



Synod of Bishops in Rome

Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment

Statement by Bishop Dr Felix Genn (Münster)

At the Synod of Bishops in Rome, Bishop Dr Felix Genn (Münster) spoke on the Instrumentum laboris. We document his statement before the Synod:

With sincere thanks for the excellent *Instrumentum laboris*, I would like to focus on three points that seem important to me. They refer to part II and part III:

1. Concrete forms of catechesis are mentioned. I would like to briefly tell you that in our diocese I have found a way to get in touch with young people during the year. I meet them on different Sundays at 5 p.m. and on various Friday evenings.

The first way is the form of a catechesis which brings me into direct conversation with the young people and during which we also use various digital media. The other form consists of youth prayer evenings, in which I convey the word of the Annunciation to the young people in a catechetical way by means of a prayer. The time on Sunday seems to be remarkable, but those in charge of youth ministry have told me that the time at 5 p.m. for young people is a time they can hardly fill with leisure activities. Many are coming, however!

2. A detailed chapter in the document speaks of the art of accompaniment. Number 115 refers to “meekness towards our teacher”. I would like to point out the dangers of this accompaniment, which are, however, also mentioned again in various places, especially in number 130. In connection with the debate on the forms of abuse, I would like to mention a separate point. It has become apparent that sexual abuse has also occurred during confession: in the sacred space of the sacrament and the person! Just terrible! Therefore, it is important to point this out: There is also the spiritual abuse of imposing my decision, which I consider to be right for them, on others instead of giving them the freedom to decide. The accompaniment must take place in the

Kaiserstraße 161
53113 Bonn

Postal address
Postfach 29 62
53019 Bonn

Tel.: 0228-103 -214
Fax: 0228-103 -254
Email: pressestelle@dbk.de
Website: www.dbk.de

Editor
P. Dr Hans Langendörfer SJ
Secretary of the German
Bishops' Conference

attitude described in number 15 of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: allowing the Creator to deal with the creature.

3. Finally, I would like to emphasize what is said about the importance of *auctoritas* and the repeated affirmation in the document that young people must be the protagonists of youth ministry. I would like to underline that we have to accompany the young people, by listening intensely to evoke the truth that already lives in them in an almost maieutic manner, and from there also lead them to an inner conversion of following Christ. So they will feel that following Christ is beautiful and good and corresponds to the truth of life.

Thank you for your attention.