

**Vox Populi**  
**11 October 2023**

The reports unfolding this week in the Middle East following the unprecedented attacks and responses are shocking and distressing.

In a region that has known conflict for many decades, this week has sadly carved another date into its bloody history.

The violent attacks by Hamas militants against Israeli civilians - children, the young and elderly, families – and the abductions and hostage-taking demonstrate disregard for human life and dignity.

As a result many Palestinian families are now suffering and grieving loss of loved ones following the terrorist-inflicted conflict which began at a music festival during a Jewish holy day.

All people of faith and goodwill must be devastated by this escalation of terror and war and be asking what does real peace look like for everyone, and how can we get there?

Speaking from Rome this week Bishop Anthony Randazzo said terrorism and war do not lead to resolutions, only to further anguish, death and suffering.

“I will continue to pray for peace and that we do not see the potential incalculable consequences for the whole region,” Bishop Anthony said.

Our prayers can have a powerful impact, especially during this month of October which is dedicated to the Holy Rosary.

Pray to Our Lady for an end to the devastating loss of civilian lives, the release of hostages and for renewed peacebuilding efforts.

**News from the Synod, Rome:**

The XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome is reaching its halfway point.

The overall theme is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.”

During the first week, around 460 participants met in small groups to discuss the first part of *Instrumentum Laboris*, the document guiding discussions during the monthlong assembly.

These discussions centred on “For a Synodal Church: An Integral Experience” and the experience of the people of God journeying together over the last two years.

This second week the gathering switched from small groups to a plenary assembly with the theme “A communion that radiates”.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo was also elected this week to the synod’s Information

Commission.

For your interest these two links provide a background to the Synod from EWTN [A Look at the First Week of the Synod on Synodality | EWTN News In Depth October 6, 2023 -](#)

[YouTube](#)

and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWGT34gPEno&t=70s>