



Following, you will find a selected collection of original quotations from various actors in the process of the "Synodal Path" (German bishops, theologians, quotations from the documents of the "Synodal Path"), which document and clarify the changed pattern of thinking as shown in the "Seven Questions to the Catholic Church".

Statements by theologians

Prof. Dr. Magnus Striet

Magnus Striet: „Naturrecht und Geschlechterverhältnisse. Ein fundamental-theologischer Beitrag“ From: Kirche und Schule. Hg. Bischöfliches Generalvikariat Münster, Dcember 2021 | NR. 195

„That God created human beings as man and woman or that he instituted marriage is simply an interpretation of human beings. And such an interpretation, theologically ambitious, shows very clearly all the indications of a historical change." (p.8)

...

„By using the concept of ecology, it is associated that there is a binary biological nature of human beings that can claim normative validity on its own, and to live otherwise." (p.9)

...

„A nature given to man, a determination of being which he would not have given himself, does not therefore exist for man." (p. 9)

...

„And to find oneself free means at the same time to want and to have to determine oneself according to self-chosen standards."(p. 9)

...

„First of all, no God may be accepted who does not respect man's freedom and thus the right to free self-determination claimed by him. Either freedom is supreme or it is not. But if it is, then God must not be relieved of respecting it either. And since we only ever think about the possible God, the God we hope for must be one who absolutely respects a successful relational life. And even more, who delights in it. And therefore this God must also delight in a culture that values the success of relationships regardless of sexual preference." (p. 11)

Magnus Striet: „Ernstfall Freiheit. Arbeiten an der Schleifung der Bastionen“, Freiburg 2018:

„If anything, this grinding has still not been done theologically [meaning a theology like H. U.



v. Balthasar's]. In essence, it is about the question of how strongly theological thinking can engage with a modernity that understands itself as an unfinishable project that knows no other certainties than freedom itself - and in which faith then also becomes a project. That it does not become meaningless beyond that is to be shown. In relation to the question of what might be morally commanded, one does not need the God of this faith." (p.25f)

....

„Therefore, no God may be accepted who does not stand for the dignity of freedom of man“ (p.39)

...

„that another God, always pressing for unambiguity, would discredit himself on moral grounds."(p.40)

...

„But the concept of him [God] becomes humanly standardised" (p.41)

...

„The conversion of a metaphysical or theologically infused natural law to a discursive-communicative law of reason, which in its core asserts the principally egalitarian rights of all, then has two reasons: Firstly, freedom is now supposed (!) to be the highest, namely as the right of self-determination of freedom through itself. Secondly, although the "contents of the Jewish morality of justice of the Old Testament and the Christian ethics of love of the New Testament" still shape "everyday moral intuitions (...) in Western societies", these religious traditions have also become "legally a private matter" (Habermas quotes) because their authority guaranteeing validity has become an uncertain candidate in the historical process. Whether God exists has become questionable. And thus an imperative of God also bears the signature of the hypothetical. Of course, after the conversion of a divine right to an anthropogenic right of reason that is reflexively aware of itself as such and which then takes its measure from the unconditional respect for the freedom of the other, this imperative should only become an imperative for man if it calls for respect for man's right to self-determination." (p. 50f)

...

„In essence, his [meaning Prof. Menke's] argumentation boils down to the fact that freedom only understands itself as freedom when it is conceived ontologically from God. That it could be the accidental product of an evolution that runs blindly in itself, that it is human freedom, but that it could not owe itself to any God, Menke does not allow as a possibility." (p.51)

...

On this Striet p. 9/ footnote 5: „One can also read the argument with Menke in this writing as one about the efficiency of nominalistic thinking. Freedom-minded as I am, I see a potential here, philosophically and theologically, that is far from exhausted.“



"What is loved, and: what does not interfere with the freedom rights of others, and what is unconditionally willed in the instance of formally unconditional freedom for the sake of the other person, may be lived." (p.72)

...

„Therefore, it [freedom] may also not be effected by a God" (p.74, footnote 51).

Magnus Striet Essay: „Zwischen Ballast und Befreiung: Wie heute über Sünde reden?“ In Herderkorrespondenz 11/2011, p. 568-572

„In ‘Die fröhliche Wissenschaft’ (The Joyful Science), Friedrich Nietzsche mocked the „ambitious Oriental in heaven“ who is concerned with nothing but the restoration of "his divine honour" (Kritische Studienausgabe, 2nd ed., Munich 1988, 486). This God brings man to his knees. For Nietzsche, the associated "rolling in the dust before God", this "first and last condition to which his grace attaches itself", was the fundamental evil that had gripped humanity. (...)

One may think what one likes of Nietzsche. He is and remains a highly ambivalent figure of modernity who has in fact made his contribution to the legitimisation of fascist violence. But that life suffocates when it is confronted only with being sinful before God is something Nietzsche quite rightly denounced." (...)

„In order to become guilty and to have an awareness of having become guilty, there is no need of God. Kant therefore spoke of the conscience as man's inner court of justice, but admittedly no longer understood the conscience as the place of God's certainty. Conscience functions autonomously, indeed it must even be a law unto itself and may only determine itself of its own will, so that morality can be.“ (...)

„However, it is no longer necessary to first argue about God when it comes to the future of modern society, which relies on the greatest possible freedom and the greatest possible justice. Even what is just must be sought and balanced again and again. Ethically responsible self-determination is crucial. No belief in God can change this - apart from the fact that many a belief in God or religion has done anything but contribute to the pacification of a society.“

[Link to the source](#)

Interview Magnus Striet with Deutschlandfunk, 18 July 2018 "The dignity of freedom"

Question: What correction in doctrine beyond that do you think is urgently needed?

Magnus Striet: „A Christian theology will never be able to depart from the basic Christian dogmas, which are summed up in the statement that God actually became man in reality as this Jew from Nazareth. But there are other, I don't even know if I would say dogmatic, but doctrinal decisions that need correction. There I summarise above all the classical doctrine of original sin built up in the fourth, fifth centuries, the idea that the whole of humanity became sinful in the one act of Adam and that this sin is passed on through the sexual act.



This is a doctrine that cannot be upheld under modern conditions, and it has actually had a fatal theological effect.“

Question: Keyword Augustine.

Magnus Striet: "Keyword Augustine! Augustine actually developed this thought. What then went down in the history of theology as the doctrine of original sin and profoundly shaped at least the European West, European Christianity, did not exist biblically. Paul only holds to this determination that all human beings have become sinners before God. He is simply trying to make clear the universality of Jesus' meaning of salvation, but Augustine goes much further, so that theological historians like Kurt Flasch say that he first invented the original sin construct. I agree with him, which at the same time has led to whole sections of people being neurotised, i.e. made ill by this idea that they may now be condemned to eternal damnation. [Link to source](#)

"Whoever asserts a ius divinum identifies the will of God, which can only be assumed, with what he considers to be the ius divinum"

Source: Magnus Striet: "Ius divinum - Freiheitsrechte. Nominalistic Deconstructions with Constructive Intent" in "According to the Law of God. Autonomy as a Christian Principle"; Katholizismus im Umbruch 2, Freiburg 2014, p. 105.

"Reason is therefore supposed to determine itself according to ethically compatible maxims because it is supposed to be moral, but not because other power, not even a God, commands such. Morality is thus entirely freed from all heteronomous determinations."

Source: Magnus Striet: "Erkenntnis aller Pflichten und Gebote. Remaining Relevance and Limits of Kant's Philosophy of Religion", in: Kant und die Theologie, edited by Georg Essen and Magnus Striet, Darmstadt 2005, p. 171.

Interview Magnus Striet Deutschlandfunk Kultur „Der lange Schatten der Tradition“:

"You can see from the rhetoric of mercy, as I call it, that a certain basic principle of modern thinking has still not taken hold in the Catholic theological tradition. It is part of modernity that people can act in a self-determined way in the way they lead their lives and are not subordinated to an objective norm, i.e. this norm is placed in front of them, and in the Catholic sphere, too, people have long been living in a self-determined way what they, hopefully with reasons, consider to be right, while the concept of mercy resonates with the fact that they are living something that should not actually be like this and should be allowed to be like this, but it is conceded to them. This is what I mean when I say that there is a paternalistic element. (...)

„Amoris Laetitia“ means progress in Catholic teaching, but it is not enough. What is actually admitted is that there are life situations that do not follow Catholic doctrine, in the



terminology of "Amoris Laetitia": "They are complex." But instead of coming here with mercy, so to speak, one should perhaps simply admit that under the condition of modern living conditions there are living situations that are not shaped in such a way that people can fail in their plans, start something new and that one should also start thinking theologically here. The breakthrough has certainly not happened yet, but that in turn has to do with the self-imprisonment of the Church that has taken place in the last decades: until today, one does not really dare to approach the great mastermind of an old theology, namely John Paul II. One tries to create a continuity, but de facto one will not be able to achieve it in the long run. Yes, I agree with you that we need to rethink, we need to ask whether the ideal of life partnership, of marriage, which is always presented as sacrosanct, was an ideal at all over the centuries or whether it is not a relatively modern invention in the Catholic sphere, and at this point we are actually afraid to think consistently."

Source: Interview Magnus Striet in Deutschlandfunk Kultur vom 20. November 2016, [Link Online](#)

Interview Magnus Striet, Deutschlandfunk Kultur vom 19. März 2020: „Besonnen durch die Glaubenskrise“

"There is a wonderful verse by the now deceased Austrian poet Ernst Jandl that speaks of "God, the creator of heaven and all corruption". If one is serious about the idea of a creator God, then one will have to say that everything that happens to human beings in evolution must actually also be answered for by him in the end. This is the end of a child's faith, a pure praise faith. For that means that prayer is always permeated with lamentation, even with accusation." [Link to the source: Deutschlandfunk Kultur](#)

Beispiel für den Einfluss der Theologie von Magnus Striet auf Teilnehmer des Synodalen Weges:

The Bonn dogmatist Karlheinz Menke quotes a young enthusiastic participant in the synodal journey who "according to her own confession 'inspired not by the Holy Spirit but by the great theology of Magnus Striet' [...] no longer allows herself to be 'authoritatively bequeathed'"

Source: Karl-Heinz Menke: "With the "Urporsche" head-on against the wall." An anthology shows examples of errors in thinking and narrow-mindedness that influence the Synodal Way.

Menke reviews the volume: Michaela Labudda/Marcus Leitschuh (Hgg): Synodaler Weg. Letzte Chance? Standpunkte zur Zukunft der katholischen Kirche. Paderborn 2021, in: DT vom 28.1.2021



Prof. Dr. Stephan Goertz

Stephan Goertz: "Autonomie Kontrovers"

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat: for if thou eat thereof, thou shalt surely die' [...] But what is the intention behind the Genesis quotation in Veritatis splendor? Quite obviously that of inculcating in us that the inhuman determinations of good and evil lie outside our own human responsibility, that the moral question has already been answered." (...)

"Moral autonomy involves "man's claim to lead his own life according to self-established ends."" (S. 167)

Source: Goertz, *Autonomie kontrovers. Die katholische Kirche und das Moralprinzip der freien Selbstbestimmung*, in: Ders./Magnus Striet (Hrg) *Nach dem Gesetz Gottes. Autonomie als christliches Prinzip (Katholizismus im Umbruch 2)* Freiburg 2014, p.151 -197.

"The sexual pleasures of a pair of lovers were suspicious of tradition. One should not forget that Church morality was formulated by men who saw their spiritual life threatened by sexuality [...] And ultimately the primacy of nature [H. v. m.] is also behind John Paul II's moral teaching, which is rigorous on this issue."

Source: Stefan Görtz Interview Domradio vom 18. August 2020: „Antibabypille“ und die katholische Morallehre. [Link to the source](#)

Quotations from the official papers on the Synodal Path

"Women in Ministries and Offices in the Church".

„Against the idea that gender is something that one "has" or "is", there are findings of gender research (empirical as well as historical): Gender is not a pre-social and unchangeable or even God-given fact. In the system of bisexuality, assumptions about different characteristics, abilities, interests and needs of women and men become the basis of argumentation for their supposedly just place in society.“ (p. 5)

„Empirical evidence shows that the differences within the sexes are at least as great as those between the sexes. It follows that no gender can be ascribed specific characteristics and tasks. Bringing about gender justice in the Roman Catholic Church therefore requires that all the baptised and confirmed, regardless of their gender, experience recognition and



appreciation of their God-given charisms and vocations. Only in this way will the full potential of vocations for ministries and offices in the Church be realised." (p. 8)

„Then the representation of Christ is a "Vollzugsbegriff" (term in execution), which grows out of the communicative understanding of revelation and a soteriological development of sacramentality. The traditional substance-ontological representation of Jesus Christ and a sacerdotal-cultic understanding of ministry are broken open, and in this soteriological perspective the manhood of Jesus Christ plays no role. In this way, the church can then become a fraternal and partnering church that calls men and women equally to follow Jesus Christ." (p. 28)

Source: From the official paper of Forum III „Frauen in Diensten und Ämtern in der Kirche“ (Women in Ministries and Offices in the Church) now discussed at the Synodal Path (3.-5. February 2022)

„Diakonat der Frau“ (Diaconate of women)

"A diaconal leadership office in the form of the sacramental diaconate exercised by women will contribute to this credibility and raise the diaconal profile of the church. Men and women are equally called to diaconal ministry; there can be no exclusion here on the basis of gender. The examination of the diaconate of women offers the opportunity for a fundamental process of reflection on the ministerial structure of the church. A diaconal ministry can contribute to the "de-clericalisation" of which Pope Francis has spoken several times."

Source: Official paper forum III „Frauen in Diensten und Ämtern in der Kirche“ (Women in Ministries and Offices in the Church), action-paper „Diakonat der Frau“ (diaconate of women), p. 5

Synodal Path, Forum IV „Leben in gelingenden Beziehungen - Liebe leben in Sexualität und Partnerschaft“ (Life in successful relationships – Practicing love in sexuality and partnership)- draft on the topic: „Lehramtliche Neubewertung von Homosexualität (Revaluation of homosexuality in church teaching)“ [Voting result at Forum IV: 20 Yes, 2 No]

"Every human being is created by God with his or her sexuality and has an inviolable dignity in this being created. Every human person's sexual orientation is an inseparable part of them. It is not self-selected and cannot be changed. (...) Since homosexual orientation belongs to the identity of the human being as created by God, it is ethically to be judged no differently in principle than any other sexual orientation. Every human being is called to integrate his sexuality into his way of life. Responsible genital sexuality in relationships with another person is oriented towards respect for dignity and self-determination, love and faithfulness, responsibility for each other and the specific dimensions of fertility. It takes place in relationships that are designed for exclusivity and permanence. This also applies to



homosexual people. Their sexuality - also realised in sexual acts - is not a sin that separates from God and is not to be judged as bad in itself. Rather, as with all human beings, it is to be measured against the realisation of the values mentioned."

Synodal Path, Forum IV „Leben in gelingenden Beziehungen - Liebe leben in Sexualität und Partnerschaft“ (Life in successful relationships – Practicing love in sexuality and partnership)- draft on the topic: „Grundordnung des kirchlichen Dienstes“ (Basic rules in church ministry) [Voting result in Forum IV: 20 Yes, 3 No]

"The moral doctrine, which is listed as a decisive criterion, is furthermore massively criticised within the church with regard to its statements on forms of life. This synodal assembly also evaluates remarriage, inter- and transsexuality, homosexuality and correspondingly same-sex partnership differently than previous official texts of the church. Following this view, the adaptation of the Basic Order as well as the practices in granting the Missio Canonica and the Nihil Obstat is a necessary consequence."

Statements by German Bishops

Bishop Helmut Dieser, Diocese Aachen:

"Now we say: Sexual orientation is a gift from God. It is not to be questioned, but it must be led into following God." (...) "I hope that there may be and will be different ways in the Church, that we will have, for example, blessing ceremonies for homosexual couples, while they are still unthinkable in other parts of the universal Church."

Source: Report in katholisch.de vom 02. Februar 2020, [Link to source](#)

Interview Bishop Helmut Dieser in Daily Newspaper „Rheinische Post“

Question: Would you currently bless homosexual couples?^[SEP]

Helmut Dieser: "So far I have always left it to the decision of conscience of the individual pastor whether you would like to bless or not. For the future, however, I would like to move forward and be able to base the diocese on a foundation that is a sustainable basis for the decision. Within the framework of the Synodal Way, such a decision will be worked out, which then has to be decided by a two-thirds majority."

Source: Interview Rheinische Post 24. January 2022, [Link to source](#)



Bischof Dr. Franz-Josef Overbeck, Diocese Essen:

Interview with Westdeutscher Rundfunk Radio (WDR) about, among other things, "various forms of acceptance but also rejection of the way homosexual people can live together"

WDR question: "Where do you see yourself in this?"

Franz-Josef Overbeck: "For myself, I would say that I have come a long way in the last twelve years and today I would say that there is also a lot of blessing on those who live together as same-sex couples - with fidelity and in reliable relationships."

Question WDR: Does that mean in concrete terms that if, for example, a priest in your diocese blesses a homosexual couple, you will definitely not reprimand him for it?

Franz-Josef Overbeck: "I will not do that, no. I will not suspend him for it or impose other church punishments on him. I have said that, and other bishops have also said that clearly: "I will not." Source: Interview WDR vom 03. 04. 2021, [Link to source](#)

„Overcoming bias“

Any attempt to pathologise homosexuality as 'unnatural' not only contradicts the findings of human and sexual science research, but also ignores the concrete life testimonies and experiences that make it clear that love in a responsible partnership is not an abstract question of natural law, but a question of respect, mutual regard and deep inner feelings and sensations ... Against this background, the willingness of Catholic Christians to continue to support a sexual morality which, through overly restrictive ideas of supposedly 'natural' sexuality, wants to deny numerous people the freedom to lead a good life filled with love in a committed partnership, is decreasing. Those who also want to sanction the open rejection of this position have apparently not understood that today we live in a society in which the conditions for living one's faith have fundamentally changed ... How people have to live can no longer be prescribed in a generally authoritative way without trampling on God's gift of autonomy." Source: Essay by Franz-Josef Overbeck: „Vorurteile überwinden“ (Overcoming Bias) as a contribution to the book „Katholisch und queer“ (Catholic and queer), Mirjam Gräve u.a., Paderborn, 2021, S. 214f

Bischof Dr. Georg Bätzing, Diocese Limburg (Chairman of the German Bishop

Conference)From: Interview on the papal letter of 15 March 2021 on the ban on blessing same-sex couples: „We need a re-evaluation of same-sex partnerships and a further

development of the Church's sexual morality. Marriage between a man and a woman is a very high good for us as Christians. As a sacrament of the Church, it has an incomparable significance and unique dignity. It is not a question of tampering with the created order. No one wants to relativise the marriage of man and woman and its fertility. This esteem in the Roman letter is important. But in order to emphasise the special value of marriage, there is a need to devalue other forms of cohabiting partnerships, which obviously do exist."

Link source

