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First meeting of the 14th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops: fruitfully combine primacy, collegiality and synodality

Vatican City, 20 April 2016 – During the days 18-19 April the first meeting of the 14 th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops took place, chaired by the Holy Father Francis. The work of the Council began with an intervention from the general secretary, Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, who thanked the Holy Father for his presence and for the recent publication of the post-Synodal apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. All the Council Members seconded these words, demonstrating the broad welcome the document has received from the particular Churches throughout the world.

The Council then went on to consider the results of the consultation undertaken to decide on the theme of the next Ordinary General Assembly, among the dicasteries of the Roman Curia, the Episcopal Conferences, the Oriental Churches and the Union of Superior Generals. After wide-ranging debate, various suggestions were made to be proposed to the Holy Father for his evaluation.

The Members then turned their attention to the revision of the *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum*, the final item on the day's agenda. In this regard Msgr. Fabio Fabene, under-secretary of the Synod of Bishops, gave a report on the Study Seminary organised for the purpose by the General Secretariat, following the Holy Father's address on 17 October 2015. The Council Members divided into *Circuli minores* to consider the matter in depth, and finally presented in plenary session a report on their work.

From the groups' reports it emerges that the emphasis on synodality and collegiality must always be connected to the exercise of the ministry of the Bishop of Rome, to link primacy, collegiality and synodality in a fruitful way.

To conclude, the Holy Father thanked the Council Members for their contributions and for the spirit of fraternal communion in which the meeting took place.