
Germany: outcomes of the Bishops' Plenary Assembly. Mgr. Bätzing (DBK President), "German Church does not seek divisions"

The Spring Plenary Assembly of the German Bishops' Conference (DBK) in Dresden ended today with the traditional press conference evaluating the work carried out. The President, Mgr. Georg Bätzing, once again denied the accusations that the Catholic Church in Germany is fighting for a "national Church" through the work of the Synodal path. For the German Bishops, the President remarked, it is "obviously" clear "that we are always part of the global Catholic Church, which is why I once again clearly and unequivocally reject allegations from outside the DBK that we are heading towards a national Church or that we are seeking divisions". At the same time, Mgr. Bätzing announced that he would "take seriously the concerns and suggestions of the Vatican dicasteries" regarding the Synodal path and the possibility of a Synodal Council. Ahead of the last meeting of the Synodal path scheduled for next week in Frankfurt, the Bishops, Mgr. Bätzing said, "have found an open and constructive union" despite the initial contrasts. "We had a closer look at the texts for which, according to a large number of Bishops, there was a need for more debate and coordination". Another item on the Assembly's agenda was the issue of spiritual abuse. The Bishops discussed and approved a new work tool entitled "Abuse of spiritual authority". In recent years, there have been increasing reports of spiritual abuse in Church offices, Mgr. Bätzing explained. Spiritual abuse refers to the abuse of one's own spiritual authority or that attributed to those responsible for pastoral care, religious orders and communities or education. This includes, for example, a manipulative approach to the Bible, the spiritual tradition of the Church, or the spirituality of a community, "forcing others with their own values or beliefs or forcing them into behaving in a certain way".

Valentina Bombelli