



In recent years, a growing and increasingly visible tension has run through the heart of the Church: the apparent opposition between so-called “traditionalists” (tradis) and “synodals.” What for some is a legitimate theological debate has, for others, become a real spiritual, cultural, and even emotional fracture within the Body of Christ.

But before taking sides, we should do something deeper—and more Christian: **understand**.

Because, in the end, we are not dealing with human ideologies, but with something infinitely more serious: **how to live faithfully the faith received from Christ in a rapidly changing world**.

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## 1. What do “tradis” and “synodals” really mean?

In today’s language, often simplified to the point of caricature:

- **“Tradis”**: faithful Catholics who seek to preserve the liturgy, doctrine, and traditional practices of the Church, especially those linked to the Traditional Mass, Latin, classical discipline, and a clearer sense of authority.
- **“Synodals”**: faithful Catholics who emphasize the journey together (“syn-hodos”), communal discernment, listening to the Holy Spirit in the People of God, and pastoral adaptation to contemporary challenges.

However, this division is **insufficient and dangerous if absolutized**, because both approaches contain deeply Catholic elements... and also risks.

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## 2. Historical roots: a tension that is not new

Although today it is expressed with new labels, this tension has precedents throughout the history of the Church:

- In the early centuries, between rigorists and the merciful (for example, in penitential discipline).
- In the Middle Ages, between reform and preservation.
- After the Second Vatican Council, which opened an intense process of renewal that is



still unfolding.

The problem is not the existence of tensions—the Church has always lived with them—but **when these tensions cease to be fruitful and become confrontation.**

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### 3. The theological core: Tradition and development

Here lies the key point.

The Church does not live from two separate sources (tradition vs. change), but from a single living reality: **Tradition** with a capital “T,” which is the transmission of the deposit of faith.

As the Catechism teaches:

“Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God.”

This means:

- Tradition **is not immobility.**
- Pastoral development **is not doctrinal rupture.**

The real problem arises when:

- Some identify Tradition with a specific form (for example, a particular liturgy), forgetting its living dimension.
  - Others identify renewal with constant change, forgetting that revealed truth **does not change.**
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### 4. A biblical perspective: unity in diversity

Sacred Scripture already gives us a fundamental key. In the First Letter to the Corinthians we



read:

*“That there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in the same mind and in the same judgment” (First Epistle to the Corinthians 1:10).*

Saint Paul does not deny diversity, but he warns against the **fragmentation of the ecclesial heart**.

The question today is not:

Are you tradi or synodal?

But:

**Are you truly united to Christ and His Church?**

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## 5. A parallel with today’s politics: the risk of polarization

What is happening within the Church is disturbingly similar to contemporary politics:

- **Opposing blocs**
- **Trench-like language**
- **Mutual distrust**
- **Oversimplification of the other (“the others are the problem”)**

As in politics:

- “Tradis” may see “synodals” as relativists.
- “Synodals” may see “tradis” as rigid or nostalgic.

This framework is deeply **anti-Gospel**, because it turns a brother into an adversary.

And we must be clear here:

**when Catholic identity is built in opposition to others, it has already begun to deform.**



## 6. Strengths and weaknesses of each approach

### ☐ Traditionalists (tradis)

#### **Strengths:**

- Deep love for the liturgy and the sense of the sacred
- Doctrinal clarity
- Awareness of God's transcendence
- Fidelity to the received heritage

#### **Weaknesses:**

- Risk of rigidity or spiritual elitism
  - Temptation to absolutize historical forms
  - Difficulty engaging with the modern world
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### ☐ Synodals

#### **Strengths:**

- Pastoral sensitivity
- Capacity for listening
- Attention to the wounds of the contemporary world
- Openness to communal discernment

#### **Weaknesses:**

- Risk of doctrinal ambiguity
  - Possible relativization of truth
  - Temptation to over-adapt the message to the world
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## 7. The real issue: a deeper crisis of identity

At its core, this tension reveals something deeper:

□ **Many Catholics do not know how to integrate tradition and mission.**

But Christ did not found two Churches:

- one to preserve,
- another to innovate.

He founded **one single Church**, which:

- safeguards the truth
- and proclaims it to the world

Here lies the challenge of the current pontificate, especially under Pope Francis, who has insisted on a Church “going forth,” without abandoning her identity.

The problem is that many interpret this in ideological terms, rather than spiritual ones.

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## 8. Pastoral keys to avoid getting lost in this division

### 1. Love the truth without harshness

Truth without charity becomes a weapon.

### 2. Live charity without relativism

Charity without truth becomes sentimentality.

### 3. Form your conscience

Do not repeat slogans. Study, pray, go deeper.



#### 4. **Care for your sacramental life**

Unity is not born from debates, but from grace.

#### 5. **Avoid spiritual pride**

Thinking “I am the true Catholic” is a very subtle temptation.

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### 9. **A deeply Catholic synthesis**

The true answer is not choosing a side, but living a higher synthesis:

- **Living Tradition + pastoral charity**
- **Firm truth + real mercy**
- **Fidelity + mission**

Because the Church is not an ideology.

She is the **Body of Christ**.

And a divided body... weakens.

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### 10. **Conclusion: the real battle is not between them... but within you**

The greatest danger is not that there are “tradis” or “synodals.”

The greatest danger is forgetting that:

□ **we all need conversion.**

The real battle is not ecclesial, but spiritual:

- between fidelity and lukewarmness



- between truth and comfort
- between Christ... and the world

That is why the final question is not sociological, but profoundly personal:

☐ **Am I living the faith as a banner... or as a path to holiness?**

Because in the end, when everything passes, we will not be asked whether we belonged to one group or another.

We will be asked something far more serious:

☐ **Were you faithful to Christ?**