "the orientation, method and content of the Synodal path of the Church in Germany". While for the Nordic Bishops it is understandable that "the big need for change should be read against the backdrop of Germany's concrete situation", the issues at stake "are not just German concerns", because "it is up to all of us" to respond to "the terrible wounds inflicted by abuse". The Nordic Bishops deem it necessary to start again from the Gospel, by embracing again, "with gratitude and reverence, the unchanging deposit of the faith passed on by the Church". And in the "legitimate search for answers" to the questions of our time, "we must nonetheless respect boundaries set by topics that stand for unchangeable aspects of the Church's teaching". Revitalising the Church is not a matter of "structural changes", but can only be done by focusing "on the sacramental mystery of the Church" because "we cannot expect a new fullness of Catholic vitality to follow from an impoverishment of the content of our faith".

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