

09/23

HOPE

N e w s l e t t e r



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“Love your neighbour as yourself” –Matthew 22:39

NEIGHBOURS IN THE MARGINS

Message from the Holy Father

NEIGHBOURS IN SYNOD

Synod Asia Journey

NEIGHBOURS TOGETHER

Legion of Mary , El Shaddai and Couples for Christ

YOUNG NEIGHBOURS

Vicariate Friendship Day and Kem Belia

Cover by COOL

Design by Vanessa Newn

Fr John Esper from St Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church, Michigan gave a profound yet simple homily on 9 September 2023:

“In the gospel, Jesus teaches us the need to forgive others their offenses. When a person hurts or offends us, we carry that hurt around in our heads and in our bodies. Often enough, or too often, we complain about the offending party and share the pain of the offense with others. In time, not only is a single person hurt or offended, but the larger community is negatively burdened in the continual retelling of the harm done. Jesus directs us to the root of the problem.

Ours is a broken world. We hurt others and others hurt us. Such offenses are personal, social, communal, familial, national, and global. They touch every aspect and reality of human life. The Christian way calls us to the greater good of forgiveness. The first movement of forgiveness is engaging our faith in the love God has for us, and the fruit of that love in all we ourselves are forgiven.

Forgiveness is not simple business. It is hard. Some offenses are small while others are deep or even tragic. If love is the root of the Christian life, then forgiveness is the flower or the fruit it produces.”

Reflecting on our own situation here

today in Brunei, I believe there are many times too we are affected by sin and hurt, inflicted by either ourselves or others around us.

Our natural human reaction is to close off and retreat into our self-made walls, numbing ourselves with worldly distractions and addictions (Tiktok, anyone?). We forget about “people in the margins” who need us, or worse, we marginalize and lose ourselves in our pain and fear. We hold on to grudges and self blame, or become self-righteous and trapped in our comfort zones.

Is this how we are meant to live our lives as God’s children?

How do we let ourselves change into good neighbors who journey together in **synodal faith**, who help each other like Legion of Mary members, who experience joy and discovery of God together like in Vicariate Friendship Day and Kem Belia?

By being neighborly and forgiving, we learn to make it right between ourselves and Christ too. We are meant to be found and kept safe in Him as His flock. The question is, how do we who are lost, learn to let go and let God?

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“The synod, while offering a great opportunity for a pastoral conversion in terms of mission and ecumenism, is not exempt from certain **risks**. I will mention three of these.

“The first is **formalism**. The Synod could be reduced to an extraordinary event, but only externally; that would be like admiring the magnificent facade of a church without ever actually stepping inside. If we want to speak of a synodal Church, we cannot remain satisfied with appearances alone; we need content, means, and structures that can facilitate dialogue and interaction within the People of God, especially between priests and laity.

“A second risk is **intellectualism**. Reality turns into abstraction and we, with our reflections, end up going in the opposite direction. This would turn the synod into a kind of study group, offering learned but abstract approaches to the problems of

the Church and the evils in our world. The usual people saying the usual things, without great depth or spiritual insight, and ending up along familiar and unfruitful ideological and partisan divides, far removed from the reality of the holy People of God and the concrete life of communities around the world.

“Finally, the temptation of **complacency**, the attitude that says: ‘We have always done it this way’ (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 33) and it is better not to change. That expression — ‘We have always done it that way’ — is poison for the life of the Church. Those who think this way, perhaps without even realizing it, make the mistake of not taking seriously the times in which we are living. The danger, in the end, is to apply old solutions to new problems.”





“Precisely at this time, when there is much talk and little listening, and when the sense of the common good is in danger of weakening, the Church as a whole has embarked on a journey to rediscover the word together.”

“Walk together. Question together. Take responsibility together for community discernment, which for us is prayer, as the first Apostles did: This is synodality, which we would like to make a daily habit in all its expressions.”

Pope Francis

Synod Asia website is a common digital platform maintained by the FABC OSC in collaboration with Offices of Social Communication in Asia and other media partners and the Synod Secretariat. We share news, information and other content concerning the Church in Asia and Synod on Synodality. Besides providing the latest information from the Synod Assembly in Rome, the site will be a point of reference for all relevant and latest matters of importance related to the Synod with focus on Asia.



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Unveil Insights, Stories, and Updates – Directly from the Vatican



Watch

Visual Echoes of Synod: Witness the Event Through Captivating Media.



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Synod's Knowledge, Yours to Access through fingertips.

Conversation in the Spirit

A dynamic of discernment in the synodal Church



Synod 2021-2024



PERSONAL PREPARATION

By entrusting oneself to the Father, conversing in prayer with the Lord Jesus and listening to the Holy Spirit, each one prepares his or her own contribution to the question about which he or she is called to discern.

Silence and prayer
listening to the Word of God

"Taking the word and listening"

Each person takes turns speaking from his or her own experience and prayer, and listens carefully to the contribution of others.



Silence and prayer



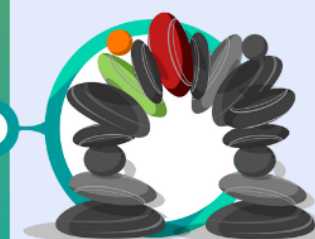
"Making space for others and the Other"

From what the others have said, each one shares what has resonated most with him or her or what has aroused the most resistance in him or her, allowing himself or herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit: **"When, listening, did my heart burn within me?"**

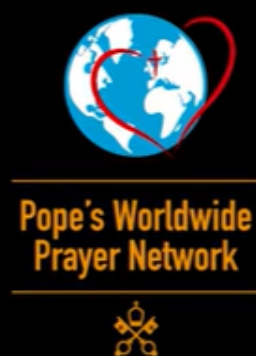
Silence and prayer

"Building together"

Together we dialogue on the basis of what emerged earlier in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit: to recognize intuitions and convergences; to identify discordances, obstacles and new questions; to allow prophetic voices to emerge. It is important that everyone can feel represented by the outcome of the work. "To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?"



Final prayer of thanksgiving



Pope's Prayer Intention

For people living on the margins

Franciscus

A homeless person who dies on the street will never appear among the top stories of search engines or newscasts.

How could we have reached this level of indifference? How is it that we allow the “throwaway culture” – in which millions of men and women are worth nothing compared to economic goods – how is it that we allow this culture to dominate our lives, our cities, our way of life?

Our necks are going to get stiff from looking the other way so we don't have to see this situation.

Please, let's stop making invisible those who are on the margins of society, whether it's due to poverty, addictions, mental illness or disability.

Let's focus on accepting them, on welcoming all the people who need it. The “culture of welcoming,” of hospitality, of providing shelter, of giving

a home, of offering love, of giving human warmth.

Let us pray for those people on the margins of society in subhuman living conditions, that they may not be neglected by institutions and never be cast out.

Pope Francis, The Vatican, 29 August 2023

An accompanying press release also added that according to the UN, over 10 percent of the global population, or 700 million people, live in extreme poverty. Another 1.6 billion people dwell in inadequate living conditions, even in developed nations.

Similarly, reports from the World Health Organization reveal that one of every eight persons lives with a 'mental disorder,' and that 16% of the world's population lives with a 'serious disability'.

<https://youtu.be/dHzTDLOYNZA>

SEPTEMBER: FOR PEOPLE LIVING ON THE MARGINS



on welcoming all the people who need it.



The Legion of Mary (Latin: Legio Mariae, postnominal abbreviation L.O.M.) is an international association of members of the Catholic Church who serve it on a voluntary basis. It was founded in Dublin, as a Marian movement by the layman and civil servant Frank Duff.

Today, active and auxiliary (praying) members make up a total of over 10 million members worldwide, making it the largest apostolic organization of lay people in the Catholic Church.

In the Apostolic Vicariate of Brunei, the LOM is made up of several language-based subgroups, yet united in the shared mission of carrying out both corporal and spiritual works of mercy for the society at large.



NEIGHBOURS TOGETHER



El Shaddai 16th Anniversary Celebrations
10 September



Couples for Christ (CFC) 29th Anniversary Recollection
15 September

NEIGHBOURS TOGETHER



Couples for Christ (CFC) 29th Anniversary General Prayer Assembly
23 September

YOUNG CATHOLIC NEIGHBOURS



Vicariate Friendship Day
24 September

YOUNG CATHOLIC NEIGHBOURS



Kem Belia
27-28 September



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