<https://www.soscisurvey.de/synod2015/index.php?i=VVZH2FHWPJSO&rnd=KMDI>

**“Ask the faithful” Academic study for the preparation of the World Bishops’ Synod 2015**

**“Ask the faithful”** That was Pope Francis’ demand when he issued a questionnaire on issues of relationships, marriage, and family in order to ask believers around the world about currently relevant themes in church politics – **a first in the Catholic Church**. We, Sarah Delere and Anna and Tobias Roth, students of social / political science and Catholic theology, take this request seriously.

**That’s why we are including you!**

We developed the project “Relationship Ethics and Family Ideas of Catholics,” which we are conducting under the academic advisement of **Prof. Dr. Marianne Heimbach-Steins**(University of Münster). We have “translated” the Pope’s questionnaire into a language that is closer to everyday life and have modified it according to social science methods through conversations with the **Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS)**and the **Suisse Institute for Pastoral Theology**. In the first phase, the survey was carried out in more than 12 countries in Europe, Africa, Latin- and North America through the use of this questionnaire and with the help of bishops, priests, pastoral assistants and committed Catholics. We have collected fascinating insights and relevant data in countries like Spain and Brazil and reflected about the questions with local parishioners in countries such as Belgium and Morocco.

**Now we are asking you to participate in the online questionnaire and to spread it actively – every voice counts! The more faithful let us know their opinion by filling out the questionnaire, the higher the validity and significance of results becomes. This in turn will increase their church-political relevance for the synod’s preparation process. You are most welcome to forward this email (to personal contacts, email lists, parishes, societies, Facebook groups, etc...).**

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The questionnaire will be online until the **middle/ end of February**and is available in **seven languages**: German, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, and Italian, so that it can be spread internationally. We are most grateful for every response and forward!

It goes without saying that the participation is **anonymous**, and we cannot track back any of the answers. Please complete the questionnaire fully. We need the socio-demographic data, for example age, to examine generational differences. The data transfer is run via an encrypted server in Germany.

In the first half of this year we will evaluate the data, with Sarah Delere working at the Free University in Berlin and Anna and Tobias Roth at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. In this manner, we will be able to introduce the **results as a direct impulse to the preparation process to the World Bishops’ Synod**on matters on relationship, marriage, and family ministry. We are in early discussions with publishers regarding **publishing opportunities in academic and journalistic media.**We would like to give a voice to the Catholics whom we came into contact with , whether through the online questionnaire or through our visits to the different countries, **on site at the Vatican in such a way that it will be heard by the cardinals, the bishops, and the Pope**. After all, it was he who urged his Church to “ask the faithful!”

Please feel free to contact us in case of any questions or comments via synode2015@uni-muenster.de .

Thank you very much for your contribution and time!

Anna and Tobias Roth and Sarah Delere

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