

2023 Pastor's Report

Pastoral visits continue and I really wish someone would go and see Doris Essenburg since I am unable to see her. I really think she would like someone to visit.

Jim Weeks does amazingly well in the big house, he would appreciate a drop in visit: Jim drives only to church and for a hair cut. Henry Schroeder is more settled in now with Tim and Hope but his hearing is a difficulty. Joyce Townsend loves her place, was upset that her good friend there will be gone soon but her response was casual and well, "that will happen to me also." Richmond South, East Harbor folks, are happy and content.

I tend to my personal care with my spiritual advisor, *it's not Jack*, getting out for lunch or dinner with friends, check in on book club, take in movies, and when I can I go to the beach and continue my spiritual walks. Henry Brinker called his walks 'prayer walks' but really it was his smoking time.

The New Baltimore pastors get together and that gathering is really a support group. Eastern Association pastors are gathering monthly as does COM [Committee on Ministry]. FYI: A COM book is in Helen's office if anyone wants to check it out.

The Nehring Memorial was beautiful and THANK YOU Don and Donna for being good neighbors. They offered to handle the hospitality because Russ was such a good friend and neighbor.

The Dunsmore Baptism was special and there will be another Baptism in late August or early September, also of the Dunsmore family.

Paulette is in a long term residence and get this, the administrator of the place lives four doors away from our church and it is another relative two doors away that asked and made a donation to use the lot for his cement workers to park. They used the lot for parking on the 17th for a graduation party. Jason, from *Concrete Replacement*, gets our worship each weekend.

The alternative Prayer of St. Francis was from the Boundary Training.

Something to think about: Devin does the camera each weekend but we do need to have someone else know how to do that ministry. The invite to others to participate in worship really needs to happen!

Respectfully submitted, KatieD+, pastor

p. 3 and following is just something of which we should all be aware.

***FYI re LGBTQ+ and Roman Catholic Church
Statement of Francis DeBernardo, New Ways executive
director, on***

the release today of the RC Synod's latest working document:

It is nothing short of an amazing and true blessing that LGBTQ+ people were mentioned twice in the Vatican's working document for the assembly of the Synod in October, which was released today. The language and style of the document, called the *Instrumentum Laboris*, is highly generalized, mentioning very few specific topics, so getting not just one, but two mentions in the document signifies that LGBTQ+ issues are priorities that cannot be ignored as the Synod participants continue to reflect on building a church that, as the document says, welcomes all and respects diversity.

For LGBTQ+ Catholics, who for decades have called on the church's leaders to have a conversation, this synodal process has signaled the beginning of such a process. Today's document emphasizes that the excluded "are bearers of Good News that the whole community needs to hear and that "whenever we encounter another person in love, we learn something new about God." LGBTQ+ people are indeed bearers of Good News inviting the church to learn more about God.

The synod will certainly not resolve all the issues that LGBTQ+ Catholics have raised, but this document indicates they are taken seriously by church leaders. The document's promise for respecting diversity, encounter, and dialogue ensures that LGBTQ+ Catholics will continue to be included in the synodal journey, with their concerns being taken seriously by church leaders. All of this paves the way for ongoing conversations in the future.

New Ways Ministry Praises New Synod Document That Includes LGBTQ+ People

June 20, 2023/3 Comments/in [Anti-LGBTQ Criminalization](#), [Hierarchy](#), [LGBTQ Clergy & Religious](#), [Marriage & Family](#), [New Ways Ministry](#), [Parish Life & Pastoral Care](#), [Politics & Human Rights](#), [Pope Francis](#), [Schools & Youth](#), [Synod on Synodality](#), [Theology & Church Teaching](#), [Transgender](#) /by [Francis DeBernardo](#), Editor



The following is a statement from Francis DeBernardo, New Ways Ministry’s Executive Director, regarding the working document for Synod’s October assembly, which was released today.

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building a church that, as the document says, welcomes all and respects diversity.

Simply using the term “LGBTQ+” is progress. In 2013, Pope Francis was the first pontiff to use the word “gay.” In 2018, the working document for the Synod on Youth, used the term “LGBT,” the first time that acronym occurred in a Vatican document. In this current document, the use of “LGBTQ+” indicates that the Vatican is not only respecting the terms that members of this community prefer, but is also being more inclusive of various gender and sexual identities.

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As we have seen throughout the synodal process, which began in October 2021, LGBTQ+ issues were one of the most mentioned and discussed topics not only in the U.S. and other Western nations, but around the world. Along with concerns about the role of women in the church, clericalism, and colonialism, LGBTQ+ issues were one of the few topics that had resonance in discussions worldwide.

As the Synod progressed from the local phase to the national phase to the continental phase, and now arrives at the global phase, we have also seen that the language of the documents at each of these phases has become increasingly and necessarily more general, moving away from specific topics to address themes that underlie the challenges and desires for developing the church's community. Discussing the church's relationship with LGBTQ+ people has survived each of these levels of generalization, however, and has appeared as an item in the successive reports, indicating that concern for this issue will be a major and critical topic of discussion at the October assembly.

The Catholic Church, however, need not wait until the synodal process is concluded to grow in its relationship with LGBTQ+ people. Today's document insists the church "stand alongside the most marginalized in public debate, lending a voice to their cause and denouncing situations of injustice and discrimination whilst seeking to avoid complicity with those responsible for injustice." LGBTQ+ people, particularly where they are criminalized

and persecuted, need the church's solidarity now—including an end to discrimination in the church. The document is clear: non-discrimination is already a Catholic value on which we can act.

Overall, the **Instrumentum Laboris** offers a promising outline for the next phase of the Synod. By identifying three critical areas—communion, mission, and participation—the Synod leaders have selected topics that desperately need to be addressed for the church to continue to become a more synodal institution, a promise that was made over 50 years ago at Vatican II.

–Francis DeBernardo, New Ways Ministry, June 20, 2023

