

Fr. Perozich comments —

If I were to wish to exert my own will over the Catholic Church rather than to continue to promote Jesus Christ's sacrifice for our salvation from sin, death, and isolation for goodness, eternal life, and communion with God and one another, I would be astute in my approach.

I would allow interviews with non believers to report what I said so that I would have deniability.

I would put into power others of like mind to be heralds of my beliefs.

I would caution on synods of particular churches, but not prohibit them in order to allow their teachings in accord with my own to come to the larger forum.

I would use new language and meaning of “starting from the pastoral situation” in which people live their lives be it good or bad, “discerning spirits”, “truth through discourse”, and the idea that what is decided locally could influence Rome.

I would have my forgone conclusions ready to be presented for discussion and for the final document.

The Catholic Church from the apostles did start with the “pastoral situation”, of people who were like sheep without a shepherd.

The people were given clear teaching on living the commandments, not to break one of the least of them Mt. 5:19, to be baptized Jn 3:5, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus Jn 6:51-58, and to do the Father's will Jn 14:23.

Through the apostle John they were told not to trust any spirit 1 Jn 4, and through Paul to the Galatians 1 not to accept any other gospel.

Truth is given through revelation, not by man's willing it Romans 9:16.

1 Tim 6 speaks of those who would preach their own ideas.

2 Peter 2 speaks of false prophets putting out their own ideas.

Remain faithful, live by the Spirit and do not gratify the desires of the flesh, Gal 5:16.

Maranatha, Come, Lord Jesus Rev. 22:20.



Father Hans Langendörfer

BLOGS

German ‘Synodal Path’ Aims to Shape Vatican Decisions, Says Plan’s Architect

‘We believe it is unacceptable that all issues decided in Rome, now and in the future, should be taken largely without the participation of the local Churches,’ Jesuit Father Hans Langendörfer told a German newspaper.

By Edward Pentin – Posted 1/30/20 at 12:51 PM

One of the chief architects of the German Church’s synodal path which begins today has said an important novelty of the process is that it aims to influence papal and curial decisions, even if it cannot be binding on matters concerning the universal Church.

In a revealing [interview](#), Jesuit Father Hans Langendörfer, the influential secretary of the German bishops’ conference, told Bonn’s *General Anzeiger* newspaper Jan. 27 that those organizing the synodal path “don’t assume Rome must implement what we have decided here in Germany” but they do expect “insights and convictions” to be “taken into account in Rome.”

He said a “particular goal” of the process is its “binding nature” in relation to decisions that are the responsibility of the local Church. But he said that “what is new” about the synodal path is that it “can also come to decisions which concern the Roman level — not the level of a council, but the level of the Holy Father and his Curia.”

“We believe it is unacceptable that all issues decided in Rome, now and in the future, should be taken largely without the participation of the local Churches,” Father Langendörfer continued. And he proposed that such an approach should be emulated by the Church in other countries.

“We believe that proposals can and must be brought to Rome from the different regions of the world, in order to allow a balanced approach, and consideration of different cultures at the level of the universal Church,” he said. This would allow the Church to acquire “new credibility and persuasive power.”

His comments, which echo Cardinal Reinhard Marx’s famous 2015 [comments](#) that the Church in Germany is “not just a subsidiary of Rome,” come after the Vatican [made clear](#) last year that the synodal process was not in any way binding, and that Germany’s bishops must exercise their authority in unity and obedience to the authority of the Pope.

The two-year synodal path, which begins today in Frankfurt with its first assembly, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, aims to tackle “key issues” arising from the clerical sex abuse crisis, ostensibly with the aim of helping the Church align with the times.

Consisting of four forums, each headed by a bishop and layperson, 230 participants will discuss four themes: “Power and the Separation of Powers in the Church,” “Priestly Life Today,” “Women in Ministries and Offices of the Church,” and “Living in Successful Relationships — Living Love in Sexuality and Partnership.”

Supporters of the process, the first of its kind in the Church, [argue](#) it is a process of listening and dialogue, which aims to overcome differences, find solutions and lead to “conversion and renewal.”

Doctrinal Chaos

But critics are [concerned](#) the two-year synodal process will result in proposals that will undermine the Church’s teaching, lead the

Church in Germany into schism and ultimately spread doctrinal chaos throughout the Church.

Earlier this month, a silent prayer demonstration was [held](#) in Munich, calling on the hierarchy in Germany to end “dissimulation and deception” and to be straightforward about what they want to achieve from the process.

In his Jan. 27 interview, Father Langendörfer, who has served as secretary of the German bishops’ conference since 1996 and is widely viewed as a highly influential *eminence grise* behind most of the German hierarchy’s major decisions, said “no ban” exists “on speaking about women’s ordination” during the process, despite Pope St. John Paul II’s 1994 apostolic letter [Ordinatio Sacerdotalis](#) which [definitively ruled out](#) women priests.

Father Langendörfer said the synodal path “requires a discernment of spirits” and that it “must always proceed from realities.” Spiritually and theologically, he said it “must always start from the pastoral situation” and that “if one relates this to the experiences in dioceses and communities, a wide range of possibilities for dialogue opens up.”

He said that following the 2018 publication of a lengthy study on clergy sexual abuse in Germany, “we saw very clearly that there are a whole series of blockages in the Catholic Church in Germany.”

Discussing the origins of the project, Father Langendörfer said researchers had recommended that if topics including sexual morality, the image of priests and access to the priesthood were examined, it would have a “favorable effect” on cases of abuse. But he also pointed out more far-reaching goals.

“Many people see a need for a reform,” he said, and together with the abuse issue, this “gave the impulse to tackle these topics in the ‘synodal path.’”

“We want to tread a new path, a path that points the way to the future,” Father Langendörfer continued. “We cannot discuss such topics as clergy and bishops alone, for the whole people of God is affected by these topics, all Catholics are affected by them.”

He added that this is why the Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK), which has long [dissented](#) from Church teaching, “is a natural and trusted partner with whom we also had a really good cooperation in preparing for the ‘synodal path.’”

Noting that this path is new and without any canonical framework, Father Langendörfer said “we are embarking on a special path of our own, one which brings together lay people and bishops on an equal footing.” But he insisted it is a path “which does not lead out of the Church, as is so often said, but leads into it.”

Asked about criticism of the process from prelates such as Cardinal Rainer Woelki of Cologne and Bishop Rudolf Voderholzer of Regensburg, Father Langendörfer acknowledged some “people who have had difficulties with the path,” and said that can also be found in the ZdK.

But he said he found it “remarkable” that all German dioceses are taking part and are “so interested in the conversation and the reorientation that they are going along with it.”

Truth Through Discourse?

“We’ll see how that turns out, but first of all, everyone is involved,” he said. Some prelates such as Bishop Voderholzer have promised to [pull out of the process](#) if they find it problematic.

Father Langendörfer, a priest noted for his political skills who once worked as research assistant to former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, said he hoped that the topics to be discussed will end the “blocking effect” that researchers said had led to sexual abuse.

He also said he would be “happy if the lived faith, and the possibility to win more people for the faith, could be further advanced through the synodal path.”

Critics, however, see this emphasis on both dialogue and the local Church as a highly political maneuver, designed to achieve change without Rome’s consent.

“One of the major ideas behind that way of thinking is that coming to the Truth via the old way does not exist — that ‘truth’ is what one arrives at through discourse,” said a source close to the German Church. “It’s a decisive philosophical framework, through which you can arrive at whatever result you want.”

The source also noted that the participants are stacked in favor of change, with as many as 90%-95% of those taking part considered to hold heterodox views.

Meanwhile, according to Ludwig Ring-Eifel, head of the German bishops’ news agency, around two-thirds of German bishops — the

threshold for passing a resolution — support the ordination of married men and women deacons.

Ring-Eifel also said half of them are in favor of blessing for same-sex unions, in Jan. 29 comments [reported](#) in *The Wall Street Journal*.

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