



24-26 October 2025

JUBILEE of the *Synodal teams*
& *Participatory bodies*



Encounter-Dialogue with Pope Leo XIV **Introduction by Sr Nathalie Becquart (3')**

Most Holy Father, dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We are filled with deep gratitude to share this time of encounter and dialogue with you, Pope Leo XIV. You participated in the synodal process first as Bishop of Chiclayo in Peru during the diocesan phase, then in both General Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023 and October 2024 as Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops, and since May 8th as our Pope, to accompany and lead our walk together through the implementation phase of the Synod.

It is with great joy that we now experience this privileged moment, which will allow us to travel across the seven continents/regions of the world to hear briefly from each delegate – representing the continental Episcopal Conferences – offering a panorama of how the Synod is being implemented in their region. All seven will share how synodality is unfolding in their respective contexts: their initiatives, challenges, and projects. Then each will pose a question to you, Holy Father, who will take time to respond.

As you likely know, many agree that in the synodal process lived from October 2021 to October 2024, the continental phase – which gave rise to seven ecclesial assemblies between February and March 2023 – was one of the most innovative aspects. In the Roman assemblies, we particularly experienced the "exchange of gifts" among local Churches, for the synodal process is founded on the principle of "mutual interiority between the whole Church and the particular Churches," as the Final Document notes in paragraph 37.

We are now invited to live this moment of listening and dialogue between all of you, representing the seven continents, and the Holy Father – who proclaimed from his very first address at Saint Peter's: "we want to be a synodal Church" – as a profound "exchange of gifts" embodying the Church's catholicity. As *Lumen Gentium* 13 underlines it: "In virtue of this catholicity, each part contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the whole Church, so that the whole and each of the parts are strengthened by the common sharing of all things and by the common effort to attain fullness in unity."

As we have just celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Synod of Bishops, established by Paul VI on September 15, 1965, at the beginning of the Second Vatican Council's final session, let us give thanks to the Lord for the journey we have traveled. From the beginning, Saint Paul VI was aware that the Synod would evolve over time. Like every human institution, he wrote, it would perfect itself. Since then, each Pope who followed has enriched this instrument of the synod at his service: Saint John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis, who for the first time in history convoked a synod for the entire Church – reminding us that primacy and collegiality cannot be lived without synodality with all the baptized.

It is therefore with open heart and gratitude that we live this privileged time with you, Holy Father. In thanksgiving for the journey traveled, we desire to listen to you attentively and to continue walking together with you on the path you will trace for the synodal dynamic.

I now present to you Rev. Fr. Rafael SIMBINE JUNIOR, Secretary General of SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar), a priest from the diocese of Xai-Xai in Mozambique, who will speak on behalf of Africa.