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JUBILEE of the *Synodal teams*
& *Participatory bodies*



The Church, hope, and the future

Cardinal Mario Grech,
Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the Synod

No other author in twentieth-century literature has offered a more beautiful depiction of hope than Charles Péguy. In his work *The Portal of the Mystery of Hope*, Péguy provides us with beautiful, profound, and thought-provoking insights about the second theological virtue, that is, hope.

He writes that *Faith sees what is, Hope sees what will be, and Love loves what is*. These words offer much food for thought about our faith, our hope, and our love. In my view, they serve as a very fitting key to understand what the Church is, or better, to understand the way we live as Church, because ecclesiology is never just a concept but also always a lived experience. Péguy's poetic reflection offers a spiritual architecture, a theological compass, and an inspirational framework for renewal. In the context of synodality, these lines offer a profound invitation to reimagine how the Church listens, discerns, and walks together.

I wish to begin with the third virtue: love, which is the most evident. We love the Church, and that is why we are here; this is why we work every day for the good of the Church. We enthusiastically cherish its mission. There is little to be gained materially in serving the Church. Love is not an emotion we feel for the Church, but the way we inhabit it. Nothing justifies our commitment to the Church unless our work is motivated by love. The various charisms and ministries which we have within the Church, and the way we perform our duties, are a clear testimony of our love for Christ's Church and its mission. This love is what makes communion possible and animates our journey together.

Love is the virtue that holds us steady when everything else feels uncertain. Love does not wait for perfection to embrace—it chooses to engage with reality as it is, with all its fragility, complexity, and beauty. In the context of synodality, love is not passive sentiment; it is an active commitment to communion, even when the path is unclear or the conversations are difficult. Only love can make us stay at the table when understanding fails.

Love is the decision to remain present. It is the refusal to disengage when tensions arise, the willingness to listen when voices clash, and the courage to stay at the table when consensus seems distant. It is the spiritual maturity that recognizes that unity is not uniformity, and that true communion, grounded in the Holy Spirit, is forged not in agreement alone, but in mutual respect and shared purpose.

In the synodal process, love expresses itself through tenderness and fidelity—tenderness toward those who feel unheard or excluded, and fidelity to the Church as a living body, called to

grow and evolve. Love is what allows us to hold space for one another, to honor the dignity of every voice, and to trust that the Spirit is at work even in our disagreements.

In fact, love goes hand in hand with faith. We not only love the Church, but we also believe in it. We see it as a sign, symbol, and sacrament of God's presence in the world, of His salvific word and actions. Our Church is not perfect — far from it — it has never been, and never will be. Nonetheless, through faith, we can distinguish the wheat from the weeds, God's grace from human sin. Why? Because we believe. Because within this human institution, we see something that is more than human — something divine. Faith is not blind optimism, but the clear-eyed recognition of reality. Faith sees the Church as it is—its vitality and its wounds, its traditions and its tensions, its unity and its polarizations. In a synodal journey, this means beginning with radical listening: to all the People of God, to the cries of the marginalized, and to the wisdom embedded in tradition. Faith anchors us in truth, and truth is the only soil in which genuine transformation can grow.

Péguy does not only speak about faith and love, but also about hope. This virtue, in the way described by him, has much to do with the future. While faith and love relate to the present, hope relates to the future. Hope reminds us that not everything is complete. Applied to the Church, hope is a reassurance—it tells us that the Church has a future – that the holy people of God have a future! It also denotes a sense of mission, for we have to construct this future. But, ultimately, let us also keep in mind that hope is a theological virtue—it comes from God and leads to God. Hope is not merely a reassurance and the bestowing of a mission; it is also a reminder that the future is God's, and we are in His hands. Our hope is rooted in the person of Jesus Christ and the certainty of what God has promised in Him.

Hope and the future demand from us a sense of letting go, of surrender. Hope teaches us to work without possessing what we build. But we also know that the future is bigger than the past and present, and this is primarily God's future. We put our work, our mission in His hands. In the synodal journey, hope sustains us along the delicate and strenuous path of discernment and conversion.

Péguy, in his work, appears to prioritize hope and the future. There is much to learn from this, and I am not merely interested in arguing against the pessimism that often grips the Church. If the future is in God's hands, then this grants us liberty and humility regarding our actions in the present. We do our part with humility, without pigeonholing God into our categories or limiting the future within our present understanding. We perform our duty with inner freedom, knowing that ultimately, the future belongs to God, who can heal our imperfections. The phrase from Luke's Gospel comes to mind: "We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty." (Lk 17:10). Perhaps we are not entirely unworthy, but nevertheless, we are unworthy compared to God's grace. We have simply done our duty; the rest belongs to God, and the future is His. We hope, not because we foresee the outcome, but because we have met the One who holds the future.

This is a key to understanding the synodal process. Much has been accomplished, and it has been done because we love the Church and believe that today, the Church is called to express its nature through a synodal approach. But let us also look ahead, remembering that there is more to be done; a truth we will increasingly recognize as this meeting unfolds. Yet this is not all for us to do.

The future belongs to God, which is why we look forward with hope. We also look forward with humility — we have done our part; the rest is in God's hands. This is why we face the future with freedom: we are not bound to our projects; the Church belongs to God, who will complete, change, and perfect what we have done. This is what hope truly means.

This should, therefore, be the sentiment that characterizes our jubilee celebration, especially in this year dedicated to hope and in the present phase of the reception and implementation of the fruits of the Synod. We are here because we love the Church and we believe in the Church, but perhaps more importantly, because we hope in the Church. It is a hope that is neither based on our dreams nor on our ideas, but on the conviction that the Church is God's Church and that its future is assured.

For this reason, as Péguy reminds us, *hope loves what has not yet come*—what will unfold in the future and in eternity.