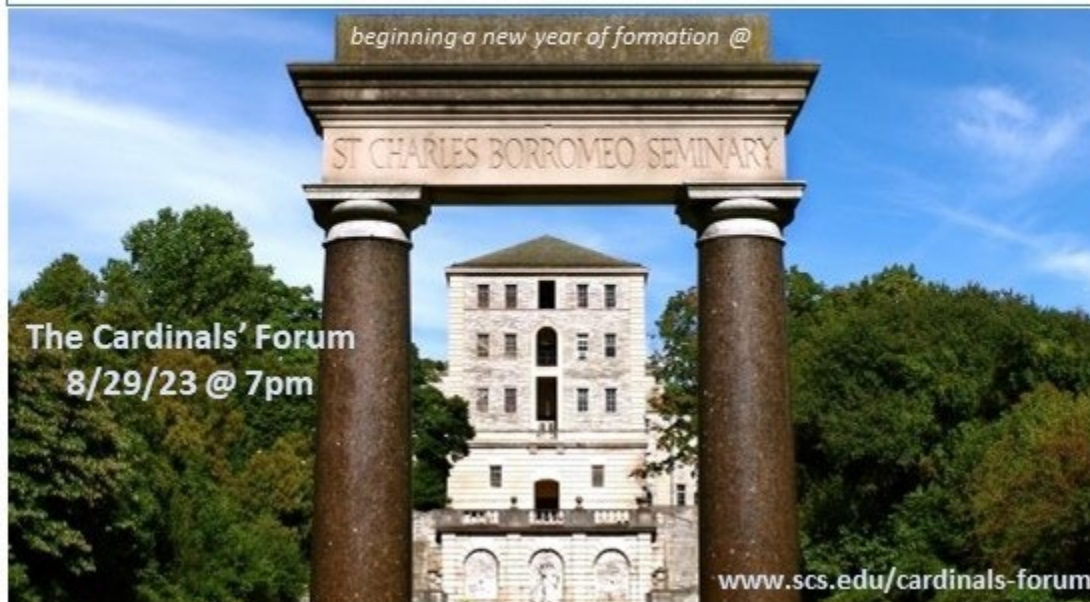


SYNODALITY ...

a style, a mentality, a spirituality, a pastoral model



introduction by

Rev. Patrick Brady

Vice-Rector of the Seminary

I am pleased to welcome you who are here in person and you who are watching online to this opening academic event for the new year of formation.

We call this discussion series “The Cardinals’ Forum” in reference to the first endowed faculty chairs here at the Seminary, which were named in honor of two distinguished prelates in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Recently, we added a non-cardinal to the list of endowed professors. Our three professors will begin the discussion, which we invite you to continue, here this evening and beyond.

This forum was created as a way to speak about contemporary events in the life of the Church. Perhaps none has been more talked about, both positively and negatively, than this year's, namely, the upcoming **Synod on Synodality!**

More a process than a singular event, the Church's focus on synodality seeks to inculcate a specific way of living and operating by which the Church as the People of God "reveals and gives substance to her being as communion when all her members journey together, gather in assembly and take an active part in her evangelizing mission." Its stated aim is "to provide an opportunity for the entire People of God to discern together how to move forward on the path towards being a more synodal Church in the long-term." (www.synod.va)

But our interest in this topic is more than just theoretical. As the working document for the first session of the general assembly of the synod states, "Formation is the indispensable means to make the synodal way of proceeding a pastoral model for the Church's life and action." As a result, it continues, "Candidates for ordained Ministry must be trained in a synodal style and mentality" so that "there is a clearer and more decisive orientation towards formation for a life of communion, mission and participation." (*Instrumentum Laboris*, #59).

Our hope tonight is to advance that synodal orientation for our seminary community as we begin another year of formation. Here's how we will do that:

First, each of our panelists will each offer a brief commentary, with thoughts on the Synod arising from their respective areas of experience.

Following their *five-minute* presentations, we will allot about 45 minutes to our assembled audience to pose some more ideas or raise some questions.

Our purpose is not to advocate for or against Synod, but rather to discuss together how this particularly ecclesial style, which "qualifies the life and mission of the Church," impacts our own work in the Church, particularly in the realm of formation.

We will conclude with a final word and a final blessing.

So, with that little introduction, let me introduce the three panelists:.

Our first speaker holds the [*John Cardinal Krol Chair of Moral Theology*](#), a faculty position he inaugurated back in 1990 and returned to in 2019 after retiring as President of the National Catholic Bioethics Center. Please welcome **Dr. John Haas**.

Our second panelist holds the [*John Cardinal Foley Chair of Homiletics & Social Communications*](#), a faculty position he inaugurated in 2017 and has held full-time since 2017. Please welcome Oblate **Father Thomas Dailey**.

Our third panelist holds the [*Lucille M. Francesco Chair in Sacred Music*](#), which he inaugurated in 2018. Please welcome **Dr. Nathan Knutson**.

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