



APORTES PARA EL SINODO

LUGARES

ENGLISH

For an authentically synodal Catholic media

Digital evangelization is a very important topic, even if it is still neglected or, at least, not treated with due attention. The Synthesis Report (RoS) of the First Session of the Synod has already drawn attention to this. So much so that the Pope has entrusted this topic to one of the ten working groups created to study issues too complex to be addressed in the second session of the Synod. This is Working Group 3 (The Mission in the Digital Environment). However, even without going into the issue in depth, this Synodal session can help with some ideas for the work of Group 3 itself. As the Instrumentum Laboris itself warns, "we cannot ignore the spread of digital culture, especially among young people. This has a radical impact on the experience and concept of space and time, as well as on the way of living every type of activity, communication, relationship and even faith" (IL 85).

We must therefore start from the observation that today it is not the local pastor, whether priest or bishop, who is primarily responsible for the religious formation of the people of God. What forms mentalities are the religious media (TV, radio and especially the Internet). Pastoral agents can provide sporadic formation one weekend a month, the priest gives Sunday homilies in the main church and perhaps monthly homilies in the communities. But it is the religious of the media (priests, nuns, lay men and women) who for several hours a day preach and teach the faith to thousands and even millions of believers. This, as the summary report emphasizes, has advantages and risks. "There are many online initiatives, of great value and utility, linked to the Church, which offer excellent catechesis and formation in the faith. Unfortunately, there are also some websites where issues related to faith are treated in a superficial, polarized and even hateful way" (RdS 17g). Therefore, the text also raises a very pertinent challenge. It is a matter of reflecting on "some important questions about how they can be regulated and which ecclesiastical authority is responsible for controlling" (RdS 17h) these media. While on the one hand there is greater ease in praying and learning content about the faith, it is also true that this prayer is often intimate and the content is transmitted in an apologetic key, more linked to an ecclesiastical self-referentiality than to an outing to the peripheries as Pope Francis asks. He is even the object of much criticism or reservations on the part of the widely followed Catholic media. Many pastors, priests and bishops are discredited, criticized and mocked in an

extremely disrespectful way. Anyone who does not think like the influencers of these media is a heretic, a communist or, at the very least, not truly Catholic. Let us see what Pope Francis denounced more than ten years ago: “The spiritual worldliness that hides behind the appearance of religiosity and even of love for the Church” (EG 93). In fact, these are "those who, deep down, trust only in their own strength and feel superior to others because they respect certain norms or are irreducibly faithful to a certain Catholic style typical of the past. This is a presumed doctrinal or disciplinary security that gives way to a narcissistic and authoritarian elitism, where, instead of evangelizing, one analyzes and classifies others and, instead of facilitating access to grace, one wastes energy in controlling" (EG 94). In this way, many digital "evangelizers" get lost in indoctrination and moralisms that do not truly build the Kingdom of God and do not live synodality. Many of them, in fact, are against synodality. "Instead of offering the healing power of grace and the light of the Gospel, some want to 'indoctrinate' the Gospel, transforming it into 'dead stones to be thrown at others'" (AL 49).

It is therefore necessary to move away from a digital evangelization that is apologetic, self-referential and indifferent to the problems of the world, to move towards an authentically synodal evangelization, going out to the peripheries, prophetic, merciful, committed to building a more just and fraternal society. world, sign of the Kingdom of God.