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Communiqué: Third Meeting of the 14th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops

On 16 and 17 November 2017 the Third Meeting of the 14th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops was held, chaired by the Holy Father Francis.

The meeting began with an intervention by the Secretary General, His Eminence Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri. In his greeting, the cardinal thanked the Holy Father for his presence and also for summoning the Special Assembly for the Pan-Amazonian Region, to take place in October 2019. The Secretary General then welcomed all the participants in the meeting and outlined the progress made from the convening of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly to date, focusing on the Preparatory Document and the Questionnaire addressed to eligible bodies, the opening of an online portal with an *ad hoc Questionnaire* for young people, the activation of special channels on social networks and the International Seminar on the state of young people, held last September.

After the intervention of the Secretary General, the criteria for the drafting of the *Instrumentum laboris* were discussed, so that all the various inputs from the consultation phase, still underway, may be included in it.

Reports were then provided on the work of the aforementioned International Seminar. In addition, information was given on the answers received so far to the Questionnaire of the Preparatory Document, as well as the first statistics regarding the online Questionnaire, which is still open. In this regard, it was decided to keep it online until 31 December 2017.

Among the activities planned, special attention was given to the pre-Synodal meeting of the young, convened by the Holy Father in Rome from 19 to 24 March 2018. In this respect, aside from the young people who will be invited to the meeting, the proposal to widen their participation via social networks was approved.

Finally, the Members of the Ordinary Council discussed the theme of the revision of the regulations of the Synod of Bishops. In this regard, His Excellency Msgr. Fabio Fabene, under-secretary of the Synod of Bishops, gave the relevant report illustrating the work carried out by the General Secretariat, which was followed by a fruitful exchange of opinions.

At the end of the meeting, the announcement was made of the date of the next Synodal Assembly, to be held from 3 to 28 October 2018. At the same time, the Holy Father communicated the appointment of the Relator General, His Eminence Cardinal Sérgio da Rocha, and the two special secretaries, Rev. Fr. Giacomo Costa, S.J., and Rev. Rossano Sala, S.D.B.

Finally, the Holy Father thanked the members of the Council and the other participants for their contribution and for the spirit of fraternal communion experienced during the meeting.
