

Dear colleagues,

we would like the Assisi meeting to take place in the synodal style of Pope Francis.

We offer you some ideas from Pope Francis' Address of his holiness

for the opening of the Synod of 9 October 2021, which we would like to be the soul of our Symposium.

*We await you "from many roads and from different Churches, each bearing your own questions and hopes" and with the certainty that " the Spirit will guide us and give us the grace to move forward together, to listen to one another and to embark on a discernment of the times in which we are living, in solidarity with the struggles and aspirations of all humanity."*

We recall that *"The Synod has three key words: communion, participation and mission. Communion and mission are theological terms describing the mystery of the Church, which we do well to keep in mind."* [...]

But the third word, participation, is decisive. *"The words "communion" and "mission" can risk remaining somewhat abstract, unless we cultivate an ecclesial praxis that expresses the concreteness of synodality at every step of our journey and activity, encouraging real involvement on the part of each and all."*

*"Without real participation by the People of God, talk about communion risks remaining a devout wish... To participate all: it is an indispensable ecclesial commitment!"*

This is why we want you to be numerous: the more we are in Assisi, the better we will be able to give common sense to our being Catholic doctors in Europe today.

*"And so, brothers and sisters, let us experience this moment of encounter, listening and reflection as a season of grace . The Synod.. offers us the opportunity to become a listening Church, to break out of our routine.. to stop and listen. To listen to the Spirit in adoration and prayer [... ] To listen to our brothers and sisters speak of their hopes and of the crises of faith present in different parts of the world [...] Finally, it offers us the opportunity to become a Church of closeness. Let us keep going back to God's own "style", which is closeness, compassion and tender love. God has always operated that way. If we do not become this Church of closeness with attitudes of compassion and tender love, we will not be the Lord's Church [...]. A Church that does not stand aloof from life, but immerses herself in today's problems and needs, bandaging wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God. Let us not forget God's style, which must help us: closeness, compassion and tender love."*

Here are the reasons for our Symposium: listening, narrating, sharing the experiences of compassion lived in our professional lives, in the various care settings, with doubts, anxieties, fears, challenges. And then, after listening and sharing, start a journey together of renewed evangelical witness, together, in Europe, with the style of competence and compassion, with the style of God.

For this reason, we invite you to involve both elderly doctors and young doctors, so that they can narrate each other's experiences in an intergenerational exchange. It is from the sharing of young and old that the present is lived with courage and responsibility and that the future can be dreamed and built together.

*“If, amid difficulties, we can practise this kind of intergenerational dialogue, “we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future.[...] To look to the future in order to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom. Together, we can learn from one another”.* (Message of his holiness Pope Francis for the celebration of the 55th world day of peace, 1 January 2022).

The final reflections of our Symposium will be our specific contribution as doctors and health workers to the synodal journey of the Catholic Church and we will involve the Bishops of our nations and our beloved Pope Francis.

We are aware that it is an ambitious goal, but together we can achieve it and in the best way.

See you in Assisi, everyone!

Vincenzo Defilippis

President of FEAMC



Mons. Jacques Suaudeau

Assistent Generale of FEAMC

