



*Original text: English*

**1st General Congregation**  
October 2, 2024

**PRESENTATION OF THE REPORTS OF THE 10 WORKING GROUPS  
ESTABLISHED BY POPE FRANCIS**

**Group 10**

**The Reception of the Fruits of the Ecumenical Journey in Ecclesial Practices (SR 7)**

**Introduction**

Throughout the synodal process, in local consultations, continental assemblies and the first Roman session, there has been a growing call to go further along the path of unity and ecumenical relations.

As stated in IL2 §9 just before mentioning the title and theme of our Study Group 10 “synodality is the condition for continuing the ecumenical journey towards the visible unity of all Christians.” And in §107 it is mentioned that “Among the most significant fruits of the 2021-2024 Synod is the intensity of the ecumenical impulse and the promise that marks it.”

As we experience more and more how Synodality is fostering ecumenism and ecumenism calls to foster Synodality, our study group is requested to explore the reception of the fruits of the ecumenical journey in ecclesial practices regarding three specific questions:

1. The interdependence and practice of Synodality and primacy,
2. The issue of Eucharistic hospitality (*Communicatio in sacris*)
3. The understanding of the phenomenon of "non-denominational" communities and Christian-inspired "revival" movements” with the question of how to relate to them as Catholics in an ecumenical perspective.

Our group started its work with enthusiasm by online meeting and during the synod we will first meet in person on October 12<sup>th</sup>, what will allow us to finalize a working plan and timeline with the view to establish three sub-groups to work on each of the three specific topics.

**Presentation of the three topics**

**Q1 For our first topic on synodality and primacy**, the request received is:

*In light of theological dialogues and paying attention to the concrete ecclesial repercussions deepening the mutual interdependence between synodality and primacy at different ecclesial levels, with particular reference to “the way of understanding the Petrine ministry at the service of unity” (SR 7h)*

- The Group, recognizing the interconnectedness of local, regional, and international levels within the Church, proposes to focus on the Church as a whole. We aim to deepen our understanding of synodality and primacy at the universal level, drawing from "The

Bishop of Rome" document, the October Assembly's discernment outcomes, and *Instrumentum Laboris 2*, particularly sections 100-108 on the Bishop of Rome's service to unity, and the responses to this document sent to DPCU by other Churches and Christian communions.

- Responding to the call of the *Instrumentum Laboris* “to address the question of the exercise of the Petrine ministry in this light [of the ecumenical and synodal fruits of the synod], opening it up "to a new situation" (UUS 95) » (IL2 107), we intend to develop practical proposals for an exercise of the Petrine ministry in a new ecumenical framework and explore the potential for ecumenical synodal processes rooted in our shared baptismal identity.

**Q2 For our second topic on the issue of Eucharistic hospitality (*Communicatio in sacris*),** the request received is “*An in-depth study from a theological, canonical and pastoral point of view of the question of Eucharistic hospitality (communicatio in sacris), in the light of the link between sacramental and ecclesial communion, with particular reference to the experience and ecumenical significance of inter-church couples and families (cf. RdS 7i).*”

- Our Group aims to clarify the terminology (“Eucharistic hospitality”/“*Communicatio in Sacris*”), and to broaden the reflection to sacramental (anointing of the sick, marriages) and non-sacramental life (liturgy and worship, funerals etc.), taking into account the local pastoral realities marked by an increasing ecumenical diversity.
- Our approach is to gather experiences and practices, and to listen to the questions raised by concrete situations in different contexts. We will be particularly attentive to the experiences and needs of inter-church marriages and families, as well as ecumenical communities, congregations, and movements. We will also examine existing bilateral agreements and best practices of pastoral ecumenism at local level.
- This methodology will enable us to approach the issue in a synodal way, bringing into dialogue theological principles, canonical norms and pastoral realities. Our aim is to formulate proposals that promote Christian unity and respond to the spiritual needs of the faithful in various ecumenical contexts, reconciling theoretical foundations with lived experience.

**Q3 For our third topic on “the phenomenon of "non-denominational" communities and Christian-inspired "revival" movements”,** the request received is “*An in-depth and open reflection "on the phenomenon of 'non-denominational' communities and 'revival' movements of Christian inspiration" (Charismatic/Pentecostal) (RdS 7j)*”

- Our perspective is to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of these ecclesial communities/movements. Our proposal is to explore in a positive way what we can learn from them in a spirit of exchange of gifts, and to foster constructive engagement and mutual growth within the broader Christian family.
- We will draw from the dialogues, experiences and challenges raised by local churches as expressed in the synod synthesis in order to elaborate some pastoral guidelines for Catholic communities dealing with this reality on the ground.

## **Method**

Our approach is to articulate a theological, canonical and pastoral perspective focusing on practices, listening to the concrete situations, questions and issues raised in the local churches regarding the three topics we have to explore. We want to be rooted in the synodal method, emphasizing listening, discernment, and consideration of the diversity of contexts in which ecumenism is taking place.

- We agree that the aim is to prepare proposals for the Holy Father including suggestions for pastoral orientations for local churches.
- Regarding theological reflection, we already have many documents to draw from and will start our work by mapping important references on each of our three topics, but we want to listen especially to the *sensus fidei* looking at the implementation and connecting with local churches. We feel it is important to take into consideration the diversity of local contexts regarding the ecumenical situation.
- A first task has been to gather what the first and second synodal synthesis' from Bishops' Conferences sent to the General Secretariat as a result of the local consultations regarding ecumenism.
- In addition, the DPCU has already started a consultation on the 3 topics among its members and consultors, their feedback and reflections will come to the Dicastery by the end of September and will be integrated to our work.
- It is also expected that other churches and Christian communions will send their reactions to the document "The Bishop of Rome".

## **Group Composition**

Study Group 10 has been organised by the General Secretariat of the Synod and the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity. It brings together experts in ecumenism from different continents and backgrounds involved in ecumenical dialogue, teaching and pastoral research.