



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Press Conference to present the two documents of the General Secretariat of the Synod

At 13.00 today, in the Holy See Press Office, a press conference was livestreamed to present the two documents of the General Secretariat of the Synod: the first, entitled *How to be a synodal Church in mission? Five perspectives to deepen theologically in view of the Second Session*; the second, *Study groups on questions arising in the First Session of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to deepen in collaboration with the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia*.

The speakers were: His Eminence Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary general of the General Secretariat of the Synod; His Eminence Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, S.J., archbishop of Luxembourg; general rapporteur of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops; Archbishop Filippo Iannone, O. Carm., prefect of the Dicastery for Legislative Texts; the Reverend Sr. Simona Brambilla, M.C., secretary of the Dicastery for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life; the Reverend Msgr. Piero Coda, secretary general of the International Theological Commission; and Fr. Giacomo Costa, S.J., consultant of the General Secretariat of the Synod.

The following is the intervention of Sr. Simona Brambilla:

Intervention of the Reverend Sr. Simona Brambilla, M.C.

The *Synthesis Report* published last October at the conclusion of the First Session of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on synodality is entitled: A SYNODAL CHURCH IN MISSION. The guiding question that accompanied us in the work towards the Second Session of October 2024 is: *How to be a synodal Church in mission?*¹ The Holy Father, approving the guidelines of the work towards the Second Session of the Assembly, recalled that “the Synod is on synodality, and not on this or that theme... The important thing is *how* we reflect, namely, in a synodal way”². As a Church, on various levels, we need to explore this “how”, or rather the concrete methods, ways and processes through which synodality, walking together, is achieved in practice. And this attention applies to all the themes and issues gathered together in the Synthesis Report: how can we deal with them, reflect on them, explore them, elaborate them, live them, in a synodal way? Indeed, the synod is

not on this or that theme: it is on synodality, the Holy Father said. Precisely for this reason, the path that leads us to October 2024 is aimed at promoting and developing synodal processes and movements at the various levels of the Church. Even in the Roman Curia, in and among its various Institutions.

In the Dicastery for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, the “how” is gradually taking on a new shape and space. Among the members of the Synod there are both the prefect and the secretary of the Dicastery. For both of them, the experience of immersion in the synodal dynamic was engaging and stimulating. We realised, with surprise and emotion, that we were experiencing a powerful moment of the Spirit that marked a turning point. The Paul VI Hall in the Vatican as a large cenacle. The round tables arranged around the Word and the icon of the Mother, the *Salus populi romani*, who, as at Cana, attentively and discreetly watches over the unfolding of the banquet, guarding communion, joy, celebration. Seated at the table of the Word, resounding in Scripture and in the voice of the other, more than 400 people from five continents and from the most diverse experiences of the Church - cardinals, bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, lay men and women - united by what makes them profoundly brothers and sisters, beyond any role, title, function, service, responsibility: Baptism, immersion in Christ, the Christian vocation!

One does not turn back from this experience. We go forward; and we go inside, deep inside, involved and caught up in a spiral movement that, with strength and gentleness, leads us to the essence of what we are as Christians: brothers and sisters in Christ. Lightened, disarmed and freed from the various armours and vestments we may be wearing. Yes, because the synod is an exquisitely spiritual journey, and as such it is a breath, a whisper, a movement that transforms, frees, unites and harmonizes, without ever flattening, homogenizing.

Thus, on the beneficial wave of last October's assembly experience, new instances of reciprocal listening, conversation, discernment are taking shape in the Dicastery: weekly meetings of the prefect with the secretary and the under-secretaries; monthly meetings with the heads of Office; and soon, periodic meetings with all those who provide their valuable service in the Dicastery.

On the same beneficial wave, we are joyfully preparing to implement what the Holy Father ordered with the Chirograph of last 16 February: “according to the provisions of Art. 33 of *Praedicate Evangelium*, the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia shall cooperate, ‘according to their respective specific competencies, in the work of the General Secretariat of the Synod’, by setting up study groups that will initiate, with a synodal method, the in-depth study of some of the themes that emerged in the First Session of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. These study groups are to be established by mutual agreement between the competent Dicasteries of the Roman Curia and the General Secretariat of the Synod, which is entrusted with coordination”³. We are sure that these study groups will be a blessed occasion not only to explore the chosen themes, but also to experience, savour, and feel the beauty and fruitfulness of walking together, listening to the Spirit.

[1] GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD – 16TH ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, *Towards October 2024*, Vatican, 11 December 2023.

[2] Ibidem.

[3] Chirograph of the Holy Father on the collaboration between the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia and the General Secretariat of the Synod, Vatican 16 February 2024.

