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GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD

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

**SECOND SESSION
(2-27 OCTOBER 2024)**

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

VATICAN CITY
2024

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Art. 1: NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THESE REGULATIONS

§ 1. These Regulations, drawn up in accordance with Art. 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 shall be held in two separate periods or sessions¹, these Regulations govern the conduct of the second session (2-27 October 2024).

§ 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” is understood to mean the Members of the Assembly (*ex officio, ex electione, ex designatione* and *ex nominatione pontificia*), with the right to vote; “Participants” is understood to mean the Members along with all others who participate in the Assembly in various capacities².

¹ Cfr. EC, no. 8; Art. 3.

² Cfr. *ibid.*, n. 8; Art. 2.



PART I

PARTICIPANTS, ROLES AND COMMITTEES

Art. 2: MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

§ 1. Members of the Assembly are designated *ex officio*, *ex electione*, *ex designatione*, or *ex nominatione pontificia*³.

§ 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 the 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 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 Bishops' Conferences of Europe (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 (CCCB) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). All of them were identified based on their competence, prudence and, in particular, active participation in the Synodal Process in various capacities.

Art. 3: OTHER PARTICIPANTS: FRATERNAL DELEGATES, SPECIAL GUESTS, EXPERTS, SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS, LITURGY ADVISOR

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

§ 2. Fraternal Delegates, who represent other Churches and Ecclesial Communities⁴, may take part in the debate in the General Congregations and in the sessions of the Working Groups (*Circuli minores*).

§ 3. Special Guests, who are recognised as having particular authority regarding the theme of the Assembly⁵, may also take part in the debate in General Congregations and Working Group sessions.

³ Cfr. ICSA, Arts. 2; 6.

⁴ Cfr. EC, Art. 12 § 1, 3°.

⁵ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 12 § 2.



§ 4. Experts cooperate with the Special Secretaries in virtue of their competence on the theme of the Assembly⁶. They attend the General Congregations, where they may speak only if expressly requested to do so⁷; they may be invited, through the Special Secretary, to Working Group sessions, offering clarification upon request; they participate, upon request of the General Secretariat, in the Language Tables mentioned in Art. 17 § 2 c) of these *Regulations*, offering clarification upon request; they assist the Relator General and the Special Secretaries in drafting of the *Final Document* of the Assembly, mentioned in Art. 22 of these Regulations.

§ 5. The Roman Pontiff has established that, from among the Experts, Facilitators be appointed to coordinate the work of the Working Groups and Communicators to support communication activities.

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

§ 7. The Roman Pontiff has established that no auditors⁸ be appointed, as they are replaced by the Members referred to in Art. 2 § 3 of the these Regulations.

Art. 4: PRESIDENTS DELEGATE

§ 1. Presidents Delegate⁹ take turns performing this assignment according to the schedule 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 Roman Pontiff is not present;
- b) delivers an address honouring the Roman Pontiff at both the first and last General Congregations;
- c) grants the floor to Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests who request it during the General Congregations.
- d) ensure that interventions during the Assembly are focused on the agenda that has been voted on, as referred to in Art. 17 § 2 e) of these Regulations.
- e) If the conduct of the Assembly so requires, the Presidents Delegate may also act in pairs.

Art. 5: GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary¹⁰ :

- a) delivers an Address at the first General Congregation outlining the preparatory work and explaining the procedures to be followed during the Assembly;
- (b) establishes the work schedule and makes any necessary changes to it;

⁶ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 12 § 1, 1st.

⁷ Cfr. ICSA, Art. 14 § 3.

⁸ Cfr. EC, Art. 12 § 1, 2nd.

⁹ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 11, 1st; ICSA, Art. 12.

¹⁰ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 8 § 5.



(c) regularly provides information regarding procedural aspects of the Assembly.

Art. 6: UNDER-SECRETARIES

The Under-Secretaries¹¹ :

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

Art. 7: RELATOR GENERAL

The Relator General¹² :

- a) gives a General Presentation at the first General Congregation introducing the theme to be treated;
- b) provides a short Special Presentation at the beginning of each Module, referred to in Art. 17 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 Commission for the Drafting of the Final Document, referred to in Art. 13 of these Regulations;
- d) coordinates the work of preparing the outline for the *Final Document* and the subsequent work of drawing up the *Final Document Draft*, directing the examination of the reports and the collective amendments (*modi*) from the Working Groups, referred to in Arts. 17 § 4, 19 §§ 7-8, 21 § 1 of these Regulations, as well as the additional amendments referred to in Art. 21 § 2 of these Regulations.

Art. 8: SPECIAL SECRETARIES

There are two Special Secretaries who¹³:

- a) assist the Relator General in all his functions;
- b) supervise the work of the Experts, under the direction of the Relator General; in particular, one [Msgr Riccardo Battocchio] is responsible for supervising the work of the Experts-Theologians; the other [Fr Giacomo Costa SJ] is responsible for supervising the work of the Experts-Facilitators.
- c) justify in writing their acceptance or non-acceptance of the amendments of the Working Groups, as referred to in Arts. 17 § 4; 19 § 7-8; 21 § 1 of these Regulations, as well as of the additional amendments referred to in Art. 21 § 2 of these Regulations, both for the purpose of explaining them to those concerned and for recording them in the Acts of the Assembly.

¹¹ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 9.

¹² Cfr. EC, Art. 11(2); ICSA, Art. 13.

¹³ Cfr. EC, Art. 11(3); ICSA, Art. 14.



Art. 9: PROVISIONS COMMON TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY, THE RELATOR GENERAL AND THE SPECIAL SECRETARIES

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

Art. 10: COORDINATOR OF THEOLOGICAL EXPERTS

The Coordinator of the Theological Experts has the task of assisting the Special Secretary in his responsibility of supervising the work of the Theological Experts.

Art. 11: THE COMMISSION FOR INFORMATION

§ 1. The Commission for Information¹⁴:

- a) collaborates with the Dicastery for Communication and the General Secretariat of the Synod, which support it with their staff.
- b) is responsible for reporting on the progress of the Synodal Assembly in accordance with Art. 24 § 1.
- (c) collaborates, when necessary, in the preparation of communiqués on specific topics.

§ 2. The Commission for Information is composed of: a President and a Secretary both of whom are 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 Office; the seven Members already elected by the Assembly; the Communication Manager of the General Secretariat of the Synod.

§ 3. The seven Members *ex electione* of the Commission for Information are respectively designated to represent: Eastern and Middle Eastern Catholic Churches, North America, Central and South America, Asia, Europe, Oceania. The election takes place in such a way that the Members of the Assembly of each area elect only their respective representatives. The election takes place in General Congregation by means of separate ballots. At the end of each ballot the one who obtains the most votes is elected.

§ 4. The Commission for Information remains in office for both Sessions. At the beginning of the Second Session a new election shall not be held, unless, for proven reasons, it is necessary to replace one of the Members already elected.

§ 5. On the motion of its President, the Commission for Information shall meet in the manner and at the times deemed appropriate. Other experts with competence in the matters to be discussed may also be invited to attend its meetings in particular Communication Experts.

¹⁴ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 15.



Art. 12: COMMISSION FOR DISPUTES

The Commission for Disputes¹⁵, composed of three Members appointed by the Roman Pontiff, is responsible for examining any disputes presented by the Participants and submitting them to the Roman Pontiff. The Commission remains in office for both Sessions.

Art. 13: COMMISSION FOR DRAFTING THE FINAL DOCUMENT

§ 1. The Commission for Drafting the Final Document¹⁶ has the task of supervising, amending and approving the preparation of the *Final Document Draft* referred to in Arts. 17 § 4 and 22 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 are deemed necessary.

§ 2. The Commission for Drafting the Final Document is composed of: the Relator General, who presides over it; the General Secretary; the Special Secretaries; seven Members elected by the Assembly and three other Members appointed by the Roman Pontiff. The Special Secretary responsible for supervising the work of the Experts-Theologians is the secretary of the Commission.

§ 3. The seven Members *ex electione* of the Commission for Drafting the Final Document are elected to respectively represent: Eastern and Middle Eastern Catholic Churches, Africa, North America, Central and South America, Asia, Europe, Oceania. The election takes place in such a way that Assembly Members elect only representatives from their respective geographical area.

§ 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 Drafting the Final Document will meet at the times indicated on the work schedule and whenever necessary when convened by the President. Other experts with competence in the matters to be addressed may be invited to attend its meetings. Written minutes of the meetings shall be drawn up by the Secretary and approved by the Commission.

Art. 14: MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR THE COMMISSIONS

§ 1. Any Member of the Assembly, with the exception of the Presidents Delegate, the General Secretary, the Under-Secretaries, the Relator General and the Special Secretaries, may be elected as a member of a Commission¹⁷.

§ 2. A Member who has been elected to one Commission may not be elected to another. It is the faculty of the Roman Pontiff to appoint members without such limitation.

¹⁵ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 18.

¹⁶ Cfr. EC, Art. 17 § 2; ICOSA, Art. 16.

¹⁷ Cfr. ICOSA, Art. 19.



PART II

CELEBRATIONS

Art. 15: SCHEDULED CELEBRATIONS

§ 1. The first session of the Assembly opens on 2 October 2024 with a Eucharistic celebration presided over by the Roman Pontiff on 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 *Veni, Creator Spiritus*¹⁸.

§ 3. Eucharistic celebrations will take place on the days indicated in the work schedule.

§ 4. The day on which the *Final Document Draft* will be presented is a day of retreat, opening with the celebration of the Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit at the Altar of the Chair in the Vatican Basilica.

§ 5. The last General Congregation closes with the singing of the *Te Deum*¹⁹.

§ 6. The Second Session of the Assembly closes on 27 October 2024 with a Eucharistic Celebration presided over by the Roman Pontiff in the Vatican Basilica.

§ 7. During Eucharistic celebrations, the Bishops and the Presbyters concelebrate; the Deacons perform the liturgical service proper to them; the lay faithful participate and carry out various services that are necessary from time to time.

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

§ 9. On those weekdays when no Eucharistic Celebration is scheduled, a Eucharistic Celebration will be held, before the start of work, at the Altar of the Chair in the Vatican Basilica; it may be attended by any Participants who wish to do so.

Art. 16 OTHER CELEBRATIONS AND FORMS OF COMMUNAL PRAYER

Other eventual liturgical celebrations and forms of prayer will be announced by the General Secretary.

¹⁸ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 21 § 1.

¹⁹ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 21 § 3.



PART III

WORKING METHOD

Art. 17: ORGANISATION OF WORK IN MODULES

§ 1. The Assembly's work is divided into five Modules, during each of which General Congregations alternate with Working Group sessions. Each of the first four Modules will have a thematic focus and name corresponding to a Section of the *Instrumentum laboris* (Foundations; Part 1/ Relations; Part 2/ Pathways; Part 3/ Places). The fifth Module, called the Concluding Module, includes the formalities related to the discussion, amendment and approval of the *Final Document* of the Assembly.

§ 2. The Foundations Module is structured as follows:

- a) a brief presentation of the topic by the Relator General;
- b) two Working Group sessions, with an exchange based on the "Conversation in the Spirit" method;
- c) a meeting of the Language Tables. After the above-mentioned sessions, representatives from each of the Working Groups mentioned in Art. 19 § 6 will meet, divided into five Language Tables (two Tables in English, one in Italian, one in French, one in Spanish and Portuguese). Each Table elects its own Coordinator and then draws up a text to be presented at the next General Congregation. The text will summarise the work carried out in the groups represented, identify the main issues to be handled in the subsequent General Congregations, explain the reasons for the choice, and highlight important terms. At each table there is an Expert Facilitator and an Expert Theologian;
- d) a meeting to prepare the agenda for the Assembly. After the Language Tables have concluded their work, their Coordinators, the Relator General, the General Secretary, the Special Secretaries and the President Delegate will meet to draw up a proposal for the order of topics to be handled in the following General Congregations, under the responsibility of the Relator General. This proposal will be communicated to the Participants as soon as possible in both hard and soft copy;
- e) two General Congregations, during which the synthesis reports of the Language Tables are heard and a vote is taken on the proposed order in which to handle the topics, which are then discussed in accord with the approved order;
- f) a Working Group session to draft a Report, which, with regard to the matter under discussion and on the basis of the proceedings of the entire Module, gathers the proposals that have emerged and their reasons, also indicating any differences in position. The Report is approved by vote and then delivered to the General Secretariat.

§ 3. Each of the Modules on Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the *Instrumentum laboris* is structured like the Foundations Module with the one difference that the General Congregations referred to in e) are three and not two.

§ 4. The Concluding Module, aimed at discussing, amending and approving the *Final Document* of the Assembly, is structured as follows:

- a) a day of retreat that includes: the celebration of a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, a General Congregation for the presentation of the *Final Document Draft*; some points for meditation; a



time of personal prayer; a Working Group session to discuss the draft following the “Conversation in the Spirit” method.

- b) a General Congregation to debate the draft;
- c) two Working Group sessions for the formulation of collective amendments (*modi*);
- d) a General Congregation to read the amended *Final Document Draft*;
- e) a General Congregation for the approval of the *Final Document*.

Art. 18: REPRESENTATION AND FREEDOM OF MEMBERS

§ 1. Each Member expresses his or her opinion and votes freely and according to conscience, always bearing in mind the good of the Church.

§ 2. Although there is no binding mandate, when Members take the floor, Members who for various reasons represent the Eastern Catholic Churches, Episcopal Conferences, or even International Groupings of Episcopal Conferences, they are called upon to convey both the views expressed by the bodies they represent and the consultation carried out within their particular Churches of origin²⁰.

§ 3. Similarly, Members elected by the representative bodies of 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* and appointed by the Roman Pontiff in accordance with Art. 2 § 3 of these Regulations, are called to bear witness to the Synodal Process in which they took part at diocesan, national and continental levels.

Art. 19: WORKING GROUPS (*CIRCULI MINORES*)

§ 1. Working Groups are formed based on language, taking into account the preferences expressed by the Participants for Italian, English, French, Portuguese and/or Spanish²¹. For this reason, Working Group sessions will not provide the simultaneous translation referred to in Art. 29 § 2. Given the diversity of geographical origin, every effort is made in the composition of the Working Groups to achieve an even “geographical” distribution of Participants not vested with the episcopal *munus* mentioned in Art. 2 § 3 of these Regulations.

§ 2. In preparation for the Assembly, Participants are notified of the provisional composition of the Working Groups, which will have two different configurations: one for both the Foundations and Concluding Modules; another for the three other Modules mentioned in Art. 17 of these Regulations. From the point of view of the content of each Module, all the Working Groups will work on the same Section of the *Instrumentum laboris*.

§ 3. In the Working Groups there is an Expert Facilitator who coordinates the sharing and exchange among the Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests. He/she is responsible for ensuring that the work is carried out following the method of "Conversation in the Spirit". In the first four Modules, the exchange begins with a round of interventions in which each

²⁰ Cfr. EC, n. 6; ICOSA, Art. 29 § 1, 3°.

²¹ Cfr. ICOSA, Art. 30.



Member highlights the most valuable points of the Section of the *Instrumentum laboris* under examination. This is followed by a second round in which each Member indicates those points of the Section of the *Instrumentum laboris* under examination that must be discussed, deepened, and/or corrected.

§ 4. For each of the Modules, there will be a Secretary and a Rapporteur, both Members of the group. The Secretary is identified by the General Secretariat on the basis of editorial competence; the Rapporteur is elected by the Assembly Members belonging to the group. 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^o, and C.C.E.O., can. 956 § 1²². The Facilitator draws up a report of this election to be delivered to the General Secretariat.

§ 5. In each of the first four Modules, each Working Group is to draw up a Report containing the proposals that have emerged and their reasons, also indicating any differences in position. This Report must be approved by an absolute majority of the Members²³ and contain the results of the vote. The vote shall focus on whether the Report faithfully represents the work carried out in the Working Group.

§ 6. It is the joint task of the Secretary and the Rapporteur²⁴ to oversee the drafting of the Report referred to in § 5, which is to have a maximum length of two pages (about 6,000 characters, including spaces). It is the task of the Rapporteur to deliver this Report to the General Secretariat, preferably in electronic format, by the time indicated. In addition, the Rapporteur is responsible for representing the Working Group at the Language Table as per Art. 17 § 2 c), being able to delegate this task to the Secretary (or eventually to another Member of the Assembly who is part of the Working Group) if she/he deems it necessary or appropriate.

§ 7. In the Concluding Module, each Working Group is to formulate collective amendments (*modi*) to the *Final Document Draft* presented in General Congregation, i.e., proposals for amendment, suppression or integration. These amendments must be approved by an absolute majority of the Members²⁵. Each amendment must be transcribed separately, together with an indication of the votes for and against, following the instructions of the General Secretariat, to which it must then be delivered.

§ 8. In the Concluding Module, the Rapporteur, elected in accordance with § 4, and the Secretary are responsible for supervising the preparation and due transcription of the amendments mentioned in § 7. The Rapporteur is responsible for delivering to the General Secretariat, according to the indications received.

Art. 20: GENERAL CONGREGATIONS

§ 1. During General Congregations, Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests may intervene freely, making a request in accordance with these Regulations or the General Secretariat and waiting for the President Delegate to give them the floor.

²² Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 31 § 1.

²³ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 32 § 2.

²⁴ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 31 § 3.

²⁵ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 32 § 1.



§ 2. In the first four Modules, before the interventions begin, the synthesis reports from the Language Tables are presented by their respective Coordinators and a vote is taken on the order in which themes are to be addressed, as indicated in Art. 17 §§ 2-3 of these Regulations.

§ 3. Each Member, Fraternal Delegate or Special Guest will take care in his or her speech to keep to the topics under consideration according to the agenda approved by the Assembly / the programme of the General Congregation. It is the duty of the President Delegate to supervise and intervene to ensure that the interventions are effectively relevant to the themes on the agenda of the General Congregation.

§ 4. When taking the floor, each Member, Fraternal Delegate or Special Guest is requested to use the microphone at their disposal. While speaking at the microphone, the Speaker is requested to remain seated and to deliver their speech slowly, so as not to put unnecessary strain on the simultaneous translators.

§ 5. Unless otherwise specified, the time allocated for the above-mentioned interventions is set at three minutes to allow as many Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests 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 advised by a further notice that the microphone is switched off. All the interventions and any other allocution made during General Congregations are subject to audio and video recording by the General Secretariat for archiving purposes.

§ 6. Those who have already spoken and request to speak again - either in the same General Congregation or in a subsequent one, within the same Module or in a subsequent one – will be given the floor after the conclusion of the interventions of those who are speaking for the first time, time permitting.

§ 7. A moment of silence is observed at regular intervals to allow the participants to internalise the speeches heard and elaborate their own synthesis.

§ 8. The interventions of the Coordinators of the Language Tables in General Congregation, mentioned in § 2, may not exceed five minutes.

Art. 21: TEXTS OF THE INTERVENTIONS

The texts of the interventions by Members, Fraternal Delegates and Special Guests, from the Working Groups or General Congregations, whether or not actually delivered, may be submitted to the General Secretariat, preferably in electronic format, not exceeding the length of one page (about 3,000 characters including spaces), following the indications given at the beginning of the Assembly.

Art. 22: EXAMINATION OF TEXTS AND AMENDMENTS (*MODI*)

§ 1. The examination of the Working Groups Reports, the Language Table reports, and the collective amendments from the Working Groups is carried out by the Relator General, with the help of the Special Secretaries, duly assisted by the Experts. This examination consists of



classifying and evaluating them, deciding which of them to accept or not and which, if any, to merge, seeking to enhance the different positions as much as possible.

§ 2. Each Member of the Assembly or groups of Members (of whatever size) are able to propose additional amendments (i.e., proposals for amendments, deletions or integrations) to the *Final Document Draft* presented in General Congregation, following the format and within the time-frame indicated by the General Secretariat. Each amendment must refer to only one issue of the *Final Document Draft* and should precisely indicate the proposed amendment(s). These additional amendments will be examined by the same procedure used for examining the collective amendments mentioned in § 1.

Art. 23: FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY

§ 1. The *Final Document*, referred to in Art. 17 § 4 of these Regulations, has as its reference both Sessions in which the Assembly took place. As envisaged by the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio*, the *Final Document* gathers the fruits of the Assembly's discernment and offers them to the Holy Father²⁶.

§ 2. The *Final Document* of the Assembly is prepared by the Special Secretaries, with the help of the Experts, under the coordination of the Relator General, and is approved by an absolute majority of the members of the Commission for the Drafting of the Final Document²⁷.

§ 3. Once the approval of the Commission for the Drafting of the Final Document has been obtained, the document shall be voted by Members of the Assembly in a paragraph-by-paragraph secret-ballot vote. A paragraph shall be deemed approved if it receives a favourable vote of at least two-thirds of the Members of the Assembly present at the vote²⁸.

²⁶ Cfr. EC, Art. 18 § 1.

²⁷ Cfr. ICSA, Art. 33 § 2.

²⁸ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 35 § 4.



PART IV

COMMUNICATION

Art. 24: RULES FOR COMMUNICATION

§ 1. In order to guarantee freedom of expression to each and every one regarding their own thought, and to ensure a serene common discernment, which is the main task entrusted to the Assembly, each of the Participants is bound to confidentiality and discretion with regard to both their own interventions and the interventions of other Participants, whether delivered in the General Congregations or in the Working Groups. This obligation remains in force even after the Synodal Assembly has ended.

§ 2. All Participants are forbidden from recording, filming and/or disseminating interventions given either during the General Congregations or in the Working Groups. The initial General Congregation and other moments will be streamed. An official audio-visual recording of the General Congregations is kept in the archives of the General Secretariat of the Synod for the *Acta Synodi Episcoporum*.

§ 3. In accordance with procedures that will be communicated, the General Secretariat will make material available and support general communication through press releases and official images. Participants will be free to share these with the media in their countries of origin in order to promote the circulation of information regarding the Assembly's work.

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, always preserving the confidentiality of the work in compliance with Art. 23 § 1 of these Regulations.

§ 2. Journalists accredited to the Press Office will be admitted to Paul VI Hall only at the times and in the spaces indicated to them.



PART V

GENERAL INFORMATION

Art. 26: PLACES

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

§ 2. During General Congregations, the Participants take the seat assigned to them by the General Secretariat to facilitate the locating of each one and the distribution of material.

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

§ 4. A chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament is present, is available. It is located on the first floor of Paul VI Hall, accessible by stairs or by lift. The Church of Santa Maria della Pietà (Teutonic College) located next to the entrance of Paul VI Hall will also be available for personal prayer.

Art. 27: DRESS AND I.D. BADGE

§ 1. Cardinals and Bishops are requested to wear a “filettata” only on the opening and closing days of the Assembly.

§ 2. All Participants will be given an I.D. badge with a QR-code which is necessary for admittance to Paul VI Hall and to consult digital documentation. This badge is strictly personal and non-transferable; it must be carried at all times during the Assembly’s 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 during Working Group sessions, is regularly checked. Attendance is recorded and archived by the General Secretariat and 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 General Secretariat well in advance of the reason for their absence, following the indications that will be provided²⁹.

Art. 29: LANGUAGES USED IN GENERAL CONGREGATIONS

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

²⁹ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 25.



§ 2. During General Congregations, simultaneous translation service is available for all the languages indicated in § 1. Translation into German is also available, although this is not one of the official languages of the Assembly.

§ 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 and submit it, in advance, to the General Secretariat for distribution to the simultaneous translators.

Art. 30: METHODS OF ELECTION AND APPROVAL

In General Congregations, elections and approvals of texts take place electronically³⁰.

Art. 31: ACCESSIBILITY OF WORKING MATERIALS

§ 1. For reasons of sustainability, i.e. to minimise the volume of printing, working materials (e.g. the Reports and Allocutions delivered at General Congregations, the reports of the Language Tables, etc.) are generally made accessible to the Participants in electronic format via a special platform.

§ 2. The procedure for accessing this platform will be the subject of a future communication from the General Secretariat, whose technicians will provide any necessary assistance.

§ 3. Materials are made available in their original language and, when possible, in translation into one or more of the languages indicated in Art. 29 § 1 of these Regulations.

Art. 32: GENERAL CRITERIA

Regarding anything for which there is no provision in these Regulations, reference is made to the indications contained in the Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis communio*, the *Instruction on the Celebration of Synodal Assemblies and on the Activity of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops*, and to established practice.

³⁰ Cfr. *ibid.*, Art. 28.



APPENDIX

I. PERSONAL MAILBOXES

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 Participant. Only the holder is entitled to withdraw from their physical mailbox the items deposited there.

b) The distribution to Participants of material from sources external to the Synod Assembly requires the approval of the Secretary General. The General Secretariat, in any case, is not responsible for the content of any such documents or publications that may be delivered to the Participants.

II. GUESTS

The General Secretary may invite persons to follow the proceedings of the General Congregations by virtue of their specific competence. These Guests are also bound to observe the confidentiality prescribed by Art. 24, §§ 1 and 2, of these Regulations.

III. LOST DOCUMENTS / PROPERTY

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

IV. SNACK-BAR

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

V. PHOTOGRAPHS AND BOOKS

Official Vatican photographers will display photographs taken during the assembly in the Atrium of Paul VI Hall. Participants who so wish may purchase these photographs from the employees of the photographic service.

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

VI. AIRLINE TICKETS

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

VII. BANK TELLER/COUNTER

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