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Hopes and dreams for the 2014 synod on the family

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There is something unreal about a group of men who claim lives of celibacy coming together for a synod on the family. Granted, they were part of families growing up, but they are not spouses or parents in a family as adults.

When I think about what a synod on the family should look like, I picture parents and grandparents and perhaps older children coming together to discuss issues they know firsthand from their own lives. They would come from around the globe, all continents and cultures, to share ideas, problems and theological understandings.

At the very least, the coming 2014 synod on the family should have a large number of such consultants -- men and women who actually form families -- to make decisions about contraception, economic realities, and the future of children who come out as gay or lesbian.

In fact, if Pope Francis ever decides to follow Pope John XXIII and call a council of the church, I believe it should be a "Council of the People of God," not a meeting of bishops alone. Again, it would be predominantly men and women (in equal numbers) from across the globe, sharing insights on a church of the future and making decisions together.

I can dream, can't I?

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