

## *Editorial*



### **Dear Members and Readers,**

The November-December issue of the SEDOS Bulletin contains the talks given at the Autumn Seminar on the theme, “Mission as Synodality: On the

Experience of Living Synodality.” SEDOS had the privilege of listening to three important Speakers who were taking part in the Synod in Rome. The three Speakers who participated at the Synod happened to be a Sister, a Brother and a Priest, who belong to three missionary institutes and who hail from three continents. Listening to their sharing was a unique experience.

In his introduction to the theme, **Alain Mayama, CSSp**, explained Synodality and shared some of his experience. It was a real and proper orientation to the Seminar, whose purpose was “to experience synodality at the deepest level between us, based on what we hear this morning, from our three Speakers, or what we have heard around us, and/or in our communities. And then, using the approach adopted by the Synodal Assembly in Rome, “conversation is the Spirit, we will listen to each other and try to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say to us during the course of this day that we will spend together in prayer and reflection.”

The first Speaker was **Mary Barron, OLA**, the President of SEDOS and newly elected President of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). She was chosen to represent the women religious from all over the world. In her talk she focused on sharing the experience of the Synod. Describing her experience, she said, “the time together at the Synod was a time of learning how to be Church together. It was an ongoing formation programme, where we were being pruned and shaped, to have ‘the mind and heart of Jesus.’” She divided her experience of the Synod into

four categories; a deep Spiritual Journey in a Sacred Space, a Place of Respectful Encounter which promotes new connections and friendships, an exciting but exhausting experience, a new space for women.

**Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie, MCCJ**, gave the second talk on the theme, “Mission as Synodality.” He was also one of the main participants who was elected to participate on behalf of all the religious men’s congregations, Union of Superiors General (USG). His talk focussed more on the actual content emerging from the Synod. According to him, in the process of Synodality, there was deep reflection on communion, mission and participation in the life of the Church which is called upon to contribute to building up the Reign of God in the world today.

In his deliberation, he said, “We saw that one of the signs of the richness and the challenges facing the Synod has been the diversity of the experiences of our local Churches and the complex reality of our different mission contexts. It was seen that we are all striving to walk towards unity and communion of faith and mission praxis, despite the peculiarity of our particular fields of evangelization.”

The third Speaker, **Mark Hilton, SC**, spoke on the theme, “16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops: Implications for religious life.” He was chosen to represent the religious Brothers at the Synod. He summarised his experience of the Synod, as “how to be Church, how to enter into dialogue, how to listen, how to move forward TOGETHER, how to find consensus in the midst of division, how to be faithful to the Lord who constantly calls us to go forward.” According to him, the Synod is just the beginning, or the first step, which calls for discernment, for honouring the baptismal dignity of every faithful, for formation for mission, for action and for a response to God’s love, on the part of everyone.

After the main talks, there was creative sharing among the participants in various groups,

guided by **André-Leon Simonart, M.Afr** and **Geni Santos Camargo, SFB**. The aim of the sharing was to enable the participants to enter the synodal process.

Together with the outcome of the Seminar, the General Report of SEDOS 2023 is attached for the information of all the members. Finally, as Christmas is round the corner, naturally we are including a Christmas message and a prayer.

In the Bulletin, we are also publishing the article, “*An Urgent Call for Climate Action*” by **James H. Kroeger, MM**, where he reflects upon the Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum (LD)*, Pope Francis issued during the mission month of October.

Pope Francis made a passionate appeal to “all people of good will to take more action on the climate crisis” that humanity is facing.

I am sure the above articles will not only help us to understand the process of *synodality* called for by Pope Francis but will also help us to walk together with the Lord and with one another while listening to the Spirit and thus to experience synodality in our daily life.

Dr. John Paul Herman, SVD

Director of SEDOS

