



Presentation of the working document for the continental stage

UISG-USG, November 2 2022

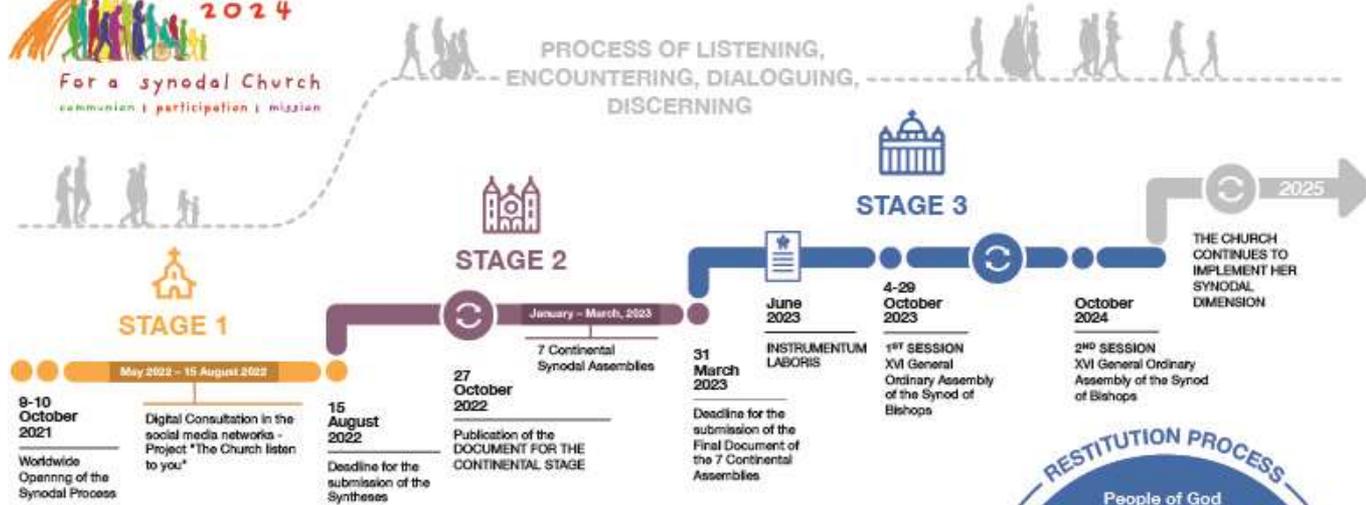
*Sr Nathalie Becquart, xmcj, Under-Secretary
to the General Secretariat for the Synod*



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission



The Synodal Process 2021 - 2024



ICON INDEX

- Local churches
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Introduction



“Enlarge the space of your tent”

(Is 54:2)

WORKING DOCUMENT
FOR THE CONTINENTAL STAGE



GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD

Purpose: Not to write documents, but...

”

...to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another, and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands and inspire [...] a vision of the future filled with the joy of the Gospel.

...all led by the same overarching Question

”

2. How does this “journeying together”, which takes place today on different levels (from the local level to the universal one), allow the Church to proclaim the Gospel in accordance with the mission entrusted to Her and what steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church? (PD2)

Experiencing the joy of synodality...

”

3. Along the way they experienced the joy of meeting as brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing what resonated within them from listening to the Word, and reflecting together on the future of the Church based on the impetus of the Preparatory Document (PD).

...brings a greater desire for synodality !

”

...This has nourished in them the desire for an increasingly synodal Church: synodality has ceased to be an abstract concept for them and has become a concrete experience; they have tasted its flavor and want to continue to do so. “Through this process we have discovered that synodality is a way of being Church – in fact, it is the way of being Church’. ‘The Holy Spirit is asking us to be more synodal’” (EC England and Wales).

A short-term & long-term process

”

98. The first is the long-term horizon, in which synodality takes the form of a perennial call to personal conversion and reform of the Church.

”

98. The second, clearly at the service of the first, is the one that focuses our attention on the events of the Continental Stage that we are experiencing.

A journey of conversion and reform

**” We believe that communion must lead us to a permanent state of mission: meeting and listening to each other, dialogue, reflection, discernment together are all actions with positive effects in themselves, but they are not understandable if they are not directed at pushing us to go beyond ourselves and our communities of reference in order to carry out the mission entrusted to us as Church.
(EC Spain)**

” The message of our synodal way is simple: we are learning to walk together, and sit together to break the one bread, in such a way that each is able to find their place. Everyone is called to take part in this journey, no one is excluded. To this we feel called so that we can credibly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to all people. This is the path we seek to continue on in our next Continental Stage.

” To walk in a synodal way, by listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue, has possibly an ‘already and not yet’ dimension, it is there, but much more to be done. The laity are capable, talented and willing to contribute more and more, provided they are given opportunities. Further surveys and studies at the parish level can open up more avenues where the contributions of the laity can be immense and the result would be more vibrant and flourishing Church, which is the goal of synodality (EC Namibia)

A World Synthesis of the Local Phase

” 4. Their experience have been translated into words

5. Globally, participation exceeded all expectations. In all, the Synod Secretariat received contributions from 112 out of 114 Episcopal Conferences and from all the 15 Oriental Catholic Churches, plus reflections from 17 out of 23 dicasteries of the Roman Curia besides those from religious superiors (USG/UISG), from institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, and from associations and lay movements of the faithful. In addition, over a thousand contributions arrived from individuals and groups as well as insights gathered through social media thanks to the initiative of the “Digital Synod.”

” 6. The quotations that punctuate the DCS try to give an idea of the richness of the materials received, letting the voices of the People of God from all parts of the world speak as much as possible on their own terms and find resonance. (...)

(...) Enabling this encounter and dialogue is the meaning of the synodal journey, whose ultimate purpose is not to produce documents but to open horizons of hope for the fulfilment of the Church’s mission.

” 7. It is within this journey, which is far from reaching its conclusion, that this DCS is situated and finds its meaning. In view of the Continental Stage of the synodal journey, the DCS organizes around a small number of nuclei the hopes and concerns of the People of God from across the globe

The structure of the text

Chapter 1. The experience of the synodal journey

9. *The Document opens with a chapter that offers more than a simple account of 'what happened', presenting a narrative of the synodality experienced so far, with the consultation of the People of God in the local Churches and the discernment of the Pastors in the Episcopal Conferences: it profiles the synodal experience, presents the difficulties encountered and the most significant fruits gathered, identifying the cornerstones of what constitutes an authentic collective experience of the Christian faith. (...)*

What emerges is a profound re-appropriation of the common dignity of all the baptized

Chapter 2. Listening to the Scriptures

10. *The second chapter presents a biblical icon, the image of the tent with which chapter 54 of the book of Isaiah opens. This image and narrative represents a key to an interpretation of the contents within the DCS in the light of the Word, placing them in the arc of God's promise that becomes a vocation for his People and his Church: "Enlarge the space of your tent!"*

”

Chapter 3. Towards a missionary synodal Church

11. *This tent is a space of communion, a place of participation, and a foundation for mission. In turn, the third chapter articulates the key words of the synodal journey connecting them with the fruits of listening to the People of God. It does so by gathering them around five generative*

tensions that are intertwined with one another:

- 3.1 *listening that becomes welcoming*
- 3.2 *Sisters and brothers for the mission*
- 3.3 *Communion, participation and co-responsibility*
- 3.4 *Synodality takes shape*
- 3.5 *Synodal life and liturgy*

Chapter 4. The next steps

- 4. 1 *A journey of conversion and reform*
- 4. 2 *Methodology for the continental stage*



Lord, you have gathered all your People
in Synod.

We give you thanks for the joy
experienced by those who decided to set
out
to listen to God and to their brothers and
sisters during this year,
with an attitude of welcome, humility,
hospitality and siblinghood.

Help us to enter these pages as on “holy
ground.”

Come Holy Spirit: may you be the guide
of our journey together!

Amen.



1. Experiencing synodality

1. The experience of the synodal journey

”

15. The reports sent by Churches across the world give voice to the joys, hopes, sufferings and wounds of Christ's disciples. In their words we hear resonate what is at the heart of all humanity. They express the desire for a Church that walks with Christ under the guidance of the Spirit to fulfil its mission of evangelization.

”

“Our current ‘synod’ experience has awakened in the lay faithful the idea of, and a desire to, get involved in the life of the Church, in its engagement with the world today, and in its pastoral work on the ground” (EC Canada).

”

Echoing GS 1.

- *The centrality of experience*
- *A process of naming the reality,*
- *A transformative process*
- *An appropriation of the call for synodality : « What emerges is a profound re-appropriation of the common dignity of all the baptized”*

1. 1 The fruits, seeds, and weeds of synodality

” The joy of synodality

Largely, what emerges from the fruits, seeds and weeds of synodality are voices that have great love for the Church, voices that dream of a Church of credible witnesses, a Church that is inclusive, open and welcoming Family of God.

(EC Zimbabwe)



● The impact of synodality

- *An experience of joy in a challenging time*
- *Appreciation of the method of spiritual conversation*
- *Looking at the reality of Church life and naming the lights and shadows*
- *A strengthened feeling of belonging to the Church*
- *A path of recognition*
- *An experience of liberation & new life*



” Difficulties, fears and resistances

In this process there was also resistance, lack of participation, communities that did not join. This may have been partly due to the novelty of the challenge, since many communities are not accustomed to this way of living the Church. It was also due to the fact that some leaders and pastors did not assume the animating and guiding role that corresponded to them. Several diocesan reports complain about the lack or weak involvement of priests
(EC Chile)

1. 2 Our common baptismal dignity

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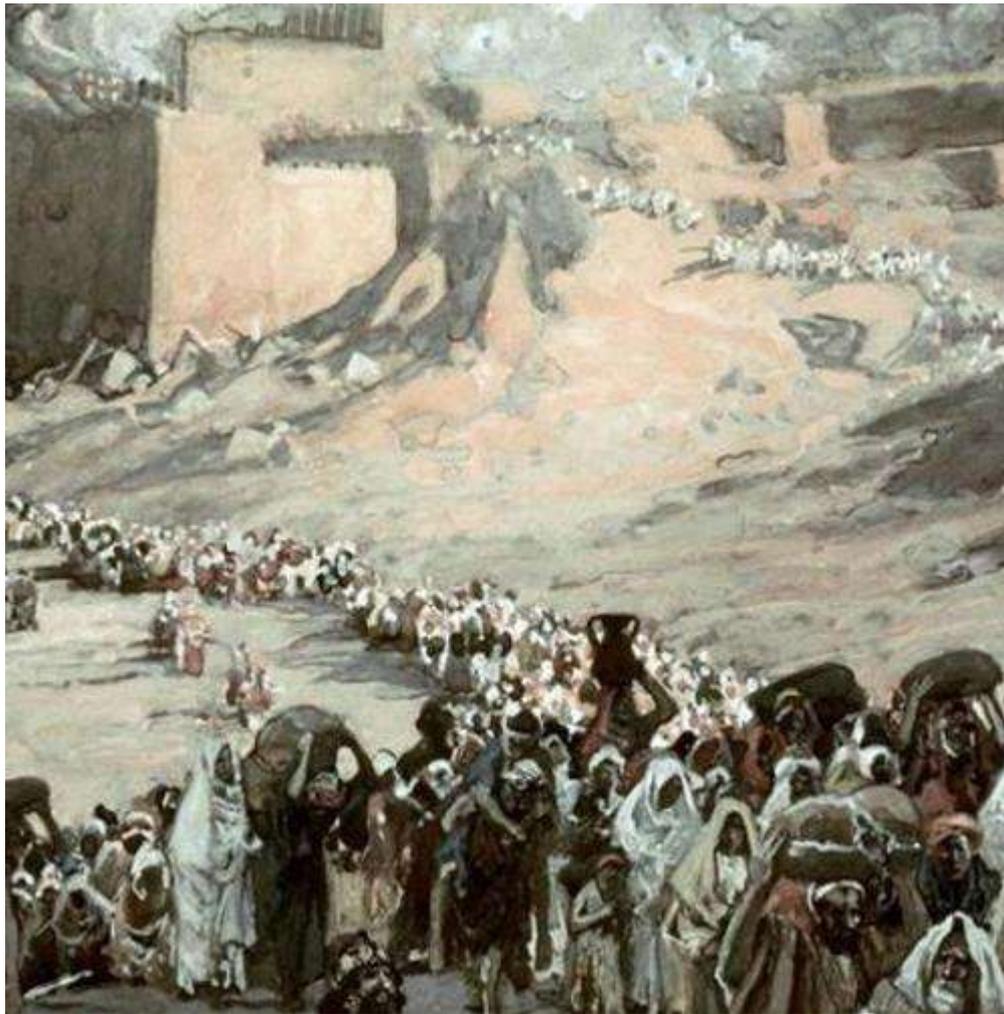
*A pivotal and precious moment to realize how we all share a common dignity and vocation through our Baptism to participants in the life of the Church
(EC Ethiopia)*

”

*The synod process as an experience of novelty and freshness
People of God remarked on the uniqueness of speaking freely and being heard in organized conversations that were open-ended and attentive with guidance of the Holy Spirit. They spoke of how, after decades of church going, they had been asked to speak for first time.
(EC Pakistan)*

”

*A foundational reference to baptism
There was a growing understanding that it is important for all who have received the blessing of baptism to walk together, sharing and discerning the guidance of the Holy Spirit who calls them. There was a deep realization that in the synodal Church walking together is the way to become a missionary Church. (EC Japan)*



24. Elsewhere, expressions emerge that evoke rather the idea of distance between family members and a desired return, the end of a collective alienation from one's identity as a synodal Church. To use a biblical image, one could say that **the synodal journey marked the first steps of the return from an experience of collective exile**, the consequences of which affect the entire People of God: **if the Church is not synodal, no one can really feel fully at home.**



2. Listening to the Scriptures



“Enlarge the space of your tent”

(Is 54:2)

WORKING DOCUMENT
FOR THE CONTINENTAL STAGE



GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD

”

*Enlarge the space of your tent,
spread out your tent cloths
unsparingly, lengthen your
ropes and make firm your pegs
(Is 54:2)*

”

*The image of the grain of wheat
Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a
grain of wheat falls to the ground and
dies, it remains just a grain of wheat;
but if it dies, it produces much fruit
(Jn12:24)*

”

*The Kenosis path
Have among
yourselves the same
attitude that is also
yours in Christ Jesus,
Who, though he was in
the form of God, did
not regard equality
with God something to
be grasped. Rather, he
emptied himself, taking
the form of a slave,
coming in human
likeness
(Phil. 2:5-7)*

“Enlarge the space of your tent” (Is 54:2)

- DCS §25. It is to a people living the experience of exile that the prophet addresses words that help us today to focus on what the Lord is calling us to through the experience of lived synodality: *“Enlarge the space of your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly, lengthen your ropes and make firm your pegs”* (Is 54:2).
- 27. Listened to today, these words of Isaiah invite us **to imagine the Church similarly as a tent, indeed as the tent of meeting**, which accompanied the people on their journey through the desert: called to stretch out, therefore, but also to move. (...) This is how many reports envision the Church: an expansive, but not homogeneous dwelling, capable of sheltering all, but open, letting in and out (cf. Jn. 10:9), and moving toward embracing the Father and all of humanity.

Towards a new birth of the Church, a path of kenosis

- DCS 28. **Enlarging the tent requires welcoming others into it, making room for their diversity. It thus entails a willingness to die to self out of love**, finding oneself again in and through relationship with Christ and one's neighbor: ***“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit” (Jn. 12:24)***. The fruitfulness of the Church depends on accepting this death, which is not, however, an annihilation, but an experience of emptying oneself in order to be filled by Christ through the Holy Spirit, and thus a process by which we receive richer relationships, deeper ties to God and each other. **This is the place of grace, and of transfiguration**. For this reason, the apostle Paul recommends, *“Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness” (Phil. 2:5-7)*. It is under this condition that the members of the Church, each and all together, will be able to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the mission assigned by Jesus Christ to his Church: it is a liturgical, Eucharistic act.



3. Towards a missionary synodal Church

The vision of a Church of radical inclusion, Facing the dynamic of home&exile, belonging&exclusion

” *The Church-home does not have doors that close, but a perimeter that continually widens (EC Italy)*

” *Those who feel at home in the Church feel the absence of those who don't (EC Ireland)*

” *We are called to go to every place, especially outside the more familiar territories, “leaving the comfortable position of those who give hospitality to allow ourselves to be welcomed into the existence of those who are our companions on the journey of humanity” (EC Germany)*

” *The call is to live better the tension of truth and mercy, as Jesus did [...]. The dream is of a Church that more fully lives a Christological paradox: boldly proclaiming its authentic teaching while at the same time offering a witness of radical inclusion and acceptance through its pastoral and discerning accompaniment (EC England and Wales)*

Listening that becomes welcoming

A gradual path to greater inclusion

” *People ask that the Church be a refuge for the wounded and broken, not an institution for the perfect. They want the Church to meet people wherever they are, to walk with them rather than judge them, and to build real relationships through caring and authenticity, not a purpose of superiority*
(EC USA)

” *As the Bolivian Church, we are saddened that we have not been able to effectively reach out to the poor on the peripheries and in the most remote places*
(EC Bolivia)

” *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.*
(CF Poland)

Sisters and brothers for mission

”

Our Church is not called to confrontation, but to dialogue and cooperation on all levels [...]. Our dialogue cannot be an apologetic dialogue with useless arguments, but a dialogue of life and solidarity
(Catholic Armenian Church)

”

Care for creation

It is our desire to protect this part of God's creation, as the wellbeing of our people depends on the ocean in so many ways. In some of our countries the major threat is the ocean as changes in climate have drastic outcomes for the actual survival of these countries
(EC Pacific)

”

A call to foster ecumenism

In the real life of the Central African Republic, 'living together' between Christians of different confessions is self-evident. Our neighbourhoods, our families, our mortuary places, our workplaces are real places of ecumenism
(EC Republic of Central Africa)

”

Interreligious dialogue

The encounter between the Catholic Church in Cambodia and the Buddhist Monks and lay Cambodian Buddhists 'creates a new culture.' All our activities affect each other and affect the whole world. We may differ in religion, but we all seek the common good
(EC Laos and Cambodia)

A call to foster ecumenism

Walking together with all Christians.

48. The call to ecumenism is not, however, merely aimed at common social engagement. **Many reports emphasize that there is no complete synodality without unity among Christians.** “In the real life of the Central African Republic, ‘living together’ between Christians of different confessions is self-evident. Our neighbourhoods, our families, our mortuary places, our workplaces are real places of ecumenism” (EC Republic of Central Africa). Within the Catholic community, this begins with the call for closer communion between Churches of different rites. Since the Second Vatican Council, ecumenical dialogue has made progress. However, many ecumenical issues related to synodal structures and ministries in the Church are still not well-articulated. The reports also note that there is an ‘ecumenism of martyrdom’ where persecution continues to unite Christians. The reports request greater attention to divisive realities, for example the question of sharing the Eucharist.

Communion, Participation, and Co-responsibility

”

Beyond clericalism

*It is important to build a synodal institutional model as an ecclesial paradigm of deconstructing pyramidal power that privileges unipersonal managements. The only legitimate authority in the Church must be that of love and service, following the example of the Lord
(CE Argentina)*

”

*Many groups would like to see greater participation of the laity, but the margins for maneuver are unclear: what concrete tasks can the laity perform? How is the responsibility of the baptized articulated with that of the parish priest?
(EC Belgium)*

”

Rethinking women's participation

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 need to value co-responsibility between men and women based on equality as baptized

- 62. In every area of their lives, women ask the Church to be their ally. (...) Women participating in the synodal processes desire both Church and society to be a place of flourishing, active participation and healthy belonging for women.
- 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).

The issue of full and equal participation of women

- 64. Almost all reports raise the issue of full and equal participation of women (...) 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 to the context, 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.

Women religious at the forefront of synodal practices

- **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.**

Synodality takes Shape

” *The entire synodal exercise was one of active participation at diverse levels. For this process to continue, a change of mindset and a renewal of existing structures are needed*
(EC India)

” *In personal spirituality and in the message of the Church, the joy of the risen Christ must prevail and not the fear of a God who punishes*
(EC Czech Republic)

” *Formation for synodality intersects all dimensions of Christian life and can only be “an integral formation that includes personal, spiritual, theological, social and practical dimensions. For this, a community of reference is essential, because one principle of ‘walking together’ is the formation of the heart, which transcends concrete knowledge and embraces the whole of life. It is necessary to incorporate in the Christian life a continuous and permanent formation to put synodality into practice, to mature and grow in faith, to participate in public life, to increase the love and participation of the faithful in the Eucharist, to assume stable ministries, to exercise real co-responsibility in the governance of the Church, to dialogue with other Churches and with society in order to bring those who are far away closer in a spirit of fraternity*
(EC Spain)

Synodal Life and Liturgy

“In ‘walking together’, prayer, devotion to Mary as a missionary disciple listening to the Word, *lectio divina* and liturgical celebration inspire the purpose of belonging (EC Colombia)

“The French report gives voice to three aspirations: “the first [...] concerns the diversification of liturgies to the benefit of celebrations of the Word, that is, moments of prayer that place meditation on biblical texts at the centre. The second, less frequent, recalls the importance of pilgrimages and popular piety. The third calls for a renewed liturgical formation, to address a problem reported by many reports, namely the incomprehensibility of the language normally used by the Church (EC France).

“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)

“The bond of many baptized people with the Church passes above all through the phenomenon of popular religiosity. [...] Many people consider it a sign of belonging to the Church; for this reason, we must promote and evangelise [it], with a view to a more intense participation and a conscious incorporation into Christian life” (EC Panama)



4. Participating to the Continental phase

An ongoing journey of conversion and reform

“ We believe that communion must lead us to a permanent state of mission: meeting and listening to each other, dialogue, reflection, discernment together are all actions with positive effects in themselves, but they are not understandable if they are not directed at pushing us to go beyond ourselves and our communities of reference in order to carry out the mission entrusted to us as Church.
(EC Spain)

“ The message of our synodal way is simple: we are learning to walk together, and sit together to break the one bread, in such a way that each is able to find their place. Everyone is called to take part in this journey, no one is excluded. To this we feel called so that we can credibly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to all people. This is the path we seek to continue on in our next Continental Stage.

”

To walk in a synodal way, by listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue, has possibly an ‘already and not yet’ dimension, it is there, but much more to be done. The laity are capable, talented and willing to contribute more and more, provided they are given opportunities. Further surveys and studies at the parish level can open up more avenues where the contributions of the laity can be immense and the result would be more vibrant and flourishing Church, which is the goal of synodality (EC Namibia)

Methodology for the Continental Stage



This Document for the Continental Stage (DCS) invites us to take a further step in this spiritual journey “for a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission” and constitutes its point of reference: “Just as the experience of the disciples at Emmaus was only the beginning of their new mission, our synodal process is only a first step” (EC Russian Federation). The continental level constitutes an opportunity to live synodality, which we are still learning to grasp and which we are now invited to practise concretely.



A time of **listening, encounter and discernment**

Of all the People of God and of all local Churches on a continental basis from the Document for the Continental Stage (DCS).

A **deepening process**

For the people that represent the local Churches in the pre-assembly listening and discernment processes prior to each Continental Assembly.



The intent of this stage is to deepen the discernment on what has emerged from the previous stage of local and national listening with **the aim of formulating open questions more accurately, and to better substantiate and flesh out the insights and overall vision, especially from a continental perspective.**



It also wants to be an opportunity to listen to those realities not integrated in the previous stage.



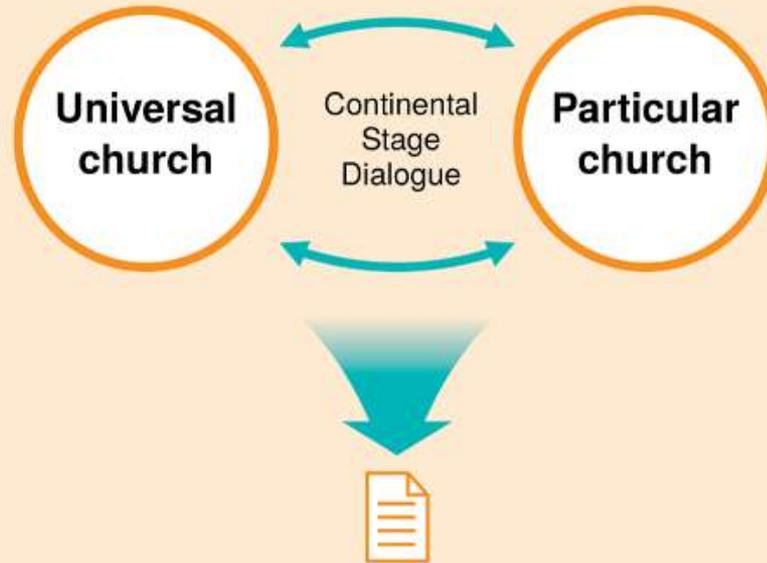
This stage is not yet the time to suggest answers, nor to decide on courses of action. It is a time to DISCERN together in a continental key.

A Dialogical Movement

This stage is part of this **synodal process** to emphasize the dialogue between the universal Church and the particular Church.

- Synodal process -

"How we walk together today"



DOCUMENT FOR THE CONTINENTAL STAGE

A synodal Church is a Church of local Churches with the vision of a mutual dialogue and connection between the universal Church and the particular Church.

It is intended to encourage the creation or strengthening of links of neighbouring Churches and those that are part of specific regions.

Document for the Continental Stage



It was written after careful reflection on the fruits from syntheses of all the Episcopal Conferences of the Universal Church, the Eastern Catholic Churches, and groups such as Religious Institutes, lay movements and so on.



It is a **real working document, which should facilitate the work of dialogue, listening and discernment** at the continental level.



It is not as a document to be modified in view of the universal stage, **it is as a true guide for an ongoing discernment**, fruit of listening to the People of God.

Participants in the Continental Assemblies*



Ecclesial Assemblies
of the entire People of
God: bishops, priests,
deacons, men and
women religious,
laymen and laywomen.



**Fraternal delegates
from other Christian
denominations.**



**People with no
religious affiliation** but
aware of the importance
of "walking together"
also for our societies.

* The delegations are elected by the Continental Ecclesial Assemblies.



*"To understand the synodal process, one must think of a fruitful circularity of prophecy and discernment. The current synodal process is governed by this principle of circularity, guaranteed by an act that makes it operative in ecclesial experience:
that of restitution to the Churches, which will take place in the coming months."*

Cardinal Mario Grech
(August 26th, 2022)

More information:

<https://www.synod.va/en/resources/infographics.html>

www.synod.va

Main sources: Pope Francis (2020): *Fraxilli tutti* (151) | CIC (2020) | Cardinal Grech (2022): Press Conference: the second stage of the synodal process.

Continental Assemblies

For this synod, the subdivision decided for continental assemblies are:



* which will specifically see the contribution of the Eastern Catholic Churches.



5. The role of religious

Formation in synodality

- **82-83**
- **Integral formation**
- **Formation in listening and dialogue**

- **Spirituality 84-87 communal discernment**

A call for religious

- **80. All Church institutions, as fully participatory bodies, are called to consider how they might integrate the call to synodality into the ways in which they exercise their functions and their mission, renewing their structures and procedures.**
- **A special case in point is represented by universities and academic institutions, which will be able to develop research addressing questions of synodality, helping to innovate in the design of educational and formation programmes. In particular, theological faculties will be able to deepen the ecclesiological, Christological and Pneumatological insights that synodal experiences and practices bring.**

A call for Consecrated Life

- **81. The adoption of an authentically synodal style also challenges consecrated life**, beginning precisely with those practices that already emphasize the importance of the participation of all members in the life of the community to which they belong: *“Synodality in consecrated life affects discernment and decision-making. Although communal discernment has been practised in our Institutes, there is room for improvement. Membership in a body requires participation. [...] A shared desire is the establishment – both in the life of the Church and in the consecrated life – of a circular (participative) and less hierarchical and pyramidal style of governance”* (USG/UISG).

Towards a new vision of God

- **An experience of the Trinitarian God**
- **A dynamic vision of faith**
- **Changing our image of God**
Towards a dynamic vision of God walking with us



An ongoing journey



On the road

- **Synodality manifests the ‘pilgrim’ character of the Church. The image of the People of God, gathered from among the nations (Acts 2,1-9; 15,14), expresses its social, historical and missionary character, which corresponds to the condition and vocation of each human person as *homo viator*. The path is the image that clarifies our understanding of the mystery of Christ as the Way that leads to the Father. Jesus is the way from God to man and from man to God. The grace-filled event whereby He made Himself a pilgrim by pitching His tent among us (John 1,14), goes on in the synodal path of the Church (SYN, n. 49).**

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Thank you!