

## France. Bishops' plenary meeting. "Need to reform seminaries", protecting the Roma, Synod for Youth



In Lourdes, today, the allegation of “disrespect” for the Roma populations, “dragged from pillar to post”, and a call to the public powers “to make efforts to come up with permanent, dignified solutions”, opened the long final speech of the archbishop of Marseille and president of the French Bishops Conference, mgr. Georges Pontier, who summed up the work completed by the plenary meeting. In Lourdes, they decided to “move on with the reforms needed for seminaries” and define a “Ratio nationalis”, a guideline for the “integral training of seminarians”.

They reviewed the responses sent by French young people to the Episcopal Synod: “You are the present of our Church and the wealth of our society, and we call you to take your full place in our communities and to dare speak your faith”, mgr. Pontier urged. They started with a “reflection on collegiality” and the preparation of the “modernisation of the Bishops Conference’s organisation”: “priorities shall be laid down” and “the required organisation shall be arranged and put in place”.

The French Bishops’ guest was mgr. Mirkis, archbishop of Kirkuk, who told the story of persecuted Christians and his initiative for Iraqi students who stay in the country, but they also talked “of the situation of Western Christians in a context of deep secularisation” where “you cannot exist without a life choice that breaks from those of the prevalent culture”.

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Photo: Acteurs de la pastorale des jeunes et des vocations