

## Reflection Friday Week 24 – 2023

One of the significant desires of Luke in his gospel is to help us appreciate the importance of the role of women in Jesus' life and the help they gave to his spreading the Good News. Maybe this gospel should be used at the coming synod on the laity, beginning in October. Despite it being a patriarchal faith, the Old Testament is littered with the stories of how women played a vital role in the history of salvation. This is even more true today and why the synod wants to hear their voice more loudly and more clearly. Their voice is necessary in helping the Church of the future grow into the family God wants it to be.

Recently Pope Francis has decided to give women the right to vote at an upcoming meeting of bishops, an historic reform that reflects his hopes to give women greater decision-making responsibilities and laypeople more say in the life of the Catholic Church. Francis approved changes to the norms governing the Synod of Bishops, a Vatican body that gathers the world's bishops together for periodic meetings, following years of demands by women to have the right to vote. The modifications he approved emphasize his vision for the lay faithful taking on a greater role in church affairs that have long been left to clerics, bishops and cardinals.

Under the new changes, five religious sisters will join five priests as voting representatives for religious orders. In addition, Francis has decided to appoint 70 non-bishop members of the synod and has asked that half of them be women. They too will have a vote.

The aim is also to include young people among these 70 non-bishop members, who will be proposed by regional blocs, with Francis making a final decision.

Pope Francis has taken a leaf out of Luke's Gospel??