



24-26 October 2025

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



MARY, MODEL OF THE SYNODAL CHURCH

Dear brothers and sisters,

It is a great joy to be gathered here under the sign of Mary, Mother of the Church, together with all those who have taken part in the synodal journey and those who are actively engaged in the participatory bodies of the local Churches who have come to Rome to celebrate the Jubilee! But what does it mean to “live the Jubilee”? Scripture teaches us in the Book of Leviticus: «You shall treat this fiftieth year as sacred [...] It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to your own property, each of you to your own family» (Lev 25:10). The Jubilee is a time in which each person can reclaim what most truly and deeply belongs to him or her. For us, as the People of God, this is a profoundly meaningful image: to live the Jubilee means, for each of us, to return to possession of what is truest and deepest in ourselves. It is a journey back to the roots of being Church, to the beauty of our vocation within the Church. The Jubilee calls us to walk with renewed hope toward the future of a Church on mission. It is a favourable time to rediscover the evangelical dynamism that has always animated the ecclesial community, to come out of every form of self-absorption and to open ourselves confidently to the paths of the world. The Jubilee invites us to renew our apostolic zeal, to joyfully bear witness to the Gospel, to build bridges of fraternity, and to promote a culture of encounter.

And we, dear brothers and sisters, in the light of the Synod concluded a year ago, with the confirmation of Pope Leo XIV, are convinced that the synodal style is what belongs most authentically and profoundly to our communities and to the whole Church. The Jubilee tells us something important: the possibility of returning into possession of what truly belongs to us is not our own achievement, but a gift of God: a door God opens in our life, which we may cross in order to return home.

Mary guides us in our “Jubilee,” in the possibility of recovering possession of what is ours. She is like the enduring “guardian” of a synodal and missionary Church. «We see the features of a synodal, missionary and merciful Church shining in full light in the Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, of the Church and of humanity” (*Final document* [FD], 29). The passage of the Annunciation which we have proclaimed in this Vigil in some way contains those fundamental traits of synodality that the same *Final Document* recalls: Mary is «the form of the Church who listens, prays, meditates, dialogues, accompanies, discerns, decides and acts» (FD 29).

First of all, Mary is the form of the Church who listens, the fundamental model of a Church of synodal style. At the angel’s announcement, Mary knew how to listen to the Word that God addressed to her life, opening new paths, rekindling hope, and making the desert bloom. Today, as Christian communities, we are called to follow Mary’s path: in persevering prayer, to be able to listen, among the many voices, to the Word of God.

Then Mary is the image of the Church who prays. How much we need to return to an authentic prayer born from listening to the Word of God. Mary was able to listen to God’s Word and receive it in her life because she had been formed in the prayer of her people. Listening to the Word is not something improvised, but something prepared for and nourished by prayer.

Mary is the image of a Church of synodal style because she meditates and dialogues. After listening to the Word of God in prayer, Mary measures the events of her existence in her heart in

order to discern God's will. In this, Mary is a teacher of ecclesial discernment, a model of a Church which, beginning with listening, discerns the will of God and puts it into practice. But we must not forget Mary's bold dialogue with the angel in the Gospel passage we have heard: Mary is not afraid to converse with God, to express her objections, to raise her doubts... Mary is not a passive interlocutor of God! Perhaps this is the most "contemporary" and "youthful" aspect of Mary: her capacity to ask questions, the boldness to "wrestle" with God, in order that we too, in difficult times and often challenging situations, may discern what His will is and carry it out with courage and determination.

In Mary we also perceive the image of the Church who decides and acts. In her we see – continues the *Final Document* – «attentiveness to God's will, obedience to God's Word and a readiness to hear the needs of those who are poor and to set out along the path. We also learn the love that reaches out to aid those in need and the song of praise that exults in the Spirit» (FD 29). Saint Paul VI affirmed that «the action of the Church in the world can be likened to an extension of Mary's concern» (*Marialis cultus*, 28). We see this in her willingness to set out toward the hills of Judea to bring help to her cousin Elizabeth. In this solicitude for those in need Mary becomes an imitator of God, who, as the Holy Father Leo XIV states in *Dilexi te*, always «shows His concern for the needs of the poor: "When the Israelites cried out to the Lord, he raised up for them a deliverer" (*Judg* 3:15).» (DT 8).

Dear brothers and sisters, this evening we too place ourselves in the school of Mary, «the image and beginning of the Church» (*Lumen gentium*, 68), to learn how to be a synodal and missionary Church. In this way, we will be able to live our "Jubilee," to pass through the door that the Lord has opened for us, so that we may reclaim what truly belongs to us as Church. May Mary accompany us with her maternal intercession and walk with us, so that «the awakening of the Church in souls» (R. Guardini, *The Meaning of the Church*) may continue. Through her discreet and maternal presence, may we today bring forth Christ, the physician and the remedy, who is the hope that does not disappoint. But to succeed in this, we must grow in communion and offer a home and a voice to every vocation, for every vocation is a gift to the community, and only together can we weave a living, open, and fruitful ecclesial fabric.