



Vox Populi
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Another very busy schedule at the Synod on Synodality at the Vatican this week. Discussions included the possibility of revising canon law and addressing equality for women in the Church.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo was asked to join a Holy See press briefing in which he clarified the distinction between the “procedural or situational canon law.”

“It’s one very large, ongoing process,” he said. “The law itself of course can change with the needs of the Church... [procedural] law can be adapted according to the needs of particular communities and situations and circumstances. Other laws are more deeply rooted in the Second Vatican Council and Sacred Scripture.

“So it is not just a matter of changing them to accommodate the changing circumstances of the world,” he said. “We have to first ask what was in the mind of the legislator, what was the mind of the council, what were the theological, spiritual, pastoral fruits that led to those being prepared, not just in the 1960s but over the last 2000 years of the community of the Church.”

Prof Reneé Köhler-Ryan, Dean of Philosophy and Theology at the University of Notre Dame Australia and one of the lay women delegates at the Synod, also took part in the same press briefing.

After being asked about whether Synod participants have addressed equality for women in the Church, she commented that she doesn't focus on the fact that she's not a priest.

Dr Kohler-Ryan also added there is currently a lot of focus on women's ordination. "What happens when we place too much emphasis on this question is we forget about what women need throughout the world," she said.

"We could be making sure that professional women are not forced to choose between having families and being out there in the workforce; we could be doing more to make sure that families are supported in all kinds of way."

In his role of president of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania, Bishop Anthony also spoke about digital evangelization and how that affects different cultures.

"When we talk about the synodal way of walking together, we really should be talking about how we might swim or boat together," he joked. "There are people in the Church and communities of Oceania who are vast distances away from anyone else, and they live in deep isolation and so communication can be a real challenge."

"This raises for us even deeper questions with regards to the way we speak, the way we act, the way we involve various people in the community of the Church and in the society in which we live," he said.

"One of the wonderful experiences for me here is sitting at a table with people who come from all over the world, who are not just from Europe, who don't come from traditional European communities of the Church.

"That sounds very synodal to me."

Bishop Anthony sent a video message to the people of Broken Bay and can be viewed at <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/news/latest-news>