

Executive Summary: Analysis of the *Final Report of the Ordinary Synod on the Family*

Voice of the Family's comprehensive analysis argues that *The Final Report of the Synod of Bishops to the Holy Father*, approved by the Ordinary Synod in October 2015, undermines the teaching of the Catholic Church on matters relating to human life, marriage and the family. The report, by striving towards bringing Catholic moral teaching in line with the norms prevailing in the modern world, pursues an approach that runs contrary to divine revelation and the natural moral law.

The *Final Report*:

- endorses a central aspect of “gender theory” by asserting that biological sex and socio-cultural “gender” can be distinguished (paragraph 58)
- threatens the rights of parents as the primary educators of their children by asserting that the family “cannot be the only place for formation in matters of sexuality” with regard to “young people at the age of puberty and adolescence” (paragraph 58)
- undermines the Church's teaching on the nature and the ends of marriage through the use of ambiguous language and by failing to adequately express central doctrines (paragraphs 1, 4, 39, 40, 47, 49, 84, 85, 86)
- attempts to prepare the way for “divorced and remarried” Catholics to receive Holy Communion without true repentance and amendment of life through the use of ideological language in place of the Church's traditional terminology, by distorting Catholic teaching on the nature and effects of mortal sin, and by obscuring previous Church teaching by means of omission and selective quotation (paragraphs 84, 85, 86)
- undermines Catholic teaching as regards contraception by failing to restate the Church's teaching while simultaneously presenting a confused exposition on the nature of conscience (paragraph 63)
- undermines the Church's teaching on artificial methods of reproduction by failing to restate that the primary reason for the immorality of such practices is the separation of procreative and unitive elements of human sexuality, thus implying that methods that do not cause destruction of human embryos might be permissible (paragraph 33)
- states that the Church “collaborates in the development of a new ecological culture” which includes “a new mentality, new policies, new educational programmes, a new manner of living and a new spirituality”. The analysis demonstrates that the path of collaboration is leading Vatican bodies to collaborate with the promotion of abortion and contraception and with attempts to undermine parental rights and authority (paragraph 16).

The analysis discusses the relationship between these attempts to conform Catholic teaching to modern ideology with the heresy of modernism (see Chapter IV). It also draws attention to further problems in the *Final Report*, including:

- a distorted and naturalistic presentation of the gospel, which neglects its fundamentally supernatural nature, while emphasising its association with “values” such as “open to a diversity of people”, “the protection of creation” and the “transformation of unjust social structures” (Chapter I)
- an anthropocentric understanding of the gospel that alleges, for example, that the gospel is about “the dignity of the person, his/her freedom and respect for his/her rights” (Chapter I)
- the omission of any discussion of the fundamental vocation of the family with regards to man’s final end, which is union with God in the beatific vision of heaven (Chapter I)
- a misleading presentation of the nature of mercy due to lack of proper consideration of divine and human justice (Chapters I & V)
- a confused understanding of the relationship between the Church and the processes of historical development (see Chapters I & II)
- the omission of any discussion of the natural law, which leads to the conflation of the natural and supernatural orders and threatens the understanding that moral principles are immutable (Chapter III)
- a call for changes to the terminology which the Church uses to communicate her teachings, which threaten the Church’s ability to effectively transmit the divine revelation entrusted to her (Chapter VI).

The *Final Report* of the Ordinary Synod gravely endangers the most vulnerable members of the human family through its omissions and distortions of Catholic doctrine. It is clearly the duty of all who are concerned about the protection of the family to resolutely oppose the approach adopted by both synods. To fail to oppose doctrines and actions harmful to the integrity of the Catholic faith and to the family, because of a false sense of obedience, would be a grave betrayal of our duty of fidelity to God and to the weakest amongst us.