SUMMARY

SYNOD OF BISHOPS IN THE POST-CONCILIAR RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH (1965–2018)

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„As by the Lord's appointment St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles constitute one Apostolic College, so also the Bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter, and the bishops - the the successors of the Apostles, are in communion with one another. [...] The College or Episcopal Body has authoritative authority only when it is taken together with the Bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter, as its Head, and with the latter's superior authority over all, both pastors and of the faithful" (LG 22).

Following this idea - after many proposals from the bishops, by the will of Pope Paul VI - the Synod of Bishops was established on 15 September 1965 with the *Motu Proprio Apostolica sollicitudo*. It was a new central institution of the Church, made up of bishops - delegates from the individual local episcopates of the world. The meetings of the Synod of Bishops were intended to promote a close relationship between the Bishop of Rome and the whole episcopate. The bishops delegated to the Synod of Bishops were to become helpful to the Pope in defending and developing faith and morals, as well as in preserving and strengthening church discipline. The function of this new institution was defined as an advisory subject to the pope, so that the „foundation of authority" remained with the bishop of Rome.

An analysis of the organisational documents and the themes of the Synod of Bishops meetings held testify to its real impact on the life of the Church, on the development of faith based on divine revelation and on the daily existence of the community. One can also point to the changes taking place in the Synod of Bishops itself, the main criterion of which was the Church's effectiveness in evangelising activity.

Taking into account the achievements of *Vaticanum II* and the decision of Pope Paul VI, initiating a new ecclesial institution, one can pose a research problem, which is: genesis and influence of the Synod of Bishops on the renewal of the Church after the Second Vatican Council.

Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to answer the question: how did the Synod of Bishops come into being and what role did it play in the post-Conciliar transformation of the Church? The research undertaken in the field of fundamental ecclesiology has been carried out in the theological, legal and pastoral aspect,

assuming the uniqueness of this institution in the community of the Church. This work also has a practical purpose - by showing the inspiring role of the synod, it may contribute to greater co-responsibility and involvement in the pastoral affairs of the Church of the entire People of God. Bearing in mind the sentence that „every renewal of the Church consists in an increase in fidelity to her vocation", the final conclusions and the practical indications formulated may not only help to know and understand the Synod of Bishops better, but also to make aware the current postulate for ecclesial life formulated by Pope Francis: „synodal conversion".

The theme formulated: „The Synod of Bishops in the post-conciliar renewal of the Church (1965-2018)". - calls for some elaboration. The timeframe of the Church renewal under analysis has been defined as the time between 1965 and 2018. However, in order to outline the historical and theological context, this paper begins with a description of the biblical-patristic tradition from which the Synod of Bishops originated. A watershed time for the Church was the period of *Vaticanum II* (1962-1965), when the Synod of Bishops was institutionally born on 15 September 1965. The year 2018, was also a special time for the Church - this is when the revision of the norms for the life and activity of the Synod of Bishops, announced by Pope Francis, appears. What is peculiar to the present work - for an update and complete analysis of the topic, the changes brought to the Church by the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio* (2018) were also taken into account. And to show the permanent renewal that is taking place in and through the Synod of Bishops, an update on the latest synod - according to the 2018 guidelines - has not been omitted either. This will be the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops: „For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission".

The search conducted indicates numerous theological, canonical and historical works on the Synod of Bishops. Research on synodal sessions was initiated by G. Caprile. Monographic publications on the Synod of Bishops have been produced by, among others: M. Alcalá, J.I. Arrieta, M.C. Bravi, A. Fernandez, F. Dupre La Tour, D.R. Foley, A. Indelicato, G.P. Milano and a Polish

theologian-canonist: T. Rozkrut. Detailed issues related to the Synod of Bishops are also mentioned in numerous publications and articles.

Looking at the Church-wide scholarly output on the Synod of Bishops, it is easy to notice that most of these are works in Italian, Spanish, English and French.

The source material for this thesis were the documents of the Church, with particular emphasis on the documents of the Second Vatican Council, documents elaborated during synodal assemblies and papal statements. Their full presentation can be found in the bibliographic list of sources of this work. It is worth noting, however, that the most important documents will be those regulating the creation and functioning of the Synod of Bishops - among them: *Motu Proprio Apostolica sollicitudo* (of 1965), the Regulations of the Synod of Bishops *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum* (of 1966, as amended), the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio* (of 2018) and the Instruction on the Organisation of Synodal Assemblies and the Activities of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops (of 2018).

It should be added that the work includes an appendix consisting of source documents translated into Polish and biographical notes showing the uniqueness of the persons holding the posts of general secretaries of the Synod of Bishops.

In the bibliography, apart from source texts, there are studies and auxiliary literature. The studies included are those which deal with the Synod of Bishops - they allowed for a proper reading of the content of the research material. The studies included are those which deal with the Synod of Bishops - they allowed for a proper reading of the content of the research material. The supporting literature consists of other positions, which indirectly concern the issues discussed in the dissertation. If not stated otherwise, all foreign-language texts - in the author's translation.

In the implementation of the aim of the dissertation, the research method has been applied consisting in the analysis and criticism of sources and the synthesis of research results, which have been supplemented by the methods of observation, comparison and inference. The method adopted in the dissertation includes the following research elements: collection, description, analysis,

and characterisation of sources connected with the reception of the renewal which is taking place in the Church by the Synod of Bishops.

The effect of the research has been presented in a systematic presentation, according to the adopted structure: title page in Polish and English, table of contents in Polish and English, list of abbreviations, introduction, six chapters, conclusion, summary in English, bibliography, appendices.

The first chapter of the following work is devoted to the characteristics of the idea of synodality in the Church. The study of Sacred Scripture, historical events and the Tradition of the Church made it possible to show the *approfondimento* of the Synod of Bishops.

The first paragraph describes the biblical basis of the Synod of Bishops. The second paragraph is devoted to a synthesis of selected synodal assemblies. Paragraph three is a description of the synodal 'spirit' and structure in the Eastern Churches. The fourth paragraph, on the other hand, characterizes the institutions supporting the pope before *Vaticanum II*.

The second chapter deals with the timing of the Synod of Bishops as an institution - that is, the period of preparation for and duration of *Vaticanum II*. Bearing in mind that the Synod of Bishops came into being *fuori le mura Vaticano II* - that is, outside the conciliar walls - a discussion of the proposal for a new form of collegiality has here allowed the context and needs for which the institution of the Synod of Bishops was set up to be illustrated.

The first paragraph of this chapter deals with an analysis of the formation of the ecclesial terminology which made it possible to institutionalise the Synod of Bishops. For a systematic presentation, the following paragraphs of this chapter are divided according to the stages of formation of the Synod of Bishops: the first demands for a formalized collegiality made in the preparatory period for the Second Vatican Council, the proposals put forward and discussed during *Vaticanum II*, and the conciliar proposals on collegiality.

The third chapter contains a presentation of the legal documents that determined the creation and further functioning of the Synod of Bishops, showing the internal transformation of the institution.

The documents discussed are presented in chronological order: *Motu Proprio Apostolica sollicitudo* (1965), the Regulations of the Synod of Bishops *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum* (1966 as amended), the Code of Canon Law of John Paul II (1983), the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio* (2018) and the Instruction on the Organisation of Synodal Assemblies and the Synod of Bishops (2012 as amended):

The fourth chapter presents the structure of the Synod of Bishops according to the current legal requirements of 2018. The research of this issue was carried out on the basis of sources: *Episcopalis communio* and the Instructions on the Organisation of Synodal Assemblies and the Activities of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops.

The presentation of this chapter was shown through the following topics: the rules for the election of the participants of the Synod of Bishops, the members and functions of the Synod of Bishops bodies, the issue of the validity of the synodal mandate and the guidelines for the process of the activities of the Synod of Bishops.

The fifth chapter is a description of all synodal sessions to date. Thirty-seven assemblies of the Synod of Bishops have been held in Rome since 1965.

The chapter is divided according to the types of assemblies into: general sessions - 18 (including the division into ordinary: 15 and extraordinary: 3); special sessions - 11, particular sessions - 8.

With a view to updating the theme under study, the chapter has also been enriched with the presentation of a new perspective on the Synod of Bishops - the synodal process, which will be realised for the first time during the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, entitled „For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission".

The sixth chapter of this work deals with the problematic issues of the ecclesiological significance of the Synod of Bishops.

The successively discussed topics - *collegialitas Ecclesiae* of the Synod of Bishops, *representatio Ecclesiae* of the Synod of Bishops, *sensus Ecclesiae* of the Synod of Bishops, and *communio Ecclesiae* of the Synod of Bishops -

have been edited to show the author's thought: „The ever-present task of the Synod of Bishops is *plantatio Ecclesiae* in the contemporary world".