



**Women's Day Greetings from the
GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD**

Women
make the world beautiful,
they protect it, and keep it alive.

- Pope Francis





FOREWORD

On this International Women's Rights Day on 8 March, may we acknowledge with gratitude how far we have already come and commit ourselves even more resolutely, women and men together by virtue of our equal baptismal dignity, to walk better together and discern how the Spirit is calling us to give concrete expression to this recommendation of the synodal assembly 'for full implementation of all the opportunities already provided for in Canon Law with regard to the role of women, particularly in those places where they remain underutilised' in order to remove the obstacles still encountered by too many women ' in obtaining a fuller recognition of their charisms, vocation and place in all the various areas of the Church's life. This is to the detriment of serving the Church's shared mission ' (FD §60.)

It is in this spirit that today we offer you these extracts from the documents of the synod on synodality concerning women, from the preparatory document to the Final Document of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.


Vatican City, 8 March 2025
The General Secretariat of the Synod





*Women's
Day*

Preparatory Document
of the Synod 2021-2024



7. In spite of our infidelities, the Spirit continues to act in history and to show his life-giving power. It is precisely in the furrows dug by the sufferings of every kind endured by the human family and by the People of God that new languages of faith and new paths are flourishing, capable not only of interpreting events from a theological point of view but also of finding in trials the reasons for refounding the path of Christian and ecclesial life. It is a reason for great hope that more than a few Churches have already begun more or less structured meetings and consultation processes with the People of God. Where they have been marked by a synodal style, the sense of Church has flourished and the participation of all has given new impetus to ecclesial life. The desire of young people to be protagonists within the Church and the request for a greater appreciation of women and spaces for participation in the mission of the Church, already signaled by the Synodal Assemblies of 2018 and 2019, are also confirmed. **The recent institution of the lay ministry of Catechist and the opening of access to those of Lector and Acolyte to women also move in this direction.**



18. In fact, the work of evangelization and the message of salvation would not be comprehensible without Jesus' constant openness to the widest possible audience, which the Gospels refer to as the crowd, that is, all the people who follow him along the path, and at times even pursue him in the hope of a sign and a word of salvation: this is the second actor on the scene of Revelation. The proclamation of the Gospel is not addressed only to an enlightened or chosen few. Jesus' interlocutor is the "people" of ordinary life, the "everyone" of the human condition, whom he puts directly in contact with God's gift and the call to salvation. In a way that surprises and sometimes scandalizes the witnesses, Jesus accepts as interlocutors all those who emerge from the crowd: he listens to the impassioned remonstrances of the Canaanite woman (cf. Mt 15:21–28), who cannot accept being excluded from the blessing he brings; he allows himself to dialogue with the Samaritan woman (cf. Jn 4:1–42), **despite her condition as a socially and religiously compromised woman; he solicits the free and grateful act of faith of the man born blind** (cf. Jn 9), whom official religion had dismissed as outside the perimeter of grace.



30. Listening is the first step, but it requires having an open mind and heart, without prejudices. To whom does our particular Church “need to listen to”? **How are the Laity, especially young people and women, listened to? How do we integrate the contribution of Consecrated Men and Women?** What space is there for the voice of minorities, the discarded, and the excluded? Do we identify prejudices and stereotypes that hinder our listening? How do we listen to the social and cultural context in which we live?



31. The purpose of the first phase of the synodal journey is to foster a broad consultation process in order to gather the wealth of the experiences of lived synodality, in its different articulations and facets, involving the Pastors and the Faithful of the particular Churches at all the different levels, through the most appropriate means according to the specific local realities: the consultation, coordinated by the Bishop, is addressed “to the Priests, Deacons and lay Faithful of their Churches, both individually and in associations, without overlooking the valuable contribution that consecrated men and women can offer” (EC, no. 7). The contribution of the participatory bodies of the particular Churches is specifically requested, especially that of the Presbyteral Council and the Pastoral Council, from which “a synodal Church [can truly] begin to take shape”. Equally valuable will be the contribution of other ecclesial entities to which the Preparatory Document will be sent, as well as that of those who wish to send their own contribution directly. Finally, it will be of fundamental importance that the voice of the poor and excluded also find a place, not only that of those who have some role or responsibility within the particular Churches.





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**Working Document
for the Continental Stage**
of the Synod, 2022

“Enlarge the space of **your tent”**


Listening that becomes welcoming



32. In this journey, the Churches have realised that the path to greater inclusion – the enlarged tent – is a gradual one. It begins with listening and requires a broader and deeper conversion of attitudes and structures, as well as new approaches to pastoral accompaniment; it begins in a readiness to recognise that the peripheries can be the place where a call to conversion resounds along with the call to put the Gospel more decisively into practice. Listening requires that we recognize others as subjects of their own journey. When we do this, others feel welcomed, not judged, free to share their own spiritual journey. This has been experienced in many contexts, and for some this has been the most transformative aspect of the whole process. The synodal experience can be read as a path of recognition for those who do not feel sufficiently recognised in the Church. This is especially true for those lay men and women, deacons, consecrated men and women who previously had the feeling that the institutional Church was not interested in their faith experience or their opinions.



33. The reports also reflect on the difficulty of listening deeply and accepting being transformed by it. They highlight the lack of communal processes of listening and discernment, and call for more training in this area. Furthermore, they point to the persistence of structural obstacles, including: hierarchical structures that foster autocratic tendencies; a clerical and individualistic culture that isolates individuals and fragments relationships between priests and laity; sociocultural and economic disparities that benefit the wealthy and educated; and the absence of “in-between” spaces that foster encounters between members of mutually separated groups. Poland’s report states “Not listening leads to misunderstanding, exclusion, and marginalization. As a further consequence, it creates closure, simplification, lack of trust and fears that destroys the community. When priests do not want to listen, making excuses, such as in the large number of activities, or when questions go unanswered, a sense of sadness and estrangement arises in the hearts of the lay faithful. Without listening, answers to the faithfuls’ difficulties are taken out of context and do not address the essence of the problems they are experiencing, becoming empty moralism. The laity feel that the flight from sincere listening stems from the fear of having to engage pastorally. A similar feeling grows when bishops do not have time to speak and listen to the faithful.”





34. At the same time, the reports are sensitive to the loneliness and isolation of many members of the clergy, who do not feel listened to, supported and appreciated: perhaps one of the least evident voices in the reports is that of priests and bishops, speaking for themselves and of their experience of walking together. A particularly attentive listening must be offered to enable ordained ministers to negotiate the many dimensions of their emotional and sexual life. The need to ensure appropriate forms of welcome and protection for the women and eventual children of priests who have broken the vow of celibacy, who are otherwise at risk of suffering serious injustice and discrimination, is also noted.

37. Equally prominent is the commitment of the People of God to the defence of fragile and threatened life at all its stages. For example, for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, it is part of synodality to “study the phenomenon of female migration and offer support to women of different age groups; to pay special attention to women who decide to have an abortion due to fear of material poverty and rejection by their families in Ukraine; to carry out educational work among women who are called upon to make a responsible choice when going through a difficult time in their lives, with the aim of preserving and protecting the lives of unborn children and preventing abortion; to care for women with post-abortion syndrome.”



Listening to Those who Feel Neglected and Excluded

38. The reports clearly show that many communities have already understood synodality as an invitation to listen to those who feel exiled from the Church. The groups who feel a sense of exile are diverse, beginning with many women and young people who do not feel their gifts and abilities are recognised. Within these groups, that among themselves are highly heterogeneous, many feel denigrated, neglected, misunderstood. Longing for a home also characterises those who, following the liturgical developments of the Second Vatican Council, do not feel at ease. For many, the experience of being seriously listened to is transformative and a first step towards feeling included. On the other hand, it was a source of sadness that some felt that their participation in the synod process was unwelcome: this is a feeling that requires understanding and dialogue.



51. Many local Churches express concern about the impact of a lack of trust and credibility resulting from the abuse crises. Others point to individualism and consumerism as critical cultural factors: “Every day we can feel that even in our country the proclamation of the Gospel is challenged by growing secularization, individualism and indifference to the institutional forms of religion” (EC Hungary). Malta’s report, like many others, underscores how historical entanglements between Church and political power continue to have an effect on the mission context. Many Churches feel they face all these cultural challenges simultaneously, but wish to grow more and more confident in proclaiming the Gospel in “a consumerist society that has failed to ensure sustainability, equity or life satisfaction” (EC Ireland). Others experience a pluralism of positions within themselves: “Southern Africa is also impacted by the international trends of secularisation, individualisation, and relativism. Issues such as the Church’s teaching on abortion, contraception, ordination of women, married clergy, celibacy, divorce and remarriage, Holy Communion, homosexuality, LGBTQIA+ were raised up across the Dioceses both rural and urban. There were of course differing views on these and it is not possible to give a definitive community stance on any of these issues” (EC South Africa). Many reports express particular regret and concern for the pressures experienced by families and the resulting impact on intergenerational relationships and faith transmission. Many Asian reports ask for better accompaniment and formation for families, as they negotiate changing cultural conditions.

Rethinking women's participation

60. The call for a conversion of the Church's culture, for the salvation of the world, is linked in concrete terms to the possibility of establishing a new culture, with new practices and structures. A critical and urgent area in this regard concerns the role of women and their vocation, rooted in our common baptismal dignity, to participate fully in the life of the Church. A growing awareness and sensitivity towards this issue is registered all over the world.



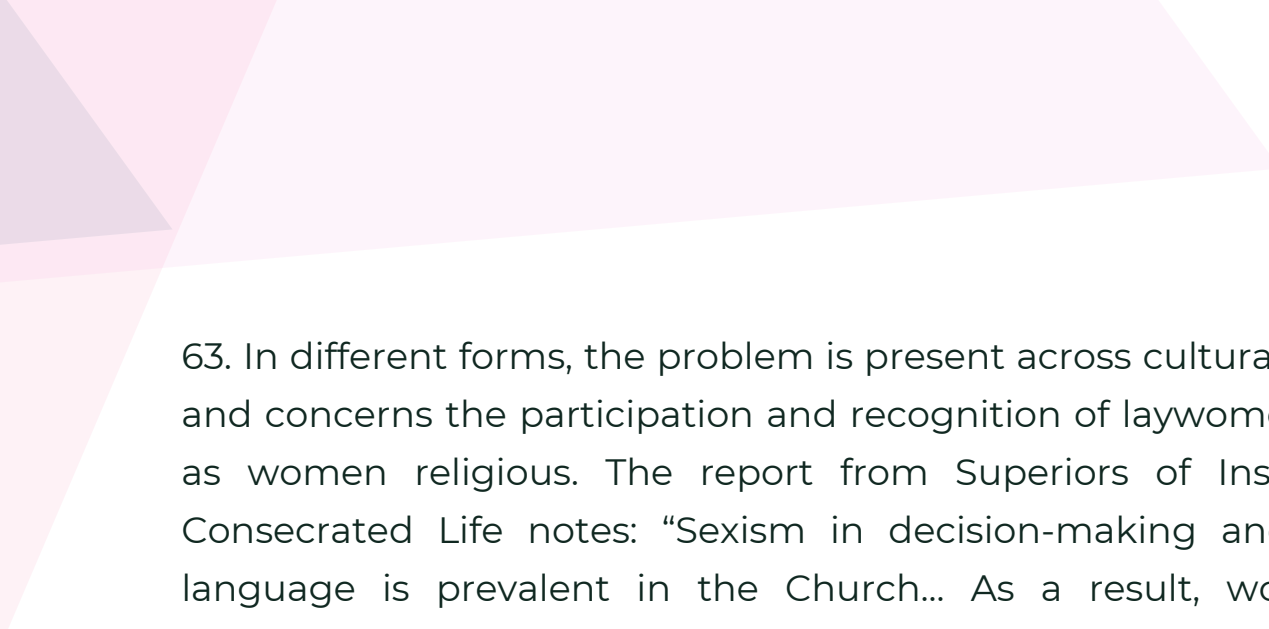
61. From all continents comes an appeal for Catholic women to be valued first and foremost as baptised and equal members of the People of God. There is almost unanimous affirmation that women love the Church deeply, but many feel sadness because their lives are often not well understood, and their contributions and charisms not always valued. The Holy Land report notes: “Those who were most committed to the synod process were women, who seem to have realised not only that they had more to gain, but also more to offer by being relegated to a prophetic edge, from which they observe what happens in the life of the Church;” and continues: “In a Church where almost all decision-makers are men, there are few spaces where women can make their voices heard. Yet they are the backbone of Church communities, both because they represent the majority of the practising members and because they are among the most active members of the Church.” The Korean report confirms: “Despite the great participation of women in various Church activities, they are often excluded from key decision-making processes. Therefore, the Church needs to improve its awareness and institutional aspects of their activities” (EC Korea). The Church faces two related challenges: women remain the majority of those who attend liturgy and participate in activities, men a minority; yet most decision-making and governance roles are held by men. It is clear that the Church must find ways to attract men to a more active membership in the Church and to enable women to participate more fully at all levels of Church life.







62. In every area of their lives, women ask the Church to be their ally. This includes addressing the social realities of impoverishment, violence and diminishment faced by women across the globe. They call for a Church at their side, and grater understanding and support in combating these forces of destruction and exclusion. Women participating in the synodal processes desire both Church and society to be a place of flourishing, active participation and healthy belonging. Some reports note that the cultures of their countries have made progress in the inclusion and participation of women, progress that could serve as a model for the Church. “This lack of equality for women within the Church is seen as a stumbling block for the Church in the modern world” (EC New Zealand).





63. In different forms, the problem is present across cultural contexts and concerns the participation and recognition of laywomen as well as women religious. The report from Superiors of Institutes of Consecrated Life notes: “Sexism in decision-making and Church language is prevalent in the Church... As a result, women are excluded from meaningful roles in the life of the Church, discriminated against by not receiving a fair wage for their ministries and services. Women religious are often regarded as cheap labour. There is a tendency – in some Churches – to exclude women and to entrust ecclesial functions to permanent deacons; and even to undervalue religious life without the habit, without regard for the fundamental equality and dignity of all baptised Christian faithful, women and men” (USG/UISG).

64. Almost all reports raise the issue of full and equal participation of women: “The growing recognition of the importance of women in the life of the Church opens up possibilities for greater, albeit limited, participation in Church structures and decision-making spheres” (EC Brazil). However, the reports do not agree on a single or complete response to the question of the vocation, inclusion and flourishing of women in Church and society. After careful listening, many reports ask that the Church continue its discernment in relation to a range of specific questions: the active role of women in the governing structures of Church bodies, the possibility for women with adequate training to preach in parish settings, and a female diaconate. Much greater diversity of opinion was expressed on the subject of priestly ordination for women, which some reports call for, while others consider a closed issue.



65. A key element of this process concerns the recognition of the ways in which women, especially women religious, are already at the forefront of synodal practices in some of the most challenging social situations we face. The contribution submitted by the Union of Superiors General and the International Union of Superiors General notes: “There are seeds of synodality where we break new ground in solidarity: securing a future of racial and ethnic justice and peace for black, brown, Asian and Native American brothers and sisters (United States); connecting in depth with indigenous and native sisters and brothers (Americas); opening new avenues of presence of religious sisters in diverse movements; alliance with like-minded groups to address key social issues (such as climate change, refugees and asylum seekers, homelessness), or issues of specific nations.” In these contexts, women seek collaborators and can be teachers of synodality within wider Church processes.








Managing tensions: renewal and reconciliation

91. Many reports strongly encourage the implementation of a synodal style of liturgical celebration that allows for the active participation of all the faithful in welcoming all differences, valuing all ministries, and recognising all charisms. The synodal listening of the Churches records many issues to be addressed in this direction: from rethinking a liturgy too concentrated on the celebrant, to the modalities of active participation of the laity, to the access of women to ministerial roles. “While being faithful to the tradition, its originality, antiquity, and uniformity, let us try to make the liturgical celebration more alive and participatory of all the community of believers; priests, laity, youth and children, reading the signs of the time with sound discernment. The young people are trying to have a space in the liturgy with songs and it is positive” (EC Ethiopia).

108. The vast majority of Episcopal Conferences that responded to the consultation sent by the General Secretariat of the Synod want representatives from the entire People of God to be involved in the Continental Stage.



It is therefore asked that all Assemblies be ecclesial and not merely episcopal, ensuring that their composition adequately represents the variety of the People of God: bishops, presbyters, deacons, consecrated women and men, laymen and women. With respect to the participants in the Continental Assemblies, it is important to pay special attention to the presence of women and young people (laymen and laywomen, consecrated men and women in formation, seminarians); people living in conditions of poverty or marginalization, and those who have direct contact with these groups and persons; fraternal delegates from other Christian denominations; representatives of other religions and faith traditions; and some people with no religious affiliation. Furthermore, bishops are invited to meet at the end of the Continental Assemblies to collegially reread the lived synodal experience from the perspective of their specific charism and role. In particular, they are asked to identify appropriate ways to carry out their task of validating and approving the Final Document, ensuring that it is the fruit of an authentically synodal journey, respectful of the process that has taken place and faithful to the diverse voices of the People of God in each continent.





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**Instrumentum Laboris for
the First Session of the Assembly**
of the Synod in October 2023



How can the Church of our time better fulfil its mission through greater recognition and promotion of the baptismal dignity of women?

In Baptism, the Christian enters into a new bond with Christ and, in Him and through Him, with all the Baptised, with all humanity and with the whole of creation. Sons and daughters of the one Father, anointed by the same Spirit, by virtue of sharing the same bond with Christ, the Baptised are given to one another as members of a single body enjoying equal dignity (cf. Gal 3:26-28). The listening phase reaffirmed the awareness of this reality, indicating that it must find ever more concrete realisation in the life of the Church, including through relationships of mutuality, reciprocity and complementarity between men and women. In particular:

a) the Continental Assemblies were unanimous in calling for attention to the experience, status and role of women, notwithstanding the different perspectives present within each continent. They celebrate the faith, participation and witness of so many Lay and Consecrated women worldwide, often present as evangelists and first teachers in the ways of faith, ministering in remote places and challenging contexts, and at the “prophetic margins”;



b) the Continental Assemblies also call for deeper reflection on the ecclesial relational failures, which are also structural failures affecting the lives of women in the Church, inviting us into a process of ongoing conversion seeking to grow more fully into that identity given us in Baptism. Priorities for the Synodal Assembly include addressing the joys and tensions, and the opportunities for conversion and renewal, in how we live relationships between men and women in the Church, and namely the relationships: between ordained Ministers, Consecrated men and women, and Lay men and women;

c) during the first phase of the Synod, questions of women's participation and recognition, of mutually supportive relationships between men and women and the desire for a greater presence of women in positions of responsibility and governance emerged as crucial elements in the search for more synodal ways to live the Church's mission. The women who participated in the first phase expressed a clear desire that society and the Church be places of growth, active participation and healthy belonging for all women. They ask the Church to be at their side to accompany and promote the realisation of this. A synodal Church must address these questions together, seeking responses that offer greater recognition of women's baptismal dignity and rejection of all forms of discrimination and exclusion faced by women in the Church and society;



d) finally, the Continental Assemblies highlight the plurality of women's experiences, points of view and perspectives and ask that this diversity be recognised in the Synodal Assembly's work, avoiding treating women as a homogeneous group or an abstract or ideological subject of debate.

Question for discernment

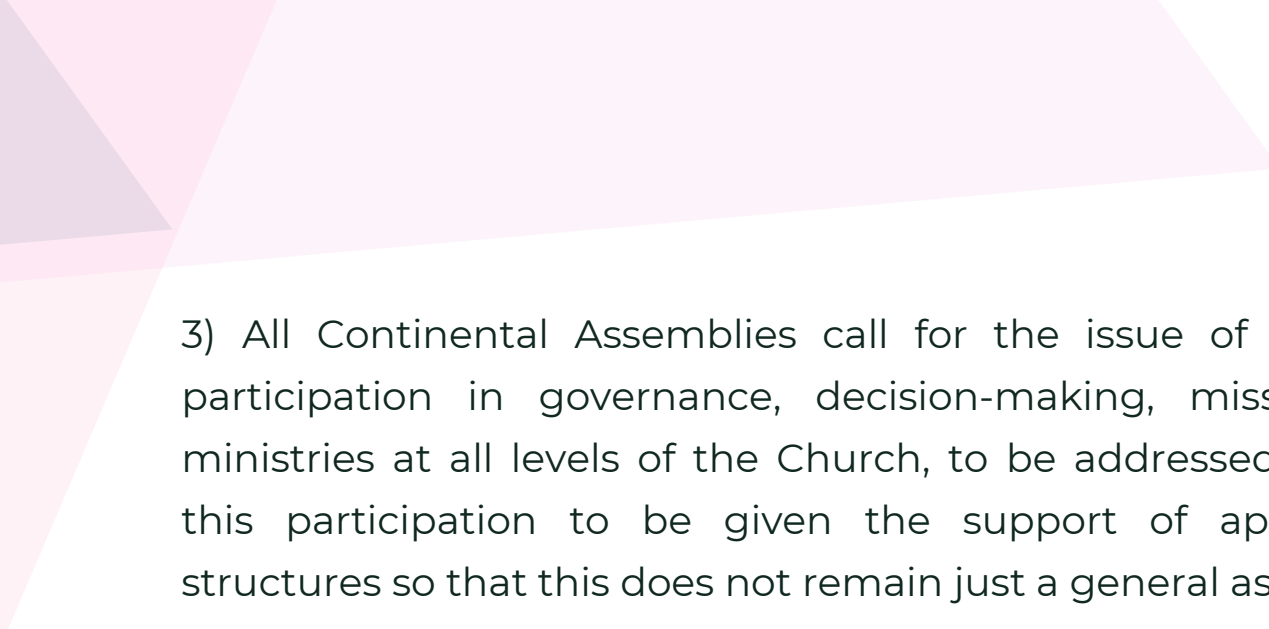
What concrete steps can the Church take to renew and reform its procedures, institutional arrangements and structures to enable greater recognition and participation of women, including in governance, decision-making processes and in the taking of decisions, in a spirit of communion and with a view to mission?

Suggestions for prayer and preparatory reflection

1) Women play a major role in transmitting the faith in families, Parishes, consecrated life, associations and movements and lay institutions, and as teachers and catechists. How can we better recognise, support, and accompany their already considerable contribution? How can we enhance it in order to learn to be an increasingly synodal Church?

2) The charisms of women are already present and at work in the Church today. What can we do to discern and support them and to learn what the Spirit wants to teach us through them?





3) All Continental Assemblies call for the issue of women's participation in governance, decision-making, mission and ministries at all levels of the Church, to be addressed, and for this participation to be given the support of appropriate structures so that this does not remain just a general aspiration.

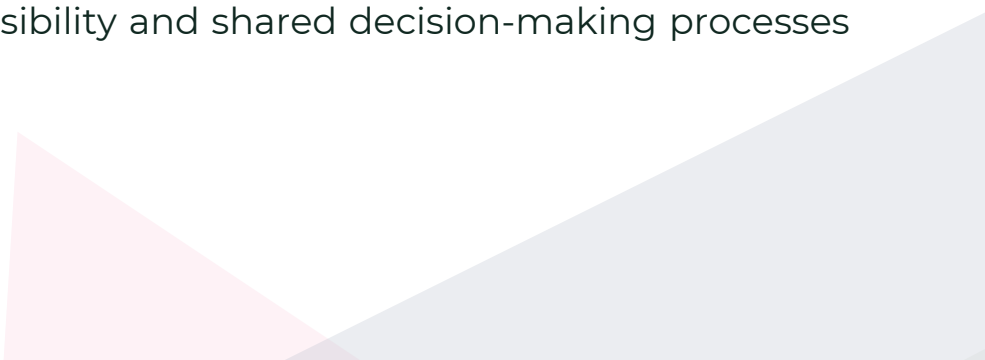
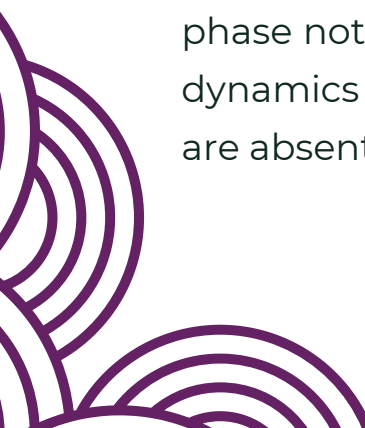
a) How can women be included in these areas in greater numbers and new ways?

b) How, in consecrated life, can women be better represented in the Church's governance and decision-making processes, better protected from abuse in all ecclesial contexts, and, where relevant, more fairly remunerated for their work?

c) How can women contribute to governance, helping to promote greater accountability and transparency and strengthen trust in the Church?

d) How can we deepen reflection on women's contribution to theological reflection and the accompaniment of communities? How can we give space and recognition to this contribution in the formal processes of discernment at every level of the Church?

e) What new ministries could be created to provide the means and opportunities for women's effective participation in discernment and decision-making bodies? How can co-responsibility in decision-making processes be increased between lay and consecrated women and clergy in remote places and in challenging social contexts where women are frequently the main agents of pastoral care and evangelisation? The contributions received during the first phase note that tensions with the ordained Ministers arise where the dynamics of co-responsibility and shared decision-making processes are absent.



4) Most of the Continental Assemblies and the syntheses of several Episcopal Conferences call for the question of women's inclusion in the diaconate to be considered. Is it possible to envisage this, and in what way?

5) How can men and women better cooperate in pastoral ministry and exercising related responsibilities?





How can we develop discernment practices and decision-making processes in an authentically synodal manner, that respects the protagonism of the Spirit?

As a synodal Church, we are called to discern together the steps we should take to fulfil the mission of evangelisation, emphasising the right of all to participate in the life and mission of the Church and drawing forth the irreplaceable contribution of all the Baptised. Underlying all discernment is the desire to do the Lord's will and to grow in closeness to Him through prayer, meditation on the Word and participation in sacramental life, which enables us to choose as He would choose. Regarding the place of discernment in a missionary synodal Church:

a) the Continental Assemblies express a desire for shared decision-making processes capable of integrating the contribution of the whole People of God, particularly those with relevant expertise, as well as involving those who for various reasons remain on the margins of community life, such as women, young people, minorities, the poor and the excluded. This desire is often expressed together with dissatisfaction with forms of exercising authority in which decisions are taken without consultation;



4) How can we foster the participation of women, young people, minorities, and marginalised voices in discernment and decision-making processes?

5) How can a clearer account of the relationship between the entirety of the decision-making process and the specific moment of decision-taking help us to better identify the responsibilities of the different actors at each stage? How do we understand the relationship between decision-taking and discernment in common?


6) How can and must Consecrated men and women participate in the decision-making processes of the local Churches? What can we learn from their experience and their different spiritualities regarding discernment and decision-making processes? What can we learn from associations, movements and Lay-led groups?



What structures can be developed to strengthen a missionary synodal Church?

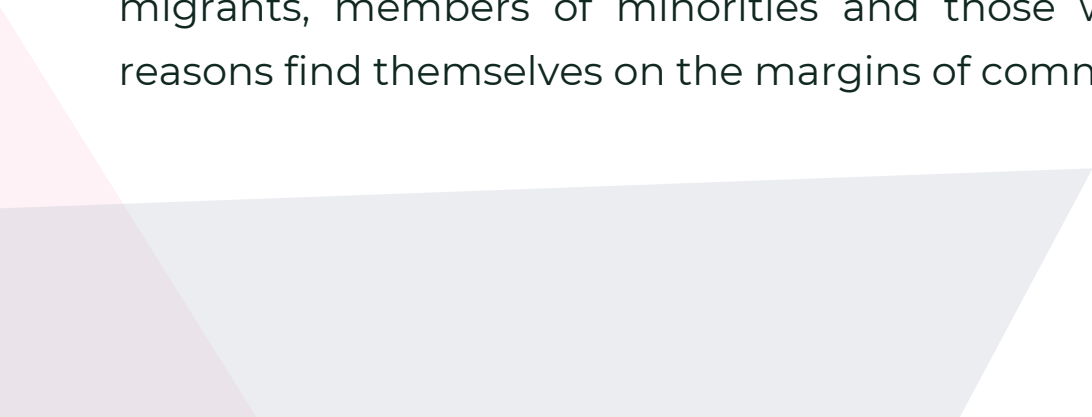
The Continental Assemblies express a strong desire that the synodal way of proceeding, experienced in the current journey, should penetrate into the daily life of the Church at all levels, either by the renewal of existing structures—such as diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils, Economic Affairs Councils, diocesan or eparchial Synods—or by the establishment of new ones. While not meaning to diminish the importance of renewed relationships within the People of God, work on structures is indispensable to strengthen changes over time. In particular:





b) this requires that structures and institutions function with adequate procedures that are transparent, mission-focused and open to participation; procedures that make room for women, young people, minorities, the poor and marginalised. This is true for the participatory bodies already mentioned, the role of each of which must be reaffirmed and strengthened. It is also true for: decision-making bodies of associations, movements and new communities; governing bodies of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (in a manner appropriate to the particular charism of each); the many and diverse institutions, often also subject to civil law, through which missionary action and the service of the Christian community is realized, such as schools, hospitals, universities, mass media, reception and social action centres, cultural centres, foundations, etc;

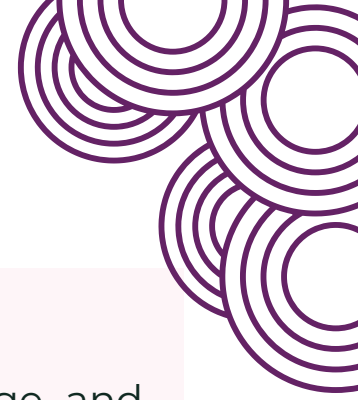
3) What obstacles (mental, theological, practical, organizational, financial, cultural) stand in the way of transforming the participatory bodies currently provided for in canon law into bodies of effective community discernment? What reforms are needed so that they can effectively, creatively and vibrantly support the mission? How can they be made more open to the presence and contribution of women, young people, the poor, migrants, members of minorities and those who for various reasons find themselves on the margins of community life?



Women's Day

Synthesis Report of the First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, October 4-29, 2023

“A synodal Church in mission”

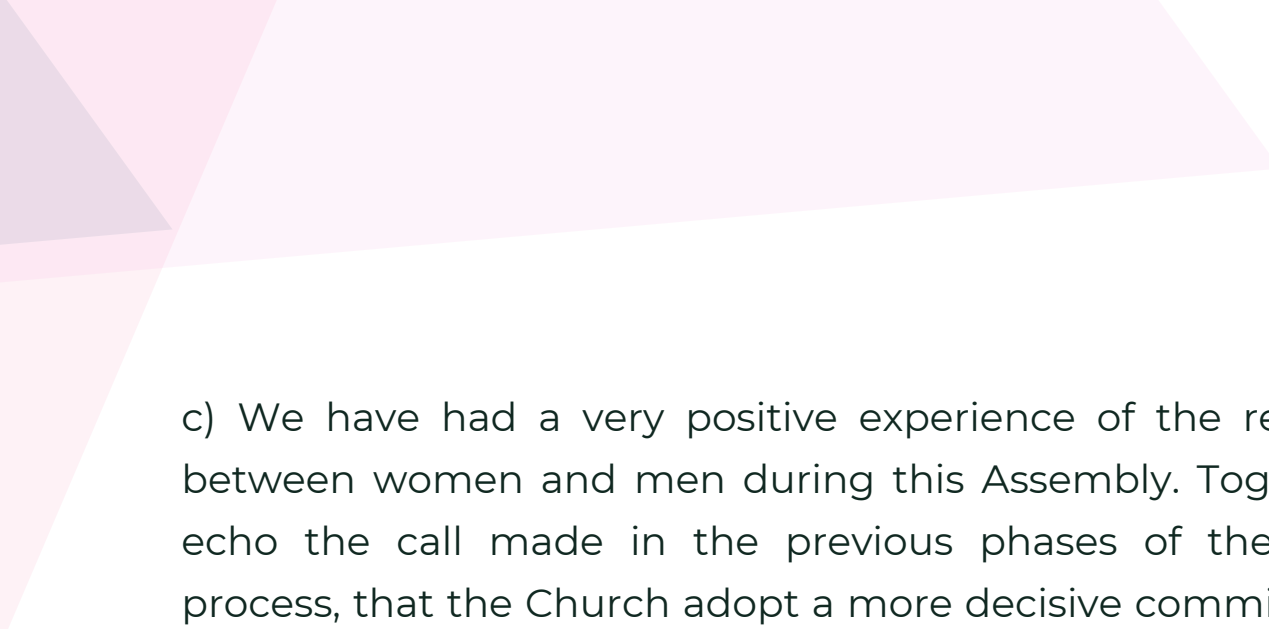


Women in the Life and Mission of the Church

Convergences



a) We are created, male and female, in the image and likeness of God. From the beginning, creation manifests unity and difference, bestowing on women and men a shared nature, calling, and destiny, and two distinct experiences of being human. Sacred Scripture testifies to the complementarity and reciprocity of women and men, and to the covenant between them that lies at the heart of God's design for creation. Jesus considered women his interlocutors: he spoke with them about the Kingdom of God; he welcomed them as disciples, as for example Mary of Bethany. These women, who experienced His power of healing, liberation and recognition, travelled with Him on the road from Galilee to Jerusalem (Lk 8,1-3). He entrusted the announcement of the Resurrection on Easter morning to a woman, Mary Magdalene.

b) In Christ, women and men are clothed with the same baptismal dignity (Gal 3:28) and receive equally the variety of gifts of the Spirit. We are called together into a communion of loving, non-competitive relationships in Christ, and to a co-responsibility to be expressed at every level of the Church's life. We are, as Pope Francis said to us together, "a people convened and called with the strength of the Beatitudes".



c) We have had a very positive experience of the reciprocity between women and men during this Assembly. Together we echo the call made in the previous phases of the synodal process, that the Church adopt a more decisive commitment to understand and accompany women from a pastoral and sacramental point of view. Women desire to share their spiritual experience of journeying towards holiness in the various stages of life: as young women, as mothers, in their friendships and relationships, in family life at all ages, in working life, and in consecrated life. Women cry out for justice in societies still marked by sexual violence, economic inequality and the tendency to treat them as objects. Women are scarred by trafficking, forced migration and war. Pastoral accompaniment and vigorous advocacy for women should go hand in hand.

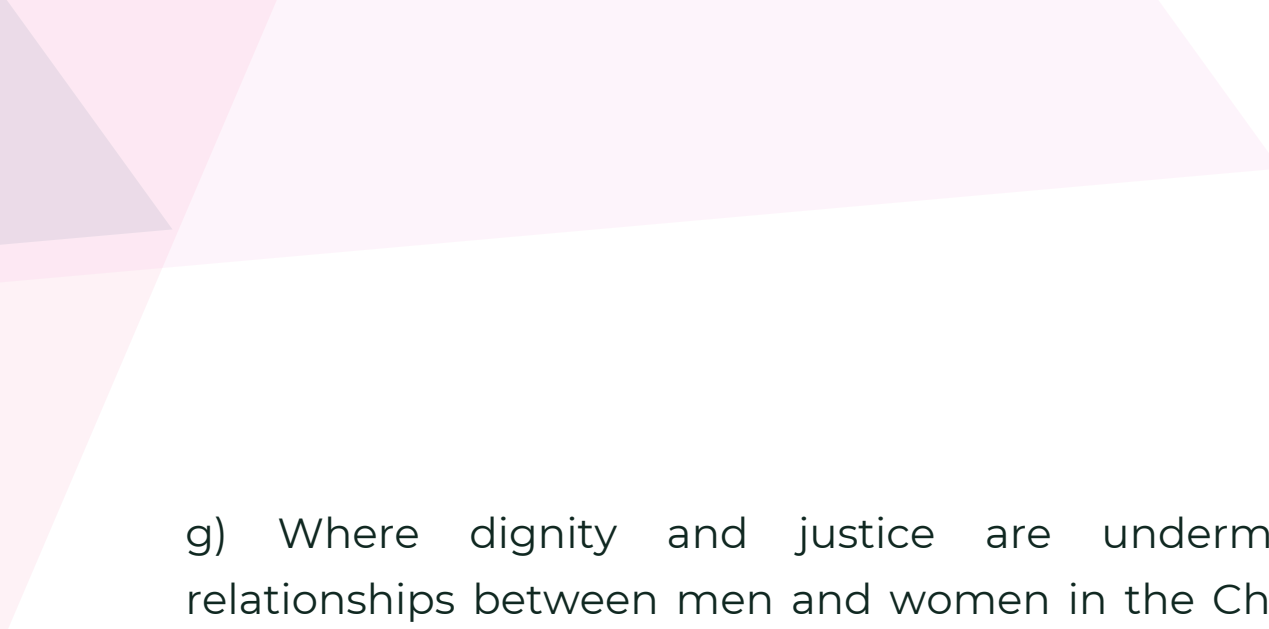
d) Women make up most of those in our pews and are often the first missionaries of the faith in the family. Consecrated women, both in contemplative and apostolic life, are a fundamental and distinctive gift, sign and witness in our midst. The long history of women missionaries, saints, theologians and mystics is also a powerful source of nourishment and inspiration for women and men today.



e) Mary of Nazareth, woman of faith and Mother of God, remains for all a unique source of theological, ecclesial and spiritual meaning. Mary reminds us of the universal call to listen attentively to God and to remain open to the Holy Spirit. She knew the joy of bearing and nurturing and endured pain and suffering. She gave birth in impoverished conditions, became a refugee and lived the sorrow of her Son's brutal killing, but she also knew the magnificence of his Resurrection and the glory of Pentecost.



f) Many women expressed deep gratitude for the work of priests and bishops. They also spoke of a Church that wounds. Clericalism, a chauvinist mentality and inappropriate expressions of authority continue to scar the face of the Church and damage its communion. A profound spiritual conversion is needed as the foundation for any effective structural change. Sexual abuse and the abuse of power and authority continue to cry out for justice, healing and reconciliation. We asked how the Church can be a place that safeguards all.





g) Where dignity and justice are undermined in relationships between men and women in the Church, we weaken the credibility of our proclamation to the world. Our synodal path shows the need for relational renewal and structural changes. In this way we can better welcome the participation and contribution of all – with lay and consecrated women and men, deacons, priests, and bishops – as co-responsible disciples in the work of mission.

h) The Assembly asks that we avoid repeating the mistake of talking about women as an issue or a problem. Instead, we desire to promote a Church in which men and women dialogue together, in order to understand more deeply the horizon of God's project, that sees them together as protagonists, without subordination, exclusion and competition.





Matters for Consideration

i) Churches all over the world have expressed a clear request that the active contribution of women would be recognised and valued, and that their pastoral leadership increase in all areas of the Church's life and mission. In order to give better expression to the gifts and charisms of all and to be more responsive to pastoral needs, how can the Church include more women in existing roles and ministries? If new ministries are required, who should discern these, at what levels and in what ways?

j) Different positions have been expressed regarding women's access to the diaconal ministry. For some, this step would be unacceptable because they consider it a discontinuity with Tradition. For others, however, opening access for women to the diaconate would restore the practice of the Early Church. Others still, discern it as an appropriate and necessary response to the signs of the times, faithful to the Tradition, and one that would find an echo in the hearts of many who seek new energy and vitality in the Church. Some express concern that the request speaks of a worrying anthropological confusion, which, if granted, would marry the Church to the spirit of the age.

k) Discussion of this question is also related to the wider ongoing reflection on the theology of the diaconate (cf. below Chapter 11).

Proposals

l) Local churches are encouraged to extend their work of listening, accompaniment and care to the most marginalised women in their social contexts.

m) It is urgent to ensure that women can participate in decision-making processes and assume roles of responsibility in pastoral care and ministry. The Holy Father has significantly increased the number of women in positions of responsibility in the Roman Curia. This should also happen at other levels of Church life, in consecrated life and dioceses. Provision needs to be made in Canon Law accordingly.

n) Theological and pastoral research on the access of women to the diaconate should be continued, benefiting from consideration of the results of the commissions specially established by the Holy Father, and from the theological, historical and exegetical research already undertaken. If possible, the results of this research should be presented to the next Session of the Assembly.

o) Cases of labour injustice and unfair remuneration within the Church need to be addressed especially for women in consecrated life, who are too often treated as cheap labour.



p) Women's access to formation programmes and theological study needs to be considerably expanded. We suggest that women should also be integrated into seminary teaching and training programs to foster better formation for ordained ministry.

q) There is a need to ensure that liturgical texts and Church documents are more attentive to the use of language that takes into equal consideration both men and women, and also includes a range of words, images and narratives that draw more widely on women's experience.

r) We propose that women receive appropriate formation to enable them to be judges in all canonical processes.





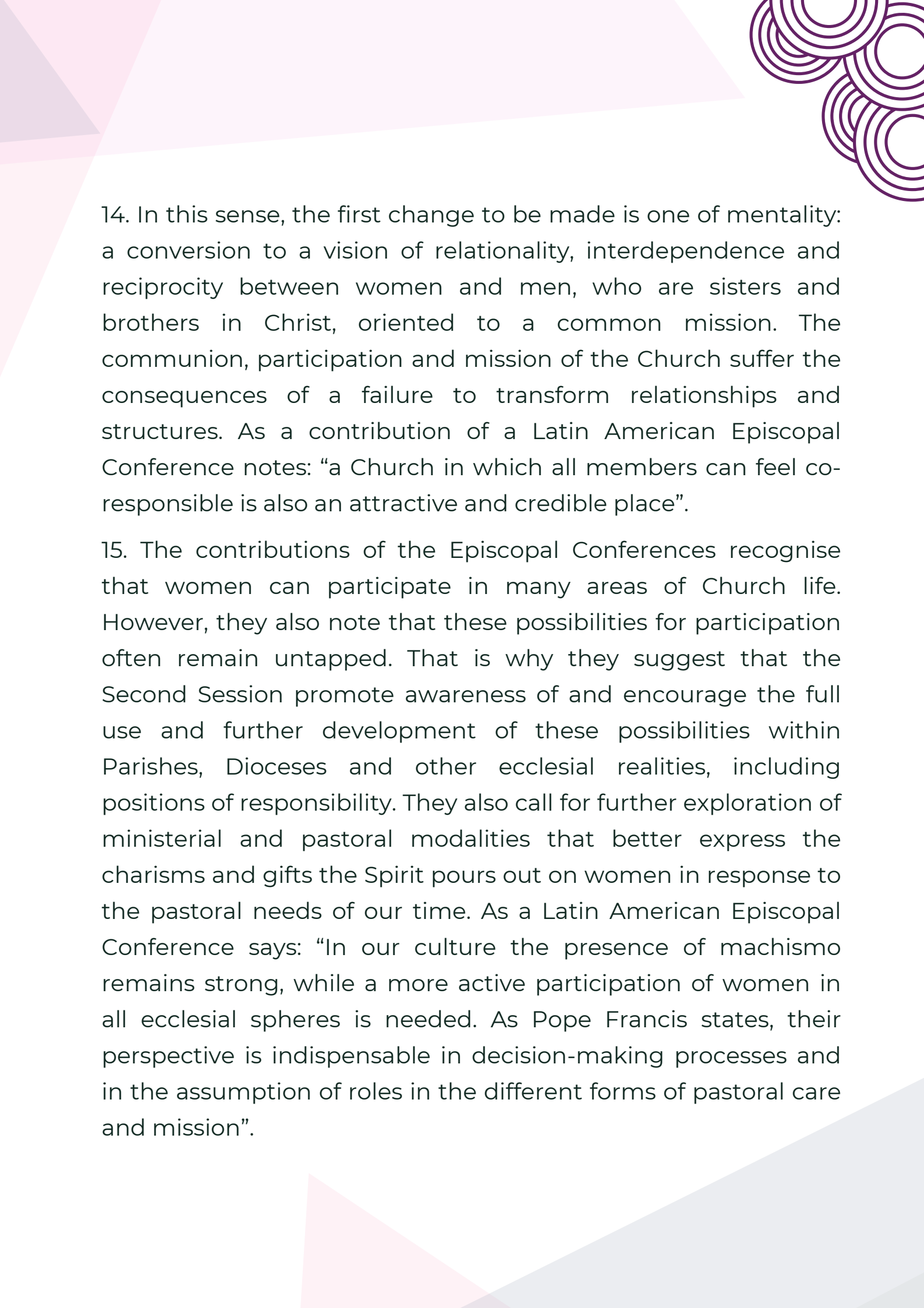
*Women's
Day*

**Instrumentum Laboris for
the Second Session of the Assembly**
of the Synod in October 2024

How to be a missionary synodal Church

Sisters and brothers in Christ: a renewed reciprocity

13. The first difference we encounter as human persons is between men and women. Our vocation as Christians is to honour this God-given difference by living within the Church a dynamic relational reciprocity as a sign for the world. In reflecting on this vision from a synodal perspective, the contributions received at all stages highlighted the need to give fuller recognition to the charisms, vocation and role of women, to better honour this reciprocity of relations in all spheres of the Church's life. The synodal perspective highlights three theological reference points as a guide for discernment: a) participation is rooted in the ecclesiological implications of Baptism; b) we are a communion of baptized persons, called not to bury talents but to discern and call forth the gifts that the Spirit pours out on each for the good of the community and the world; c) while respecting and acknowledging the diverse vocations and gifts of each, the gifts that the Spirit bestows on the faithful are ordered to each other in a complementary manner and the collaboration of all the baptised is to be practised as an act of co-responsibility. Guiding us in our reflection is the testimony of the Holy Scriptures: God chose women as the first witnesses and heralds of the Resurrection. By virtue of Baptism, they enjoy full equality, receive the same outpouring of gifts from the Spirit, and are called to the service of Christ's mission.




14. In this sense, the first change to be made is one of mentality: a conversion to a vision of relationality, interdependence and reciprocity between women and men, who are sisters and brothers in Christ, oriented to a common mission. The communion, participation and mission of the Church suffer the consequences of a failure to transform relationships and structures. As a contribution of a Latin American Episcopal Conference notes: “a Church in which all members can feel co-responsible is also an attractive and credible place”.

15. The contributions of the Episcopal Conferences recognise that women can participate in many areas of Church life. However, they also note that these possibilities for participation often remain untapped. That is why they suggest that the Second Session promote awareness of and encourage the full use and further development of these possibilities within Parishes, Dioceses and other ecclesial realities, including positions of responsibility. They also call for further exploration of ministerial and pastoral modalities that better express the charisms and gifts the Spirit pours out on women in response to the pastoral needs of our time. As a Latin American Episcopal Conference says: “In our culture the presence of machismo remains strong, while a more active participation of women in all ecclesial spheres is needed. As Pope Francis states, their perspective is indispensable in decision-making processes and in the assumption of roles in the different forms of pastoral care and mission”.



16. Concrete requests emerge from the contributions of the Episcopal Conferences for consideration at the Second Session, including: (a) the promotion of domains for dialogue in the Church so that women can share their experiences, charisms, skills, and spiritual, theological and pastoral insights for the good of the whole Church; (b) a wider participation of women in the processes of ecclesial discernment and all stages of decision-making processes (drafting and decision-making); c) wider access to positions of responsibility in Dioceses and ecclesiastical institutions, in line with existing provisions; d) greater recognition and support for the life and charisms of consecrated women and their employment in positions of responsibility; e) access for women to positions of responsibility in seminaries, institutes and theological faculties; f) an increase in the number of women judges in all canonical processes. The reports received also continue to call for greater attention to be paid to the use of language that is more inclusive and to a range of images from Scripture and Tradition in preaching, teaching, catechesis and the drafting of official Church documents.





17. While some local Churches call for women to be admitted to the diaconal ministry, others reiterate their opposition. On this issue, which will not be the subject of the work of the Second Session, it is good that theological reflection should continue, on an appropriate timescale and in the appropriate ways. The fruits of Study Group 5, which will take into consideration the results of the two Commissions that have dealt with the question in the past, will contribute to its maturation.

18. Many of the demands expressed above also apply to laymen, whose lack of participation in the life of the Church is often lamented. In general, reflection on the role of women often highlights the desire to strengthen all the ministries exercised by the laity (men and women). There is also a call for adequately trained lay men and women to contribute to preaching the Word of God, including during the celebration of the Eucharist.






Part I Relations

Throughout the synodal process and from all regions of the globe, the request emerged for a Church less focused on bureaucracy and more capable of nurturing relationships with the Lord, between men and women, in the family, in the community, and between social groups. Only a web of relationships that weaves together the multiplicity of belongings can sustain individuals and communities, offering them points of reference and orientation and showing them the beauty of life according to the Gospel. It is in relationships - with Christ, with others, in the community - that faith is transmitted.

29. As an expression of the Spirit's freedom in bestowing gifts and as a response to the needs of individual communities, there is in the Church a variety of ministries that can be exercised by any baptised man or woman. These take the form of a regular service offered to and recognized by the community and those who guide it. They can be called baptismal ministries to indicate their common root (baptism) and to distinguish them from ordained ministries rooted in the sacrament of Order. There are, for example, men and women who exercise the ministry of coordinating a small church community, the ministry of leading moments of prayer (at funerals or otherwise), the extraordinary ministry of communion, or other services not necessarily liturgical.



The Latin and Eastern canonical norms already provide that, in some cases, lay faithful, men or women, may also be extraordinary ministers of baptism. According to the Latin norms, the bishop may delegate to lay faithful, men or women, to assist at weddings. It is useful to continue reflecting on how to entrust these ministries to the laity in a more stable form. This reflection should be accompanied by further consideration of how we can promote more forms of lay ministry, including outside the liturgical sphere.

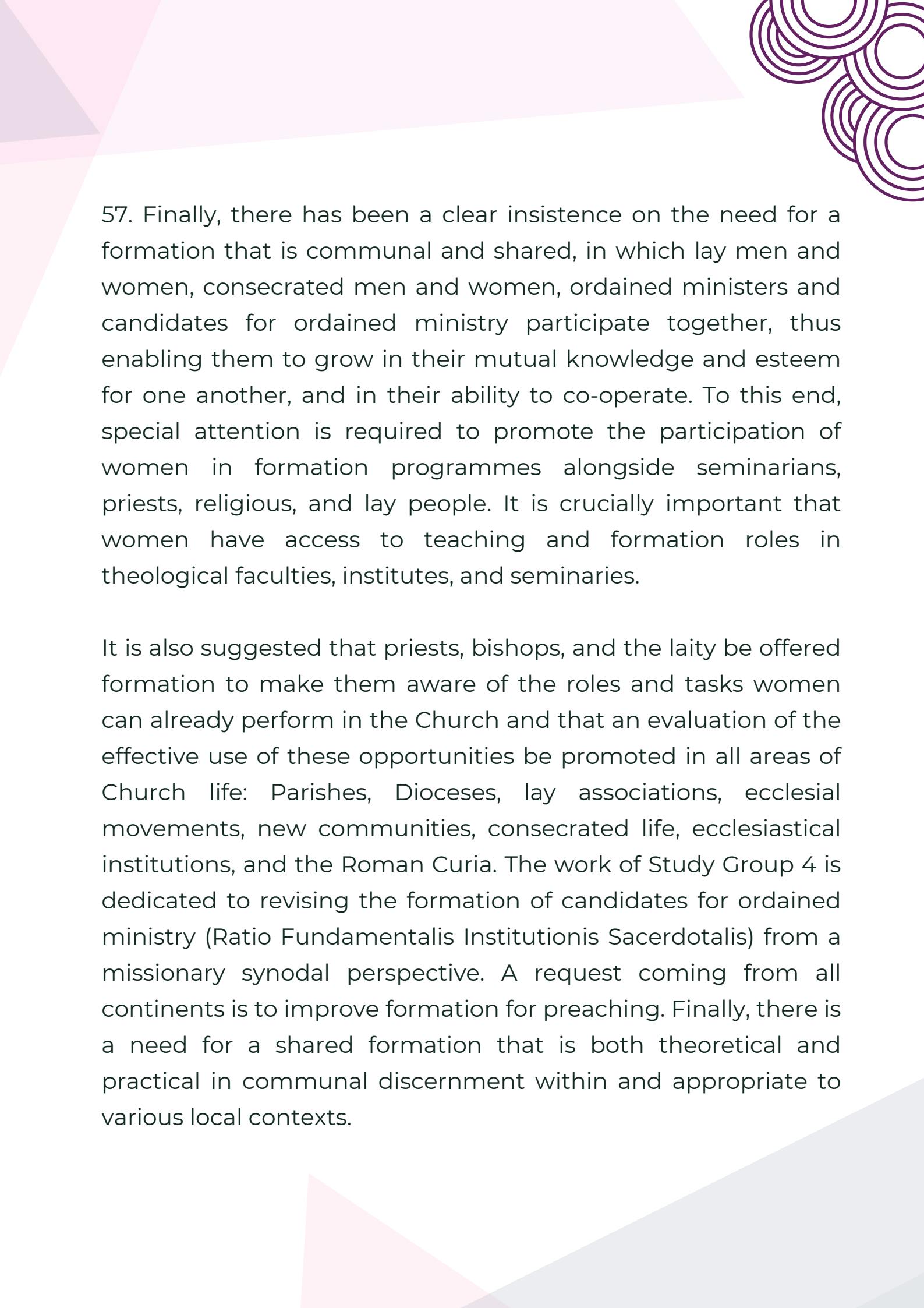




An integral and shared formation

55. The purpose of formation in the perspective of missionary synodality is to form witnesses, that is: men and women capable of assuming the mission of the Church in co-responsibility and cooperation with the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8). Formation is therefore based on the dynamism of Christian initiation, aiming to promote the personal experience of encounter with the Lord that entails a process of continuously converting our attitudes, relationships, mentality, and structures. The subject of mission is always the Church, and each of its members is a witness and herald of salvation by virtue of Baptism. The Eucharist, “the source and culmination of all Christian life” (LG 11), is the fundamental context of our formation in synodality. As a community of life and love, the family is a privileged place of education for faith and Christian practice. In the interweaving of generations, it is a school of synodality, inviting everyone to care for others and making visible that everyone - the weak and the strong, children, young and old - have much to receive and much to give.





57. Finally, there has been a clear insistence on the need for a formation that is communal and shared, in which lay men and women, consecrated men and women, ordained ministers and candidates for ordained ministry participate together, thus enabling them to grow in their mutual knowledge and esteem for one another, and in their ability to co-operate. To this end, special attention is required to promote the participation of women in formation programmes alongside seminarians, priests, religious, and lay people. It is crucially important that women have access to teaching and formation roles in theological faculties, institutes, and seminaries.

It is also suggested that priests, bishops, and the laity be offered formation to make them aware of the roles and tasks women can already perform in the Church and that an evaluation of the effective use of these opportunities be promoted in all areas of Church life: Parishes, Dioceses, lay associations, ecclesial movements, new communities, consecrated life, ecclesiastical institutions, and the Roman Curia. The work of Study Group 4 is dedicated to revising the formation of candidates for ordained ministry (*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*) from a missionary synodal perspective. A request coming from all continents is to improve formation for preaching. Finally, there is a need for a shared formation that is both theoretical and practical in communal discernment within and appropriate to various local contexts.

Transparency, accountability, and evaluation

79. In particular, in forms appropriate to each context, it seems necessary to guarantee at least a) an effective functioning of the Councils for Economic Affairs; b) the effective involvement of the People of God, especially the most competent members, in pastoral and economic planning; c) the preparation and publication (with real accessibility) of an annual financial statement, as much as possible certified by external auditors, which makes transparent the management of the goods and financial resources of the Church and its institutions; d) an annual statement on the performance of the mission, including an illustration of the initiatives undertaken in the area of safeguarding (protection of minors and vulnerable persons) and promoting women's access to positions of authority and their participation in decision-making and taking processes; and e) periodic evaluation procedures on the performance of those exercising any form of ministry and holding any position within the Church. These are points of great importance and urgency for the credibility of the synodal process and its implementation.



Local Churches in the one and unique Catholic Church

93. In a similar vein, attention must be paid to the composition of these bodies to encourage greater involvement of women, young people, and those living in conditions of poverty or marginalisation in the composition of these bodies. Moreover, as the First Session emphasised, it is fundamental that these bodies include men and women committed to witnessing to the faith in the ordinary realities of life and in their social contexts, with a recognised apostolic and missionary disposition (cf. SR 18d), and not only those involved in organising the life and services of the community. In this way, the ecclesial discernment carried out by these bodies will benefit from greater openness and ability to analyse reality and a diversity of perspectives. Finally, many contributions point to the desire to make mandatory those Councils whose establishment is discretionary under current law.



Women's Day

Final Document “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission”: Second Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly

of the Synod of Bishops, October 2-27, 2024



Introduction

6. We cannot deny that we have faced fatigue, resistance to change and the temptation to let our own ideas prevail over listening to the Gospel and the practice of discernment. Yet, the mercy of God, our most loving Father, purifies our hearts, thus enabling us to continue along this journey. We acknowledged this and began the Second Session of the Assembly with a penitential vigil, through which, feeling ashamed, we asked forgiveness for our sins and we lifted up our prayers for the victims of the evils of the world. We identified our sins: against peace; against Creation; against indigenous peoples, migrants, children, women, and those who are poor; against failures in listening and in building communion. We were brought to a renewed understanding, namely, that synodality requires repentance and conversion. In celebrating the sacrament of the mercy of God, we experience unconditional love: the hardness of heart is conquered and we open up to communion. This is why we want to be a merciful Church, capable of sharing with everyone the forgiveness and reconciliation that come from God: pure grace of which we are not masters, but only witnesses.





Unity as Harmony

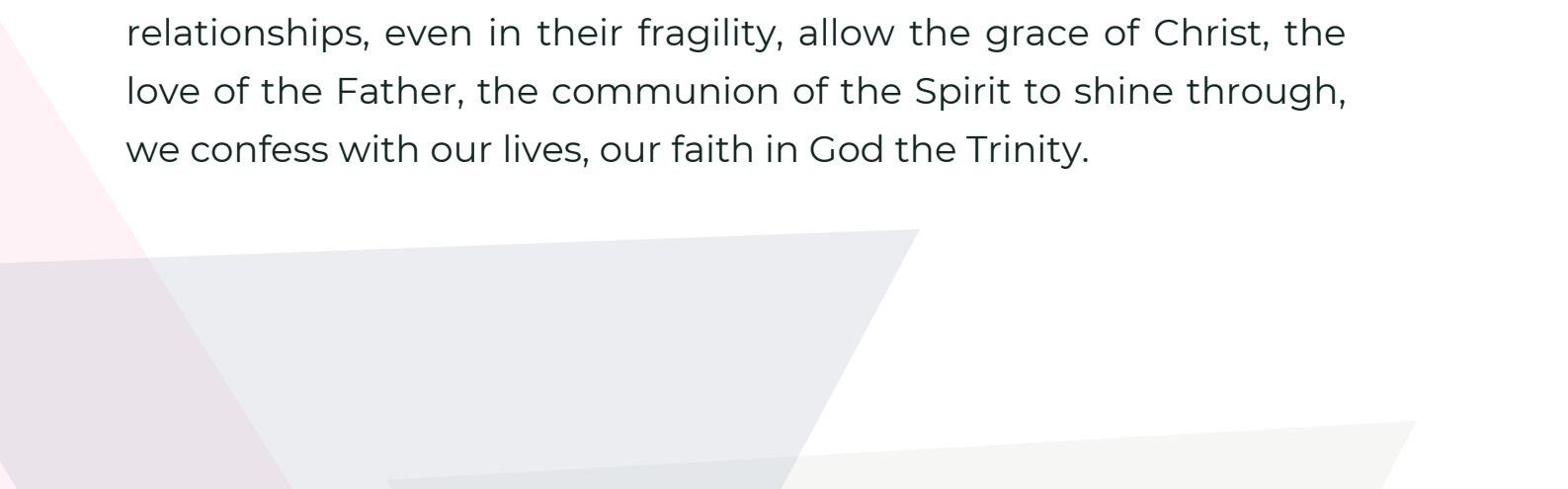
36. The synodal process has shown that the Holy Spirit constantly calls forth from the People of God a great variety of charisms and ministries. "In the structure of the body of Christ, too, there is a diversity of members and functions. There is one Spirit who distributes his various gifts for the good of the church according to his own riches and the needs of the ministries (cf. 1 Cor 12: 11)" (LG 7). Equally, a desire emerged to expand possibilities for participation and for the exercise of differentiated co-responsibility by all the baptised, men and women. In this regard, however, the lack of participation by so many members of the People of God in this journey of ecclesial renewal was a source of sadness. There was also a sense of sadness expressed at the widespread difficulty within the Church in living flourishing relationships fully between men and women, between different generations and between individuals and groups with diverse cultural identities and social conditions. Of particular concern in this regard must be the people made poor and those who are excluded.





New Relationships

50. What emerged throughout the entire synodal journey, and in every place and context, was the call for a Church with a greater capacity to nurture relationships: with the Lord, between men and women, in the family, in the local community, among social groups and religions, with the earth itself. Many participants were delighted and surprised to be asked to join this journey and to be given the opportunity to have their voice heard in the community. Unfortunately, others continued to experience the pain of feeling excluded or judged because of their marital situation, identity or sexuality. The desire for more real and meaningful relationships is not only an authentic longing to belong to a close-knit group, but may also reflect a deep sense of faith. The evangelical quality of relationships in a community is decisive for the witness that the People of God are called to make in history. “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (Jn 13: 35). The most eloquent sign of the Holy Spirit’s action in the community of disciples is the invitation to relationship extended to those most in need, which flows from a renewal of grace and accords with the teaching of Jesus. To be a synodal Church, we are required to open ourselves to a genuine relational conversion that redirects each person’s priorities and we must once again learn from the Gospel that attending to relationships is not merely a strategy or a tool for greater organisational effectiveness. Relationships and bonds are the means by which God the Father has revealed Himself in Jesus and the Spirit. When our relationships, even in their fragility, allow the grace of Christ, the love of the Father, the communion of the Spirit to shine through, we confess with our lives, our faith in God the Trinity.





52. The need for conversion definitely concerns the relations between men and women. The dynamics of relationships is inscribed upon our condition as creatures. The difference between the sexes constitutes the basis of human relationships. “So God created humankind in his image [...] male and female he created them” (Gen 1: 27). Inequality between men and women is not part of God’s design. In the new creation, this difference is reconsidered in the light of the dignity of Baptism: “As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3: 27-28). Our vocation as Christians is to welcome and respect, in every place and context, this difference, which is a gift from God and a source of life. We bear witness to the Gospel when we seek to live in relationships that respect the equal dignity and reciprocity between men and women. The widely expressed pain and suffering on the part of many women from every region and continent, both lay and consecrated, during the synodal process, reveal how often we fail to live up to this vision.



In a Plurality of Contexts


54. The evils that plague our world, including wars and armed conflicts and the illusion that just peace can be achieved by force, are rooted in these dynamics. Just as destructive is the belief that all of creation, and this includes humans themselves, can be exploited at will for profit. A consequence of this reality is the creation of barriers that divide, even Christian communities, resulting in inequalities whereby some have possibilities that are denied to others. These are inequalities such as between men and women, racial prejudices, caste divisions, discrimination against people with disabilities, violation of the rights of minorities of all kinds and the reluctance to accept migrants. Even our relationship with our mother and sister Earth (cf. LS 1), bears the mark of a fracture that endangers the lives of countless communities, particularly among those most poor, if not entire peoples and perhaps all of humanity. The most radical and dramatic rejection is that of human life itself; this leads to the rejection of the unborn, as well as of the elderly.






Charisms, Vocations, and Ministries for Mission

60. By virtue of Baptism, women and men have equal dignity as members of the People of God. However, women continue to encounter obstacles in obtaining a fuller recognition of their charisms, vocation and roles in all the various areas of the Church's life. This is to the detriment of serving the Church's shared mission. Scripture attests to the prominent role of many women in the history of salvation. One woman, Mary Magdalene, was given the first proclamation of the Resurrection. On the day of Pentecost, Mary, the Mother of God, was present, accompanied by many other women who had followed the Lord. It is important that the Scripture passages that relate these stories find adequate space inside liturgical lectionaries. Crucial turning points in Church history confirm the essential contribution of women moved by the Spirit. Women make up the majority of churchgoers and are often the first witnesses to the faith in families. They are active in the life of small Christian communities and parishes. They run schools, hospitals and shelters. They lead initiatives for reconciliation and promoting human dignity and social justice. Women contribute to theological research and are present in positions of responsibility in Church institutions, in diocesan curias and the Roman Curia. There are women who hold positions of authority and are leaders of their communities.

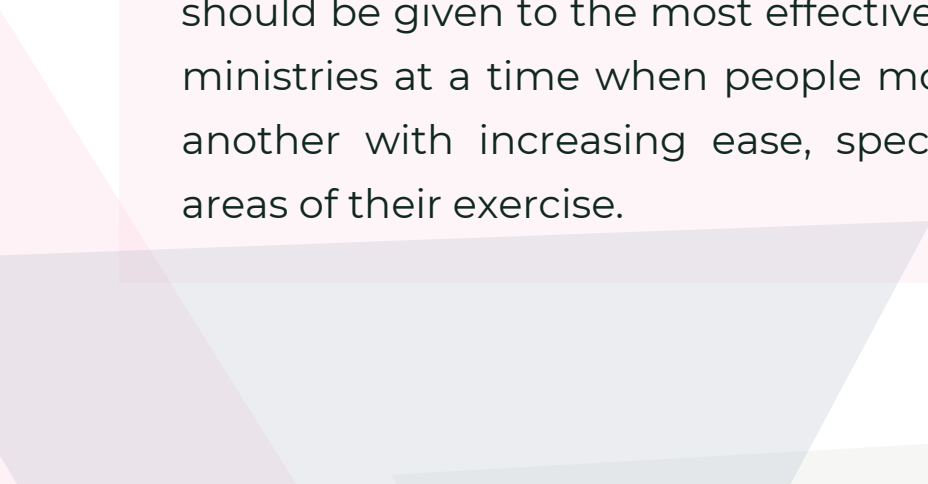


This Assembly asks for full implementation of all the opportunities already provided for in Canon Law with regard to the role of women, particularly in those places where they remain under-explored. There is no reason or impediment that should prevent women from carrying out leadership roles in the Church: what comes from the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped. Additionally, the question of women's access to diaconal ministry remains open. This discernment needs to continue. The Assembly also asks that more attention be given to the language and images used in preaching, teaching, catechesis, and the drafting of official Church documents, giving more space to the contributions of female saints, theologians and mystics.






66. Mission involves all the baptised. The first task of lay women and men is to permeate and transform earthly realities with the spirit of the Gospel (cf. LG 31.33; AA 5-7). At the behest of Pope Francis (cf. Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio Spiritus Domini, 10 January 2021), the synodal process urged local Churches to respond with creativity and courage to the needs of the mission. This response should involve a form of discernment among the various charisms in order to identify which of these should take a ministerial form and thus be equipped with adequate criteria, tools and procedures. Not all charisms need to be configured as ministries, nor do all the baptized need to become ministers, nor do all ministries need to be instituted. For a charism to be configured as a ministry, the community must identify a genuine pastoral need. This should be accompanied by a discernment carried out by the pastor who, together with the community, will make a decision on whether there is a need to create a new ministry. As a result of this process, the competent authority reaches a decision. A missionary synodal Church would encourage more forms of lay ministries, that is, ministries that do not require the sacrament of Holy Orders, and this not only within the liturgical sphere. They can be instituted or not instituted. Further reflection should be given to the most effective way of bestowing lay ministries at a time when people move from one place to another with increasing ease, specifying the times and areas of their exercise.



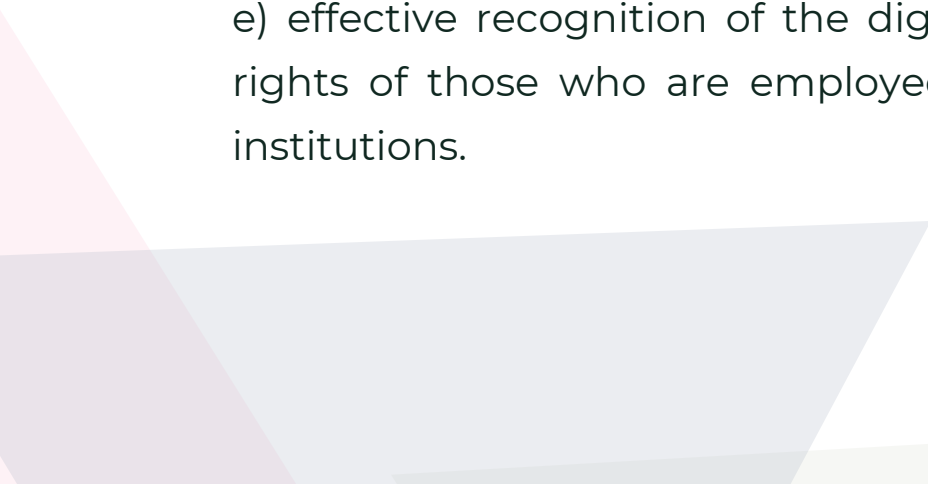


Together for Mission

76. Instituted ministries are complemented by those not instituted by ritual but are exercised with stability as mandated by the competent authority. Some examples of such ministries include the ministry of coordinating a small church community, leading community prayer, organising charitable activities, and so forth. These ministries have a great variety of expressions depending on the characteristics of the local community. An example is the catechists who, in many regions of Africa, have always been responsible for communities without priests. Although there is no prescribed rite, in order to promote its effective recognition, a public entrustment should be made through a mandate before the community. There are also extraordinary ministries, including the extraordinary ministry of the Eucharist, leading Sunday liturgies in the absence of a priest, administering certain sacramentals, and other instances. The Latin and Eastern Rite canonical order already provides that, in certain cases, the lay faithful, men or women, may also be extraordinary ministers of Baptism. In the Latin canonical order, the bishop (with the Holy See's authorisation) may delegate assistance at marriages to lay faithful, men or women. Responsive to the needs of local contexts, consideration should be given to extending and stabilising these opportunities for the exercise of lay ministries. Finally, there are spontaneous services, which need no further conditions or explicit recognition. They reveal the ways that all the faithful, in various ways, participate in the mission through their gifts and charisms.



77. The lay faithful, both men and women, should be given greater opportunities for participation, also exploring new forms of service and ministry in response to the pastoral needs of our time in a spirit of collaboration and differentiated co-responsibility. In particular, some concrete needs have emerged from the synodal process. These need to be responded to according to the various contexts:

- a) increased participation of laymen and laywomen in Church discernment processes and all phases of decision-making processes (drafting, making and confirming decisions);
 - b) greater access of laymen and laywomen to positions of responsibility in dioceses and ecclesiastical institutions, including seminaries, institutes and theological faculties; more fully enacting existing provisions;
 - c) greater recognition and support for the lives and charisms of consecrated men and women and their employment in positions of ecclesial responsibility;
 - d) a greater number of qualified lay people serving as judges in all canonical processes;
 - e) effective recognition of the dignity and respect for the rights of those who are employed in the Church and its institutions.
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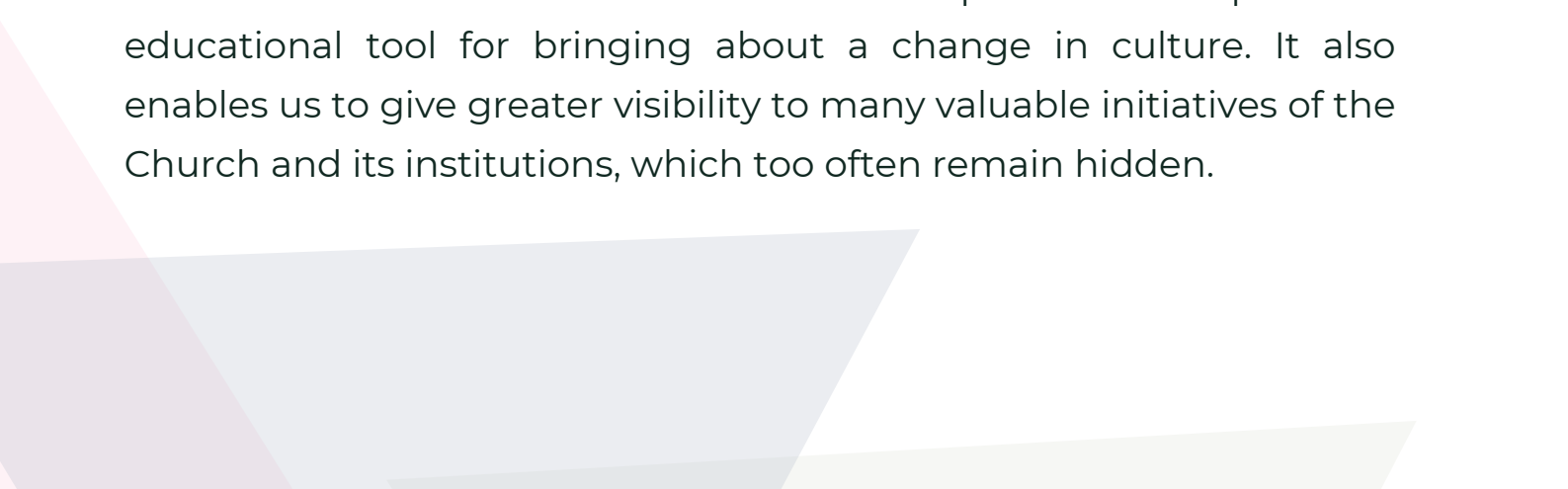


Transparency, Accountability and Evaluation

102. It seems necessary to ensure, at the very least, the establishment everywhere of the following in forms appropriate to different contexts:

- a) effective functioning of finance councils;
- b) effective involvement of the People of God, in particular of the more competent members, in pastoral and financial planning;
- c) preparation and publication (appropriate to the local context and in an accessible form) of an annual financial report, insofar as possible externally audited, demonstrating the transparency of how the temporal goods and financial resources of the Church and its institutions are being managed;
- d) the preparation and publication of an annual report on the carrying out of the local Church's mission, including also safeguarding initiatives (the protection of minors and vulnerable adults), and progress made in promoting the laity's access to positions of authority and to decision-making processes, specifying the proportion of men and women;
- e) periodic evaluations of all the ministries and roles within the Church.

We need to realise that this is not a bureaucratic task for its own sake. It is rather a communication effort that proves to be a powerful educational tool for bringing about a change in culture. It also enables us to give greater visibility to many valuable initiatives of the Church and its institutions, which too often remain hidden.



Synodality and Participatory Bodies



106. Equal attention needs to be given to the membership of the participatory bodies so as to encourage greater involvement by women, young people, and those living in poverty or on the margins. Furthermore, it is essential that these bodies include the baptised who are committed to living their faith in the ordinary realities of life, who are recognisably committed to an apostolic and missionary life, not only those engaged with organising ecclesial life and services internally. In this way, the ecclesial discernment will benefit from a greater openness, an ability to analyse the reality in which it finds itself and a plurality of perspectives. It may be appropriate to provide for the participation of delegates from other Churches and Christian Communion, as happened during this synodal assembly, or representatives of the religions present in a territory. Local Churches and their groupings can more appropriately indicate criteria for the composition of participatory bodies suitable to each context.



Firmly Rooted yet Pilgrims

115. The relation between place and space leads us also to reflect on the Church as “home”. When it is not thought of as a closed space, inaccessible, to be defended at all costs, the image of home evokes the possibility of welcome, hospitality, and inclusion. Creation itself is our common home, where men and women, members of the one human family, live with all other creatures. Our commitment, supported by the Spirit, is to ensure that the Church is perceived as a welcoming home, a sacrament of encounter and salvation, a school of communion for all the sons and daughters of God. The Church is also the People of God walking with Christ, in it everyone is called to be a pilgrim of hope. The traditional practice of pilgrimage is a sign of this. Popular piety is one of the places of a missionary synodal Church.





Forming a People for Missionary Discipleship

143. One of the requests that emerged most strongly and from all contexts during the synodal process is that the formation provided by the Christian community be integral and continuing. Such formation must aim not only at acquiring theoretical knowledge but also at promoting the capacity for openness and encounter, sharing and collaboration, reflection and discernment in common. Formation must consequently engage all the dimensions of the human person (intellectual, affective, relational and spiritual) and include concrete experiences that are appropriately accompanied. There was also a marked insistence throughout the synodal process upon the need for a common and shared formation, in which men and women, laity, consecrated persons, ordained ministers and candidates for ordained ministry participate together, thus enabling them to grow together in knowledge and mutual esteem and in the ability to collaborate. This requires the presence of suitable and competent educators, capable of demonstrating with their lives what they transmit with their words. Only in this way will formation be truly generative and transformative. Nor should we overlook the contribution that the pedagogical disciplines can make to providing well-focused formation, adult learning and teaching methods and the accompaniment of individuals and communities. We, therefore, need to invest in the formation of formators.





148. Throughout the synodal process, a widely expressed request was that discernment and formation of candidates for ordained ministry be undertaken in a synodal way. There should be a significant presence of women, an immersion in the daily life of communities, and formation to enable collaboration with everyone in the Church and in how to practise ecclesial discernment. This implies a courageous investment of energy in the preparation of formators. The Assembly calls for a revision of the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* in order to incorporate the requests made by the Synod. They should be translated in precise guidelines for a formation to synodality. Formation pathways should awaken in candidates their passion for the mission to all peoples (*ad gentes*). Formation of Bishops is just as necessary so that they may better assume their mission of bringing together in unity the gifts of the Spirit and exercise in a synodal manner the authority conferred on them. The synodal way of formation implies that the ecumenical dimension is present in all aspects of the paths towards ordained ministries.

