

# Cardinal Burke: Vatican's Synod Document 'Is a Direct Attack on the Lordship of Christ,' It's 'Apostasy!'

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Cardinal Raymond Burke, who serves on the highest court at the Vatican and is the former Archbishop of St. Louis, Mo., denounced the Amazonian synod occurring at the Vatican this week, describing its working document as a "direct attack on the Lordship of Christ." He added that the synod, along with a pending synod in Germany, is undermining the "catholicity of the Catholic Church."

In a September interview with Sohrab Ahmari and published in *First Things* magazine, Cardinal Burke explained what a synod is supposed to be and how church leaders today are perverting the process to advance heterodox and heretical ideas.

"The fundamental concept of a synod was to call together representatives of the clergy and the lay people to see how the Church could more effectively teach and more effectively apply her discipline," said Burke. "Synods never had anything to do with changing doctrine or with changing discipline."

However, "the working document of the Pan-Amazonian synod is a direct attack on the Lordship of Christ," he said. "It says to people, 'You already have the answers, and Christ is just one among many sources of answers.' This is apostasy!"

When asked if Germany's "synodal path" is ecclesially valid, Cardinal Burke said, "It's not valid at all. ... [T]hey are undertaking a process that is basically outside the Church -- in other words, attempting to create a church according to their own image and likeness. As far as I'm concerned, this synodal way in Germany needs to be stopped before greater harm is done to the faithful."

"They have already begun this, and they insist that it can't be stopped," he added. "But we're talking about the salvation of souls, which means we need to take whatever measure is necessary."

"The German bishops believe that they can now define doctrine, which is false," said Cardinal Burke. "Otherwise, we would end up with a whole group of national churches, each with their own preferences regarding doctrine and discipline. The catholicity of the Catholic Church is exactly what's at risk."

"The Catholic Church is a church that has one faith, one sacramental system, and one discipline throughout the whole world, and therefore we've never thought that each part of the world would define the Church according to particular cultures," he said. "That's what's being suggested in this working document of the Amazon and in Germany."

Both the Amazonian synod and the German synod, according to numerous reports, are seeking to reinterpret the Church's teaching on sexual morality, priestly celibacy, and the role of women in the Church, among other issues such as climate change and immigration.

Many of the German bishops and close advisers of Pope Francis have argued that the reality of the world today makes marriage and chastity too difficult.

When asked whether our "hyper-sexualized culture makes it so much harder to adhere to the Church's moral teaching," Cardinal Burke said, "But even Saint Anthony of the Desert suffered these tremendous temptations. He saw images of naked women in his hermitage."

"One of our difficulties in life is that sometimes we permit ourselves to see sinful things: This is the great evil of pornography," said Burke. "We see images that stay with us and remain sources of temptation later. But in all of that, God gives us the grace to combat these temptations."

He continued, "Many today, because of the advances in science and technology, think that life should always be easier and more convenient, and they bring that mentality into the Church. So if there is any teaching that is hard, they simply say, 'Well, that can't be right. It must be all right to fornicate or whatever else.'"

As for divorce and civil remarriage, the cardinal said that at the 2014 synod on the family "it was a German cardinal who said the Church's teaching on marriage is an 'ideal,' that not all people are able to realize it, and therefore we need to give those who fail in marriage the possibility of entering into a second marriage."

"But the fundamental error is that marriage *isn't* an ideal!" he said. "It's a grace. Marriage is a sacrament, and those who marry, even the weakest human beings, receive the grace to live according to the truth of marriage."

"Christ by his coming has overcome sin and its fruit, which is eternal death," said Burke. "He gives us, from his own being, from his own glorious body, the grace of the Holy Spirit to live in matrimony."

Asked if he sees signs of hope for the Catholic Church despite the present confusion and liberalism, Cardinal Burke said, "Liturgical renewal among the

young is everywhere, and it gives me great hope. There are many young priests and seminarians who don't buy this revolution one iota. And it's the liturgy that often attracts them so much, because that is the most perfect and immediate encounter we have with Christ."

"They're attracted to the ancient usage, the Extraordinary Form [traditional Latin Mass], because it has so many more symbols and is so much more expressive of the transcendent aspect of our life of faith," said the cardinal. "Our Lord descends to the altar to make himself sacramentally present."

"I believe that Christ said that He would never abandon us, that He would be with us until the consummation of the age," said Burke. "I believe Him. I trust Him."