



**GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD**

---

**REGULATIONS FOR THE  
XVI ORDINARY  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
SYNOD OF BISHOPS**

**FIRST SESSION (4-29 OCTOBER 2023)**

**FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH:  
COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION AND MISSION**

© Copyright *Secretaria Generalis Synodi*

---

VATICAN CITY  
2023



## Art. 1: NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THESE REGULATIONS

§ 1. These Regulations, drawn up in accordance with Article 26 of the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio* of Pope Francis (15 September 2018) (henceforth EC), prepared and published by the General Secretary of the Synod in accordance with Art. 8 § 4, 10° of the *Instruction on the Celebration of the Synodal Assemblies and on the Activity of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops* (1 October 2018) (henceforth ICSA), presupposes the norms contained in the two aforementioned documents, except where the Roman Pontiff has decided to derogate from the current discipline due to the specific characteristics of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, the celebration of which takes place within the framework of the Synodal Process launched for the universal Church on 10 October 2021. Any doubts regarding the implementation of these Regulations should be submitted to the General Secretariat of the Synod, which is responsible for providing the necessary clarifications.

§ 2. Bearing in mind that the Roman Pontiff has decreed that the Assembly be held in two separate periods or sessions<sup>1</sup>, these Regulations govern the conduct of the first session (4-29 October 2023).

§ 3. Additions to these Regulations, which may become necessary during the celebration of the Assembly, will be announced by the General Secretary.

§ 4. In the following rules, Members are understood to mean the Members of the Assembly (*ex officio, ex electione, ex designatione* and *ex nominatione pontificia*), with the right to vote; Participants are understood to mean the Members and all others who participate in the Assembly in various capacities<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. EC, n. 8; Art. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, n. 8; Art. 2.



## PART I

### PARTICIPANTS, ROLES AND COMMISSIONS

#### **Art. 2: MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY**

§ 1. Members of the Assembly are designated *ex officio*, *ex electione*, *ex designatione*, o *ex nominatione pontificia*<sup>3</sup>.

§ 2. Among the Members *ex electione*, the Roman Pontiff has established that the ten Clerics belonging to Institutes of Consecrated Life, mentioned in Art. 2, 4° of ICSA, are to be replaced by five women and five men belonging to Institutes of Consecrated Life, elected respectively by the Union of Superiors General and the International Union of Superiors General.

§ 3. By the will of the Roman Pontiff, the Members elected in accordance with the current legislation are joined by seventy other Faithful, not vested with the episcopal *munus*, men and women: Presbyters, Deacons and lay Faithful, including Consecrated men and women. They have been chosen from a list of one hundred and forty persons designated by the following bodies: twenty by the Council of Catholic Patriarchs of the East (C.P.C.O.); twenty by each of the following International Groupings of Bishops' Conferences: Council of European Bishops' Conferences (C.C.E.E.), Latin American Episcopal Council (C.E.L.A.M.), Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (F.A.B.C.), Federation of Catholic Bishops' Conferences of Oceania (F.C.B.C.O.), Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (S.E.C.A.M.); twenty jointly by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). All of them were identified by virtue of their competence, prudence and, in particular, active participation in the Synodal Process in various capacities.

#### **Art. 3: OTHER PARTICIPANTS: FRATERNAL DELEGATES, SPECIAL GUESTS, SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS, LITURGY CONTACT PERSON**

§ 1. In addition to the Members, also Fraternal Delegates, Special Invitees, Experts, Spiritual Assistants and a Liturgy Advisor participate in the Assembly, without active and passive voting rights.

§ 2. The Fraternal Delegates represent the Churches and Ecclesial Communities not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church<sup>4</sup>. Given the importance of their contribution to the work of the Synod, they may take part in the debate in the General Congregations and in the sessions of the Working Group (*Circuli Minores*).

---

<sup>3</sup> Cfr. ICSA, Artt. 2; 6.

<sup>4</sup> Cfr. EC, Art. 12, § 1, 3°.



§ 3. Special Invitees, who are recognised as having particular authority in relation to the theme of the Assembly<sup>5</sup>, may also take part in the debate in the General Congregations and in the sessions of the Working Groups.

§ 4. The Experts cooperate with the Special Secretaries by virtue of their competence on the theme of the Assembly<sup>6</sup>. They attend the General Congregations, where they may speak only if expressly mandated to do so<sup>7</sup>; they may be summoned to the sessions of the Working Groups, offering clarifications upon request; they assist the General Rapporteur and the Special Secretaries in the drafting of the Synthesis Report of the first session of the Assembly, as per Art. 18 § 4 of the present Regulations.

§ 5. The Roman Pontiff established that, among the Experts, Facilitators should be appointed to coordinate the work of the Working Groups.

§ 6. The Spiritual Assistants and the Liturgy Advisor have the task of coordinating spiritual reflection and liturgical celebrations respectively. The Spiritual Assistants are available to participants who so wish for conversations.

§ 7. The Roman Pontiff has established that auditors<sup>8</sup> shall not be appointed, as they are replaced by the Members referred to in Article 2 § 3 of these Regulations.

#### **Art. 4: PRESIDENTS-DELEGATE**

§ 1. The Presidents-Delegate<sup>9</sup> take turns in performing this assignment according to the timetable drawn up by the General Secretariat.

§ 2. The Acting President-Delegate:

- a) leads the Assembly in the name and by authority of the Roman Pontiff when the latter is not present;
- b) in the first and last General Congregation delivers an address honouring the Roman Pontiff;
- c) gives the floor to Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests who request it during the General Congregations.

#### **Art. 5: GENERAL SECRETARY**

The General Secretary<sup>10</sup>:

- a) at the first General Congregation delivers an Address to present the preparatory work and explain the procedures to be adopted during the Assembly;
- b) establishes the timetable of work, making any necessary changes to it;

---

<sup>5</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 12 § 2.

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 12 § 1, 1°.

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. ICSA, Art. 14 § 3.

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. EC, Art. 12 § 1, 2°.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 11, 1°; ICSA, Art. 12.

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. ICSA, Art. 8 § 5.



c) regularly provides information regarding procedural aspects.

#### **Art. 6: UNDER-SECRETARIES**

The Under-Secretaries<sup>11</sup>:

- a) collaborate with the General Secretary in all his functions;
- b) liaise with Fraternal Delegates;
- c) receive notifications of absence, forwarding them to the President-Delegate and the General Secretary.

#### **Art. 7: The General Rapporteur**

The Relator General<sup>12</sup>:

- a) in the first General Congregation, after the General Secretary has delivered his Address, gives a General Presentation to introduce the theme to be treated;
- b) holds a Special Presentation at the beginning of each Module referred to in Article 18 of these Regulations to introduce the work of the Working Groups;
- c) intervenes in the General Congregation to offer clarification on the theme being discussed whenever necessary;
- d) presides over the preparation of the Synthesis Report of the first session of the Assembly, overseeing the examination of the reports and the collective *modi* (amendments) of the Working Groups, as referred to in Article 18 § 4 of these Regulations.

#### **Art. 8: SPECIAL SECRETARIES**

There are two Special Secretaries who<sup>13</sup>:

- a) assist the General Rapporteur in all his functions;
- b) coordinate the work of the Experts, under the direction of the Relator General; in particular, one [Msgr. Riccardo Battocchio] is delegated to supervise the work of the Theological Experts-Theologians; the other [Fr. Giacomo Costa] is delegated to supervise the work of the Experts-Facilitators.
- c) state in writing the acceptance or non-acceptance of the collective *modi* of the Working Groups, as referred to in Art. 18 § 4 of these Regulations, both for the purpose of providing explanations to those concerned and of recording in the Acts of the Assembly.

#### **Art. 9: COMMON PROVISION FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARY, THE GENERAL RAPPORTEUR AND THE SPECIAL SECRETARIES**

The General Secretary, the General Rapporteur and the Special Secretaries are not assigned to any Working Group and are free to take part in any of them.

---

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. EC, Art. 11, 2°; ICSA, Art. 13.

<sup>13</sup> Cfr. EC, Art. 11, 3°; ICSA, Art. 14.



#### **Art. 10: COORDINATOR OF THE THEOLOGICAL EXPERTS**

Under the authority of the Special Secretary delegated to supervise the work of the Experts-Theologians, the role of the Coordinator of Experts-Theologians is established; he has the specific task of assisting the Special Secretary delegated to this task.

#### **Art. 11: COMMISSION FOR INFORMATION**

§ 1. The Commission for Information<sup>14</sup>:

- a) works in close collaboration with the Dicastery for Communication and the General Secretariat of the Synod, which support it with their staff.
- b) is mandated to report on the progress of the Synodal Assembly in accordance with Article 24 § 1 of these Regulations.
- c) collaborates, when necessary, in the preparation of communiqués on specific topics.

§ 2. In its plenum, the Commission for Information is composed of: the President and the Secretary, appointed by the Roman Pontiff; the General Secretary; the Under-Secretaries; the Relator General; the Special Secretaries; the Prefect of the Dicastery for Communication; the Director of the Press Room; as well as seven Members elected by the Assembly; to which the Communication Manager of the General Secretariat of the Synod is added.

§ 3. The seven Members *ex electione* of the Commission for Information are respectively designated to represent: Eastern Catholic and Middle Eastern Churches, Africa, North America, Central and South America, Asia, Europe, Oceania; Assembly Members from each area elect only their respective representatives.

§ 4. The election referred to in § 3 of this Article takes place in General Congregation by means of separate ballots. At the end of each ballot the person obtaining the highest number of votes is elected.

§ 5. On the motion of the President, the Commission for Information meets in the manner and at the times it deems appropriate. It may invite other experts in the subject matter to attend its meetings.

#### **Art. 12: COMMISSION FOR DISPUTES**

The Commission for Disputes<sup>15</sup>, composed of three Members appointed by the Roman Pontiff, has the task of examining any disputes presented by Participants and of submitting them to the Roman Pontiff.

---

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. ICOSA., Art. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 18.



### **Art. 13: COMMISSION FOR THE DRAFTING OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT**

The establishment of the Commission for the drafting of the Final Document<sup>16</sup> is postponed to the second session of the Assembly.

### **Art. 14: COMMISSION FOR THE SYNTHESIS REPORT**

§ 1. The Commission for the Synthesis Report has the task of periodically supervising, amending and approving the preparation of the draft of the Synthesis Report referred to in Art. 18 § 4 and Art. 23 of these Regulations, with a view to its presentation to the Assembly; it also has the task of supervising the drafting of any other documents that may be deemed necessary.

§ 2. The Commission for the Synthesis Report is composed of: the Relator General, who presides over it; the General Secretary; the Special Secretary delegated to supervise the work of the Experts-Theologians, who is its secretary; seven Members elected by the Assembly and three other Members appointed by the Roman Pontiff.

§ 3. The seven Members *ex electione* of the Commission for the Synthesis Report are respectively designated to represent: Eastern Catholic and Middle Eastern Churches, Africa, North America, Central and South America, Asia, Europe, Oceania; Assembly Members from each area elect only their respective representatives.

§ 4. The election referred to in § 3 is carried out by means of separate ballots in accordance with *C.I.C.*, can. 119, 1°, and *C.C.E.O.*, can. 956 § 1.

§ 5. The Commission for the Synthesis Report concludes its mandate at the end of the first session of the Assembly.

### **Art. 15: MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR THE COMMISSIONS**

§ 1. Any Member of the Assembly may be elected as a member of each Commission with the exception of: the Presidents-Delegate, the General Secretary, the Under-Secretaries, the General Rapporteur and the Special Secretaries<sup>17</sup>.

§ 2. For the same reason, a Member who has been elected to one Commission may not be elected to another; it is the prerogative of the Roman Pontiff to appoint members without any limitation.

---

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. EC, Art. 17 § 2; ICSA, Art. 16.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. ICSA, Art. 19.





## PART II

### CELEBRATIONS

#### Art. 16: SCHEDULED CELEBRATIONS

§ 1. The first session of the Assembly opens on 4 October 2023 with a Eucharistic celebration presided over by the Roman Pontiff in the parvis of the Vatican Basilica.

§ 2. The first General Congregation of the Assembly opens with the enthronement of the Book of the Gospels and the singing of the *Veni, Creator Spiritus*<sup>18</sup>.

§ 3. Each Module, referred to in Article 18 of these Regulations, begins with a Eucharistic Celebration, presided over in shifts according to the list established by the General Secretariat.

§ 4. The last General Congregation closes with the singing of the *Te Deum*<sup>19</sup>.

§ 5. The first session of the Assembly concludes on 29 October 2023 with a Eucharistic celebration presided over by the Roman Pontiff in the Vatican Basilica.

§ 6. Among the Participants, during the Eucharistic Celebrations, Bishops and Presbyters concelebrate, while Deacons perform their own liturgical service and lay faithful participate by performing the various services that are needed from time to time.

§ 7. Fraternal Delegates are welcome to attend the Eucharistic Celebrations and to join in the prayer of the Assembly, in accordance with the current norms on *communicatio in sacris* with respect to the different Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

#### Art. 17: OTHER CELEBRATIONS AND FORMS OF COMMUNAL PRAYER

Other liturgical celebrations and forms of prayer will be announced by the General Secretary on a case by case basis.

---

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 21 § 1.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 21 § 3.



## PART III

### WORKING METHOD

#### Art. 18: ORGANISATION OF WORK IN MODULES

§ 1. The work of the Assembly is divided into five Modules, in each of which General Congregations and Working Groups sessions alternate. Each of the first four Modules has one of the sections of the *Instrumentum laboris* (A; B1; B2; B3) as its theme, while the fifth Module (C) includes conclusory proceedings.

§ 2. Module A is structured as follows:

- a) a General Congregation for the presentation of the theme by the General Rapporteur and further introductory speeches;
- b) two sessions of the Working Groups, based on the method of “Conversation in the Spirit”; they are dedicated to an in-depth study of section A of the *Instrumentum laboris* and to the preparation of an intervention that summarises the main reflections and questions of the Working Group, to be delivered in the General Congregation;
- c) two General Congregations to listen to the interventions of the Working Groups and for free discussion;
- d) one session of the Working Groups for the final drafting of their Report, which is approved by vote and then submitted to the General Secretariat.

§ 3. Each of the Modules B1, B2 e B3 is structured as follows:

- a) a General Congregation for the presentation of the topic by the General Rapporteur and further introductory speeches;
- b) two sessions of the Working Groups, based on the method of "Conversation in the Spirit"; they are dedicated to the in-depth study of only one of the five worksheets of which each of the sections B1, B2 and B3 of the *Instrumentum laboris* is composed, and to the preparation of an address to be delivered in the General Congregation;
- c) three General Congregations to listen to the interventions of the Working Groups and for free discussion;
- d) one session of the Working Groups for the final drafting of their Report, which is approved by vote and then submitted to the General Secretariat.

§ 4. Module C, which aims at the final drafting of the Synthesis Report of the first session of the Assembly, is structured as follows:

- a) one General Congregation for the presentation of the outline of the Synthesis Report related to Section A of the *Instrumentum laboris*; one General Congregation for the discussion of this outline of the Synthesis Report; one session of the Working Groups for further discussion of this outline of the Synthesis Report and the elaboration of collective amendments (*modi*);
- b) one General Congregation for the presentation of the outline of the Synthesis Report related to sections B1, B2 and B3 of the *Instrumentum laboris*; one General Congregation for the discussion of this outline of the Synthesis Report; one session of the Working Groups for



further discussion of this outline of the Synthesis Report and the elaboration of collective amendments (*modi*);

c) one General Congregation devoted to reading the full text of the amended Synthesis Report; one General Congregation devoted to approving the Synthesis Report.

#### **Art. 19: REPRESENTATION AND FREEDOM OF THE MEMBERS**

§ 1. Members express their opinions and cast their vote freely and according to conscience, always bearing in mind the good of the Church.

§ 2. Although there is no binding mandate, Members who for various reasons represent Eastern Catholic Churches, Episcopal Conferences, or even International Groupings of Episcopal Conferences, when they take the floor, are called upon to convey the opinion expressed by the bodies they represent and the consultation carried out in the particular Churches from which they come<sup>20</sup>.

§ 3. Likewise, the Members elected by the Representative Organizations of the Superiors General bring to the Assembly the contribution of Consecrated Life as expressed in the consultations carried out in the Synodal Process.

§ 4. The seventy Members not vested with the episcopal *munus*, designated by the Roman Pontiff in accordance with Article 2 § 3 of these Regulations, are called to bear witness to the Synodal Process in which they took part at the diocesan, national and continental level.

#### **Art. 20: WORKING GROUPS (*CIRCULI MINORES*)**

§ 1. Working Groups are formed on thematic and linguistic basis, taking into account the preference expressed by Participants between Italian, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish<sup>21</sup>. For this reason, the simultaneous translation service referred to in Article 29 § 2 of the present Regulations will not be provided for Working Group sessions. Account is also taken of the diversity of geographic origin in their composition, distributing the Participants who are not invested with the episcopal *munus* mentioned in Art. 2 § 3 of these Regulations evenly among all the Working Groups.

§ 2. In preparation for the Assembly, Participants are notified of the provisional composition of the Working Groups, which are different for each Module as set out in Article 18 of the present Regulations. In terms of content, all the Working Groups work on the same topic in the first Module: Section A of the *Instrumentum laboris*. In the following three Modules, each group works on only one of the five Worksheets from the corresponding Section of the *Instrumentum laboris* (B1, B2 and B3). Each Worksheet is addressed by several groups in different languages.

---

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. EC, n. 6; ICSA, Art. 29 § 1, 3°.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. ICSA, Art. 30.



§ 3. In the first four Modules, each Small Group is called upon to prepare an address to be delivered orally in General Congregation and to draft a Report highlighting the Group's points of convergence and also points of divergence, to be delivered to the General Secretariat, preferably in electronic format.

§ 4. In each Working Group t an Expert Facilitator will be present, who will coordinate the sharing and exchange among Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests. He or she will be responsible for ensuring that the work is carried out following the method of "Conversation in the Spirit". In particular, the exchange will begin with a four-minute intervention by each of the participants in the Working Group, the text of which can then be delivered to the General Secretariat, preferably in electronic format, without exceeding two pages (approximately 6,000 characters including spaces), and following the indications that will be given at the beginning of the Assembly.

§ 5. For each of the Modules, each Working Group will have a Secretary and a Rapporteur, both Members of the group. The Secretary will be identified by the Secretariat on the basis of editorial competence; the Rapporteur will be elected by the Members of the Group from among those who do not already have another role in the Synodal Assembly. The election of the Rapporteur takes place at the beginning of the first session of each Module in accordance with *C.I.C.*, can. 119, 1°, and *C.C.E.O.*, can. 956 § 1<sup>22</sup>. The Facilitator will draw up a report of the proceedings of the election to be delivered to the General Secretariat.

§ 6. The joint task of the Secretary and the Rapporteur<sup>23</sup> is to oversee the drawing up of the draft and final text of the Report mentioned in § 3 of this Article. The Rapporteur will also read the intervention of the Working Group in General Congregation and deliver the final text of the Report to the General Secretariat.

§ 7. The final text of the Report referred to in § 3 of this Article, is meant to summarise the Working Group's reflections and questions, and to give well-reasoned record of the consensus reached, and making explicit any divergences. It must be approved by an absolute majority of the Members<sup>24</sup>. The vote concerns how faithfully the Report represents the work carried out in the Working Group. The Report will also include the results of this vote.

§ 8. In Module C, each Working Group is called upon to elaborate collective amendments (*modi*) to the Synthesis Report outline presented in General Congregation, i.e., proposals for amendment, deletion or integration. These amendments must be approved by an absolute majority of the Members<sup>25</sup>. Following the indications provided by the General Secretariat, they are to be transcribed separately, along with an indication of the votes for and against, and are subsequently to be delivered to the General Secretariat.

§ 9. In Module C, the Rapporteur, elected in accordance with § 5 of this Article, and the Secretary shall be responsible for supervising the drafting of the amendments referred to in § 8, their due transcription and their delivery to the General Secretariat; the Secretary shall draw

---

<sup>22</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 31 § 1.

<sup>23</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 31 § 3.

<sup>24</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 32 § 2.

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 32 § 1.



up minutes of the sessions of the Working Group, also to be delivered to the General Secretariat.

## **Art. 21: GENERAL CONGREGATIONS**

§ 1. During General Congregations, Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Invitees – after listening to the presentation of the drafts of the Reports of the Working Groups in Modules A, B1, B2 and B3, or listening to the presentation of the outline of the Synthesis Report in Module C – may intervene freely, making a request according to the indications provided of the General Secretariat and waiting for the President Delegate to give them the floor.

§ 2. When taking the floor, Members, Fraternal Delegates or Special Invitees, are requested to use the microphone at their disposal. While speaking at the microphone, Speakers are requested to remain seated and deliver their speech slowly, so as not to put unnecessary strain on simultaneous translators.

§ 3. The time allocated for these interventions is set at three minutes to allow as many Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Invitees as possible to speak. Thirty seconds before the end of the allotted time, the Speaker receives a warning. Once the speaking time has expired, the Speaker is further notified that the communication will be cut off.

§ 4. Those who have already spoken and request to speak again – in the same General Congregation, or in a subsequent one, within the same Module, or in a subsequent one – will be given the floor only after the conclusion of interventions of those who speak for the first time, if there is still time available.

§ 5. From time to time, Participants will be invited to observe a moment of silence, to encourage interiorizing the interventions they have listened to.

§ 6. Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Invitees may always submit to the General Secretariat texts not to be delivered in General Congregation, preferably in electronic format, not exceeding one page (approximately 3,000 characters including spaces), which will be given the same consideration as the spoken interventions<sup>26</sup>.

§ 7. The interventions in General Congregation presenting the drafts of the Reports of the Working Groups, referred to in Article 20 § 3 of these Regulations, may not exceed four minutes.

§ 8. The final texts of the Reports of the Working Groups to be submitted to the General Secretariat, as referred to in Article 20 § 3 of these Regulations, may not exceed two pages (approximately 6,000 characters, including spaces).

---

<sup>26</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 29 § 3.



## **Art. 22: REVIEW OF THE TEXTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

Texts submitted by Working Groups (reports and collective amendments) are reviewed by the Relator General, with the help of the Special Secretaries, duly assisted by Experts. The review consists of their classification and evaluation, deciding which of them to accept or refuse, and which, if necessary, to combine, seeking to value the diversity of positions as much as possible.

## **Art. 23: SYNTHESIS REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION**

§ 1. The Synthesis Report of the first session of the Assembly, referred to in Art. 18 § 4 of these Regulations, will enable reflection on the synodal theme to continue in the time leading up to the second session. Therefore, it is not a conclusive document, but rather aims at governing the next phase of the Synodal Process leading up to the October 2024 session, as far as methods, stages and themes are concerned.

§ 2. The Synthesis Report of the first session is prepared by the Special Secretaries, with the help of Experts, under the coordination of the General Rapporteur and is approved by an absolute majority of the members of the Commission for the Synthesis Report<sup>27</sup>.

§ 3. After approval the Commission for the Synthesis Report, the Synthesis Report of the first session is approved by secret ballot by two-thirds of the Members of the Assembly who are present.

---

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 33 § 2.



## PART IV

### COMMUNICATION

#### **Art. 24: RULES FOR COMMUNICATION**

§ 1. In order to guarantee the freedom of expression of each and all regarding their thoughts and to ensure the serenity of the discernment in common, which is the main task entrusted to the Assembly, each of the Participants is bound to confidentiality and discretion regarding both their own interventions and the interventions of other Participants. This duty remains in force once the Synodal Assembly has ended.

§ 2. All Participants are forbidden to record, film or disclose their interventions in the General Congregations and in the Working Groups. The initial General Congregations of the first four Modules, which, according to Art. 18 §§ 2 and 3 of these Regulations, include the presentation of the theme to be discussed, will be streamed. An official audiovisual recording of the General Congregations is kept in the archives of the General Secretariat of the Synod for the *Acta Synodi Episcoporum*.

#### **Art. 25: DISSEMINATION OF NEWS**

§ 1. A team of communicators designated by the General Secretariat and the Dicastery for Communication may enter Paul VI Hall in order to collaborate in the work of communication, following the indications of the Commission for Information and always preserving the confidentiality of the work, in compliance with Article 24 § 1 of the present Regulations.

§ 2. Journalists accredited to the Press Room will be admitted to Paul VI Hall only at the specific times and spaces they will be notified.



## **PART V**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Art. 26: PLACES**

§ 1. General Congregations and sessions of the Working Groups are held in Paul VI Hall, according to the indications provided by the General Secretariat.

§ 2. During the General Congregations, Participants take the seat they are assigned by the General Secretariat, in order to facilitate locating each one and distributing material.

§ 3. Several services are available in the vicinity of Paul VI Hall, such as a bookstore, photo service, travel agent, and bank counter.

§ 4. On the first floor of Paul VI Hall, accessible by stairs or by lift, there is a chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. The Church of Santa Maria della Pietà (Teutonic College) at the side of the entrance to Paul VI Hall will also be available for personal prayer.

#### **Art. 27: DRESS AND BADGE**

§ 1. Cardinals and Bishops are required to wear cassock only on the opening and closing days of the Assembly.

§ 2. All Participants have an identification badge with a QR-code, which is necessary for admittance to the Hall and to consult digital documentation. This badge is strictly personal, non-transferable and must be carried at all times during Assembly work. In the event of loss, the General Secretariat must be promptly notified.

#### **Art. 28: PRESENCE AND ABSENCE**

§ 1. The presence of Participants, both during General Congregations and Working Group sessions, is regularly checked. Attendance is recorded and archived by the General Secretariat, as well as transmitted to the Commission for Information.

§ 2. Participants who, for a serious reason, are unable to attend a General Congregation or Working Group session, must notify the reason of their absence the General Secretariat well in advance, following the indications that will be provided<sup>28</sup>.

---

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 25.





#### **Art. 29: LANGUAGES USED DURING THE GENERAL CONGREGATIONS**

§ 1. The languages used in General Congregations are Italian and English. French, Portuguese and Spanish may also be used.

§ 2. During General Congregations simultaneous translation service is available for all the languages indicated in § 1 of this Article. Translation into German is also available, despite not being an official language of the Assembly. Every Participant has an electronic simultaneous translation device at their disposal.

§ 3. During General Congregations, should anyone need to use a different language, they must translate their intervention into one of the languages indicated in § 1 of this Article and send it, in advance, to the General Secretariat for distribution to the simultaneous translators.

#### **Art. 30: METHODS OF ELECTION AND APPROVAL**

In the General Congregations, elections and text approvals take place electronically<sup>29</sup>.

#### **Art. 31: GENERAL CRITERIA**

For all that is not provided for in these Regulations, reference is made to the indications of the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio*, the *Instruction on the Celebration of Synodal Assemblies and the Activity of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops*, and established practice.

---

<sup>29</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 28.



## **APPENDIX**

### **I. PERSONAL MAILBOX**

- a) All Participants are assigned a physical mailbox, located in the Atrium of Paul VI Hall. Boxes are arranged in alphabetical order for each category of Participants. Only the holder can withdraw what has been deposited from his or her physical mailbox.
- b) Distribution to Participants of materials from outside the Synod Assembly requires the approval of the General Secretary. In any case, the General Secretariat is not responsible for the content of any documents or publications that may have been delivered to Participants.

### **II. GUESTS**

The General Secretary may invite persons to follow the proceedings of the General Congregations, by virtue of their specific expertise. These invitees are also bound by Article 24, §§ 1 and 2 of the present Regulations.

### **III. LOST DOCUMENTS AND OBJECTS**

All lost documents and objects found in Paul VI Hall, or its immediate surroundings, should be delivered to the offices of the General Secretariat.

### **IV. SNACK BAR**

A modest bar service will be offered to Participants during breaks.

### **V. PHOTOGRAPHS AND BOOKS**

*Official Vatican photographers* displays, in the Atrium of Paul VI Hall, photographs taken during the assembly proceedings. Participants who wish may purchase them from the employees of the photographic service.

The *Libreria Editrice Vaticana* Bookstore operates an exhibit in the Atrium of Paul VI Hall for the sale of books. The Vatican Printing House (*Tipografia Vaticana*) also has its own exhibition point.

### **VI. AIRLINE TICKETS**

A special office is open in the Atrium of Paul VI Hall at certain times to assist Participants in booking and managing air travel.

### **VII. SPORTELLO BANCARIO**

For currency exchange and any other financial transactions, a special bank counter is active in the Atrium of Paul VI Hall.