



Towards intercultural pastoral care

Modern society is becoming increasingly mobile, a fact that has changed our world – and the Catholic Church in Switzerland, too.

Today, the Church encompasses numerous language communities whose faith practices are shaped by their members' heritage. These diverse cultures bring benefits and opportunities to the entire Church – opportunities we can use to strengthen ties across languages and cultures.

The Church has recently developed a strategy to cultivate a stronger sense of community; the essential points are presented in this flyer.

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Celebrating our faith in all its diversity as one Church

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Stronger ties and respectful coexistence

In our multicultural world, we need places where all people can practise their faith – regardless of their cultural heritage. The Catholic Church in Switzerland aims to offer all believers a religious and cultural home, and the Church works to cultivate a community spirit across languages and cultures. The following five principles guide us on our journey towards realising intercultural pastoral care:

1.

The Catholic Church supports people in their search for a religious and cultural home.

Our work is founded on mutual respect and outreach activities. We seek to discover new aspects of what it means to be a Christian, and we believe that fostering stronger ties and encouraging respectful coexistence between local parishes and language communities will help us achieve this goal.



2.

Language communities and local parishes work together.

The language communities provide a spiritual home to their members. These communities work with their local parishes to build bridges, making it possible for all people of faith to celebrate and worship together.

3.

Developing stronger ties across cultural borders is a challenge. Everyone can and must help.

The local parishes and language communities often lead parallel church lives that rarely intersect. But this practice is no longer in line with modern society. To create stronger ties, all of us are called on to act.

4.

We belong to one Church, and our Church is a diverse community.

Migrants contribute to the financing of church life in Switzerland. They are entitled to have their needs taken seriously and to receive financial support from the Catholic Church. All Church members have equal rights.

5.

Stronger ties and respectful coexistence are the foundation of intercultural pastoral care.

The Catholic Church aims to foster stronger ties and respectful coexistence among its members. We meet as equals and treat one another with respect. We take sincere interest in each other and in our cultural and religious roots.



How do we make this vision come true?

We can achieve our goals by reaching out to one another, by embracing our differences and by sharing how we worship and celebrate our faith. It is also important that members of the different language communities are willing to become involved in intercultural pastoral care in the various Church authorities and bodies. At the same time, the Church authorities must actively support this involvement. In the coming months and years, we will be encouraging local projects that help us share our lives and our faith. In this spirit, we warmly invite all Catholics to join us in cultivating ties across languages and cultures.

Intercultural Pastoral Care

Many Catholics in Switzerland speak a non-local language, come from different cultures and have varying understandings of church life. In intercultural pastoral care, we see this diversity as a valuable asset. Our overall aim is that pastoral care and church life make room for the specific needs and expectations of all believers. We want to show that, through faith, we can respect differences, learn from one another and practise community life beyond conventional borders. Intercultural pastoral care gives us strength. It empowers us, as Church members from different cultures, to mutually deepen our belief in God (faith), to act in solidarity (love) and to share joy with one another (hope).

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