

The canoeists of Samoa

The International Congress on Older Persons (Rome, January 2020) will work on the vocation of the elderly in the Church. On this subject, I give the floor to Pope Francis. Following the synod on young people, Pope Francis published an apostolic exhortation entitled "Christ is alive." Chapter 6 of this text is entitled "*Young people with roots*." Elders have a role in the vitality of these roots. I like the parable by which this chapter ends. Here it is:

At the Synod, one of the young listeners from the Samoan Islands, said that the Church is a canoe on which old people help to maintain the direction by interpreting the position of the stars, and the young people ramment forcefully by imagining what awaits them further. Let us not be carried away into the past by young people who think that adults are a past that no longer counts, already obsolete, or by adults who always shout how to behave young people. It is better that we all climb in the same boat and that we seek together a better world under the ever-new impulse of the Holy Spirit.

The conclusion may be that by which Jesus concluded his speeches in parables: "He who has ears to hear, that he hears."

Father François Maupu