



*Catholic Church Reform Int'l.*  
A global network seeking renewal of the Church

August 29, 2014

Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri  
Secretary General for the Synod of Bishops  
Palazzo del Bramante,  
Via della Conciliazione, 34  
00193 Roma, Italy

**VIA ELECTRONIC AND EXPRESS MAIL**

Dear Cardinal Baldisseri,

These are times of joy and vigor in the Church. His Holiness Pope Francis has called us to a path of accompaniment, of “walking with” the other, and reflection on the meaning and practice of mercy: if one “searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?”

In response to the joy-filled call and example of Pope Francis we have set our hearts upon a journey to accompany our beloved Church to a better place in the eyes of all the people of God. Our particular concern is to expand participation of the faithful in the life and decisions of the Church. Vatican II foresaw the significance of this participation for the future of the Church, and encouraged participation by instituting collaborative structures in parishes and dioceses. Pope Francis and the International Theological Commission have added their voices to this encouragement.

When Pope Francis called an Extraordinary Synod on the Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization, his vision energized us to participate by having regional dialogues and conducting surveys in preparation for a Forum on the Family that we are holding in Rome two days prior to the start of the Extraordinary Synod.

We cordially invite you and members of your staff to come and see the results of our preparations:

**Forum on the Family: Listening to the Faithful**  
**Thursday, October 2 and Friday, October 3, 2014**  
*9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day*  
**Oratory of San Francesco Saverio del Caravita**  
**Via del Caravita, 7, 00186 Roma, Italy**

Our program schedule is posted at <http://www.catholicchurchreform.com/romeSchedule.html>. A courtesy copy of the current schedule is attached.

In particular, we have taken great care to assemble the results of our dialogues and surveys from our worldwide network of individuals and over a hundred organizations in more than sixty countries. We will showcase the compilation of survey results at our Forum and in the packet of materials being prepared for the Forum. We hope the unique demographic breadth and perspective of the survey may also make the packet useful to you and to those attending the Synod.

We would welcome you and your staff as our guests at our Forum. If you cannot come, we would appreciate meeting with you while representatives of our network are in Rome between October 1<sup>st</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate that you and your staff will be busy in the days leading up to the Synod, but we stand ready to meet at any time and place that is convenient for you.

**Please advise us as to your availability.**

If it is convenient to meet with you, or if you or a staff member come to the Forum, we will be happy to provide you with copies of the packet of materials when we meet. Alternatively, please provide the name of a staff member and a time and place on Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, or Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, where we may deliver the packets. Unless you wish a different number we will provide twenty copies.

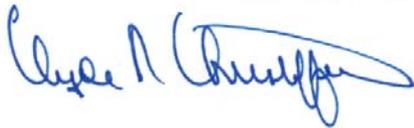
**Please advise us so that we may arrange for delivery of the packet of materials.**

Finally, we would be honoured to have a representative from our international network attend the Synod itself.

**Please advise us regarding this possibility.**

We pray for you and for the guidance of the Spirit so that the members of the Synod will be overcome with the joy of the Gospel to find a way forward for families.

Yours in Christ,



For the Synod Liaison Committee  
On behalf of Catholic Church Reform International

**Forum on the Family: Listening to the Faithful**  
October 2-3, 2014 Caravita Oratorio, Rome, Italy

**Thursday, October 2, 2014**

9:00 – 9:45 AM	Arrivals, informal conversation
9:45 – 10:00	Introduction and opening prayer
10:00 – 10:10	Welcome from Sr. Joan Chittister (by video)
10:10 – 10:30	John Buggy: our recommendations to the Synod Where we began and where we're going next
10:30 – 11:15	Robert Mickens, How to Negotiate our Way through the Vatican Bureaucracy
11:15 – 11:30	Questions and comments from the audience
11:30 – 11:45	short break
11:45 – 12:15	Marilyn Hatton: The importance of women's role in decision-making in the Church within the context of <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i>
12:15 – 12:30 PM	Questions and comments from the audience
12:30 – 2:00	Lunch break
2:00 – 2:15	Convening – Rene Reid
2:15 – 3:00	Paul Collins, What can we tell about this synod from what has happened in past synods?
3:00 -- 3:15	Questions and comments from the audience
3:15 -- 3:30	short break
3:30 -- 4:15	Sr. Mary John Mananzan Developing a non-patriarchal form of family relationships
4:30	Press Conference with Q & A from press
5:00	Wine and cheese reception

**Friday, October 3, 2014**

9:00 AM	Gathering Welcome
9:30 – 10:45	Colloquium with numerous reform groups: "What are their hopes for the Synod?" "What are the next steps for us?"
10:45 – 11:00	short break
11:00	Questions and discussion from all participants
12:30 – 2:00 PM	Lunch
2:00	Breakout sessions: clarify mandate to be delivered to the Synod
3:00	Janet Hauter, Presentation on World Meeting of Families 2015, "People's Synod" 2017
3:45	Liturgy (Fr. Keith Brennan, celebrant)
5:00	Wine and cheese reception