



# FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH

## COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION, MISSION

### CANONICAL COMMISSION



**FINAL REPORT**

**[Original text: Italian. Working translation]**

## **CANONICAL COMMISSION**

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## Introduction

The Canon Law Commission, established for the first time, was formed in preparation for the 2023 Synodal Assembly to assist the synod fathers and mothers in understanding the issues at hand, also with the assistance of canonical measures.

Building on the two General Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops (held in October 2023 and October 2024) and following the work accomplished, as well as analyzing and studying the documents produced, up to the *Final Document* (FD) approved by the 2024 Assembly, this report has been produced. Its immediate aim is to identify possible translations and proposed amendments to the canonical norms to be implemented and put into effect within a timeframe that can be considered short. In fact, the findings of the Sessions of the Synod of Bishops held in October 2023 and 2024 made it clear that there is a need for some guidelines that can support church life in the practical reality of its daily activities.

There are also certain issues that the Assembly had highlighted but which, from a canon law perspective, require further reflection, in-depth analysis, and study; accordingly, they require medium-term and long-term projects.

In the medium-term, there are in fact certain matters that could be addressed, building upon synodal concerns and in collaboration with the various relevant Dicasteries, by issuing new instructions or by revising existing ones in light of new insights that have emerged.

In the long-term, however, there is an obvious need for a complete revision of the two Codes to reflect the theological and ecclesiological issues that have emerged.

In the first part of this report, the Commission examined nos. 60, 71, 76, and 77 of the *Final Document* of the General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in October 2024, assessing the necessity, possibility, or advisability of proposing some revisions to the current canonical legislation, with particular reference to canons 145, 204, 208, 212, 228, 230, 275, 476, 483, 749, 1112, 1421, and 1425, with a view to updating church law so that it is in conformity with the teaching of the recent Synod of Bishops.

These numbers in the *Final Document* refer to the equal dignity of the faithful within the People of God and the consequences that this equality, of a juridical nature, entails for the capacity of lay persons, men and women, to exercise offices, roles, and ministries within the Church for which they are qualified and competent, including in the realm of ecclesiastical governance.

The Commission has noted that, in most cases, the Church's current legal system already provides adequate provisions for greater recognition and designation of lay persons to assume roles and functions of ecclesial co-responsibility together with the Pastors. These provisions are often overlooked but also sometimes require greater normative affirmation to be more practical and effective. The proposals aim to bring certain aspects of canon law into line with the Synod's decisions regarding some current forms and methods of lay cooperation in the Church's mission. Of particular importance is the dimension of synodal discernment and commitment, shared by pastors and the other faithful, in assessing pastoral needs and providing for ecclesial offices, in accordance with the universal magisterium's emphasis today on synodality as a constitutive dimension of the Church. The complexity of some aspects of the issue became apparent during the commission's deliberations, particularly with reference to the question of the criteria of suitability and competence for ecclesiastical offices — criteria that do not depend solely on merely technical reasons and considerations but are fundamentally rooted in the specific nature, constitution, and purpose of the Church.

In celebrating the Synod on Synodality, the Church has involved all the faithful in a process of discernment to deepen and receive the teaching of the Second Vatican Council. Through the Synod, the Church expresses its doctrine on the significance of the “sensus fidei” (LG 12). The ongoing reception of the counsel of all the faithful must accompany the interpretation and application of the law. This approach also requires a regular evaluation of existing norms; this may even lead to the necessary modification of certain legislative provisions in light of new insights and changing circumstances. Through its canonical norms, the Church assists all Christian faithful in their ongoing missionary task.

The second part of this report concerns some canons on particular councils and episcopal conferences that are to be revised from a synodal perspective. The possibility for all members of the People of God to participate in the particular council in a proportion equal to that of the “ex officio” members (can. 443 § 1-3), and the elimination of the “tantum” qualification regarding the consultative vote granted to them (can. 443 §§ 4-5, 444 §2, 466, 500 §2, 514 §1, 536 §2), are the innovations that configure this council in the synodality desired for the entire Church. Furthermore, the novelty of the ten-year frequency (can. 440 § 1) should promote its revitalization. Greater authority is granted to Episcopal Conferences by eliminating the Holy See’s intervention in the delegation of a lay person to assist at marriages (can. 1112) and by introducing a presumption of validity for the acts of the council if the Holy See does not respond within one year (can. 446). Finally, some new provisions aim to clarify the nature and role of auxiliary bishops (can. 403 § 1) and, in order to give greater recognition to bishops *emeriti*, provision is made for their engagement in commissions of Episcopal Conferences (can. 450 § 3).

The third and final part of this report highlights how the *Final Document* emphasizes the pressing need to renew participatory bodies in order to embark on paths of “missionary transformation” (FD 103, cf. 11). These bodies, in accordance with their nature and purpose, contribute to the proclamation of the Gospel and ensure that the life of the People of God remains consistent with it. Their function is missionary, not merely organizational. The “widest possible” participation of the baptized requires institutional mediation, especially within the local Church, as provided for by canon law (FD 103). These bodies are primary places of participation, in accordance with the canonical condition, charisms, ministries, and competencies of the faithful involved (*ibid.*). Differentiated co-responsibility values gifts for joint decisions (FD 89). They contribute to discernment regarding the inculturated proclamation of the Gospel, the mission and the witness of the community (FD 103). The synodal process does not diminish the decision-making authority of the bishop, the college of bishops, or the Pope, but integrates the contribution of the People of God, giving the synodal act a truly communal character (FD 92). Modifications were made to can. 127, 399, 461, 463, 466, 473, 493, 495, 500, 511, 512, 514, 536, 537. A new provision has been introduced reflecting the comments in FD 101, concerning the principle of accountability, by adding paragraph n. 3 to canon 391.

In conclusion, the Commission considers this report still to be incomplete. A definitive text will have to wait until all the working Groups have completed their work, at which time the texts will be brought together so that the proposals they have put forward can be translated into canonical norms.

Finally, it should be noted that this work concerns only the Latin Code, since a separate commission has been established for the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches.

*The Commission  
Vatican, 22 September 2026*

## Part One:

### THE LAY MEMBERS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITHFUL: MEN AND WOMEN

#### Areas of action:

FD No. 60 (cann. 204, 212, 228, 275, 476, 483, 749)

FD No. 71 (cann. 476, 483)

FD No. 76 (cann. 208, 228, 230, 1112)

FD No. 77 (cann. 145, 208, 228, 1421, 1425)

| FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SYNOD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | CURRENT LEGISLATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | PROPOSALS and RECOMMENDATIONS |
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| <p><b>60.</b> By virtue of Baptism, women and men have equal dignity as members of the People of God... Women contribute to theological research and are present in positions of responsibility in Church institutions, in diocesan curia and the Roman Curia. There are women who hold positions of authority and are leaders of their communities. <u>This Assembly asks for full implementation of all the opportunities already provided for in Canon Law with regard to the role of women, particularly in those places where they remain underutilised.</u> There is no reason or impediment that should prevent women from carrying out leadership roles in the Church: what comes from the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped. Additionally, the question of women's access to diaconal ministry remains open. This discernment needs to continue. The Assembly also asks that more attention be given to the language and images used in preaching, teaching, catechesis, and the drafting of official Church documents, giving more space to the contributions of female saints, theologians and mystics.</p> | <p><b>Can. 204</b> - § 1. The Christian faithful are those who, inasmuch as they have been incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God. For this reason, made sharers in their own way in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and royal function, they are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each.</p> <p>§ 2. This Church, constituted and organized in this world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him.</p> <p><b>Can. 275</b> - § 1. Since clerics all work for the same purpose, namely, the building up of the Body of Christ, they are to be united among themselves by a bond of brotherhood and prayer and are to strive for cooperation among themselves according to the prescripts of particular law.</p> |                               |

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|  | <p>§ 2. Clerics are to acknowledge and promote the mission which the laity, each for his or her part, exercise in the Church and in the world.</p> <p><b>Can. 212 - § 1.</b> Conscious of their own responsibility, the Christian faithful are bound to follow with Christian obedience those things which the sacred pastors, inasmuch as they represent Christ, declare as teachers of the faith or establish as rulers of the Church.</p> <p>§ 2. The Christian faithful are free to make known to the pastors of the Church their needs, especially spiritual ones, and their desires.</p> <p>§ 3. According to the knowledge, competence, and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful, without prejudice to the integrity of faith and morals, with reverence toward their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons.</p> | <p>can. 275 - § 3: In accordance with pastoral needs and in light of the charisms required by those needs, clerics are to encourage appropriate communal discernment to entrust offices and functions to suitable members of the Christian faithful.</p> <p>Can. 212 - § 4. Pastors have the duty to listen to the opinion of the Christian faithful regarding matters pertaining to the good of the Church, by employing methods of communal discernment.</p> |
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|  | <p><b>Can. 749 –</b></p> <p>§ 1. By virtue of his office, the Supreme Pontiff possesses infallibility in teaching when as the supreme pastor and teacher of all the Christian faithful, who strengthens his brothers and sisters in the faith, he proclaims by definitive act that a doctrine of faith or morals is to be held.</p> <p>§ 2. The college of bishops also possesses infallibility in teaching when the bishops gathered together in an ecumenical council exercise the magisterium as teachers and judges of faith and morals who declare for the universal Church that a doctrine of faith or morals is to be held definitively; or when dispersed throughout the world but preserving the bond of communion among themselves and with the successor of Peter and teaching authentically together with the Roman Pontiff matters of faith or morals, they agree that a particular proposition is to be held definitively.</p> <p>§ 3. No doctrine is understood as defined infallibly unless this is manifestly evident.</p> | <p>Can. 749 § 1. The entire body of the Christian faithful, having received the anointing from the Spirit, cannot err in matters of faith, and it manifests this characteristic through the supernatural sense of faith of the whole people when, from the bishops down to the last of the lay faithful, its universal consent in matters of faith and morals is demonstrated.</p> <p>§ 2. By virtue of his office, the Supreme Pontiff possesses infallibility in teaching when as the supreme pastor and teacher of all the Christian faithful, who strengthens his brothers and sisters in the faith, he proclaims by definitive act that a doctrine of faith or morals is to be held.</p> <p>§ 3. The college of bishops also possesses infallibility in teaching when the bishops gathered together in an ecumenical council exercise the magisterium as teachers and judges of faith and morals who declare for the universal Church that a doctrine of faith or morals is to be held definitively; or when dispersed throughout the world but preserving the bond of communion among themselves and with the successor of Peter and teaching authentically together with the Roman Pontiff matters of faith or morals, they agree that a particular proposition is to be held definitively.</p> <p>§ 4. No doctrine is understood as defined infallibly unless this is manifestly evident.</p> |
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| <p><b>71.</b> ... The need also surfaced to clarify the role of auxiliary Bishops and to expand the tasks that Bishops can delegate. The experience of Bishops <i>emeriti</i> in their new way of being at the service of the People of God should also be taken into consideration.</p> | <p>CHAPTER II (Cann. 474 - 481)<br/>THE DIOCESAN CURIA<br/>Art. 1<br/>Vicars general and episcopal vicars</p> <p>[...]<br/><b>Can. 476</b> - Whenever the correct governance of a diocese requires it, the diocesan bishop can also appoint one or more episcopal vicars, namely, those who in a specific part of the diocese or in a certain type of affairs or over the faithful of a specific rite or over certain groups of persons possess the same ordinary power which a vicar general has by universal law, according to the norm of the following canons.</p> <p>Can. <b>483</b> - § 1. Besides the chancellor, other notaries can be appointed whose writing or signature establishes authenticity for any acts, for judicial acts only, or for acts of a certain case or affair only.</p> <p>§2. The chancellor and notaries must be of unimpaired reputation and above all suspicion. In cases in which the reputation of a priest can be called into question, the notary must be a priest.</p> | <p>CHAPTER II (Cann. 474 - 481)<br/>THE DIOCESAN CURIA<br/>Article 1<br/>Vicars general, episcopal vicars, and episcopal delegates</p> <p>[...]<br/>Can. 476 - § 1. <i>Idem</i></p> <p>§ 2 – The diocesan bishop can also appoint one or more episcopal delegates, chosen from among the Christian faithful deemed suitable, who exercise their office with delegated authority in the same matters as those mentioned in § 1.</p> <p>Can. 483 - § 1. <i>Idem</i></p> <p>§2. The chancellor and notaries must be of unimpaired reputation and above all suspicion.</p> |
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| <p><b>76. ...</b> The canons of the Latin and Eastern Churches already provide that, in certain cases, the lay faithful, men or women, may also be extraordinary ministers of Baptism.</p> <p>In the Latin canons, the Bishop (with the Holy See's authorisation) may delegate assistance at marriages to lay faithful, men or women. Responsive to the needs of local contexts, consideration should be given to extending and stabilising these opportunities for the exercise of lay ministries...</p> | <p><b>Can. 861</b> - §1. The ordinary minister of baptism is a bishop, a presbyter, or a deacon, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 530, n. 1.</p> <p>§2. When an ordinary minister is absent or impeded, a catechist or another person designated for this function by the local ordinary, or in a case of necessity any person with the right intention, confers baptism licitly. Pastors of souls, especially the pastor of a parish, are to be concerned that the Christian faithful are taught the correct way to baptize.</p> <p><b>Can. 1112</b> - § 1. Where there is a lack of priests and deacons, the diocesan bishop can delegate lay persons to assist at marriages, with the previous favorable vote of the conference of bishops and after he has obtained the permission of the Holy See, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1108 § 3.</p> <p>§ 2. A suitable lay person is to be selected, who is capable of giving instruction to those preparing to be married and able to perform the matrimonial liturgy properly.</p> <p><b>Can. 230</b> - § 1. Lay persons who possess the age and qualifications established by decree of the conference of bishops can be admitted on a stable basis through the prescribed liturgical rite to the ministries of lector and acolyte. Nevertheless, the conferral of these ministries</p> | <p>Can. 1112 - § 1. Where there is a lack of priests and deacons, the diocesan bishop can delegate lay persons, men and women, to assist at marriages, with the previous favorable vote of the conference of bishops and after he has heard the presbyteral council, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1108 § 3.</p> <p>§ 2. <i>Idem.</i> (proposed modification on page 14)</p> <p>Can. 230 - § 1. Lay persons who possess the age and qualifications established by decree of the conference of bishops can be admitted on a stable basis through the prescribed liturgical rite to the ministries of lector, acolyte, and catechist. Nevertheless, the conferral of these ministries does not grant them the right to</p> |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>does not grant them the right to obtain support or remuneration from the Church.</p> <p>§ 2. Lay persons can fulfill the function of lector in liturgical actions by temporary designation. All lay persons can also perform the functions of commentator or cantor, or other functions, according to the norm of law.</p> <p>§ 3. When the need of the Church warrants it and ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors or acolytes, can also supply certain of their duties, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside over liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, and to distribute Holy Communion, according to the prescripts of the law.</p> | <p>obtain support or remuneration from the Church.</p> <p>§ 2. Lay persons can, by designation of the competent authority, perform the various functions (<i>munera</i>) deemed necessary for the good of the local community, according to the norm of law.</p> <p>§3. When the need of the Church warrants it and ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors or acolytes, can also supply certain of their duties, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside over liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, to assist at marriage, and to distribute Holy Communion, according to the prescripts of the law.</p> |
| <p><b>77.</b> The lay faithful, both men and women, should be given greater opportunities for participation, also exploring new forms of service and ministry in response to the pastoral needs of our time in a spirit of collaboration and differentiated co-responsibility. In particular, some concrete needs have emerged from the synodal process. This ought to be responded to according to the various contexts:</p> | <p><b>Can. 208</b> - From their rebirth in Christ, there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality regarding dignity and action by which they all cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ according to each one's own condition and function.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>Can 208 - §1 <i>Idem</i></p> <p>Can. 208 - § 2. Competent ecclesiastical authority has the duty to recognize and promote the common mission of all the Christian faithful in accordance with their proper charisms and ministries, engaging them in the processes of communal discernment necessary for the governance of the Church.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>a) increased participation of laymen and laywomen in Church discernment processes and all phases of</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p><b>Can. 228</b> - §2. Lay persons who excel in necessary knowledge, prudence, and integrity</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Can. 228 - §2. <i>Idem</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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| decision-making processes (drafting, making and confirming decisions);                                                                                                                                                    | are qualified to assist the pastors of the Church as experts and advisors, even in councils according to the norm of law.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| b) greater access of laymen and laywomen to positions of responsibility in dioceses and ecclesiastical institutions, including seminaries, theological institutes and faculties, more fully enacting existing provisions; | <b>Can. 228</b> - §1. Lay persons who are found suitable are qualified to be admitted by the sacred pastors to those ecclesiastical offices and functions which they are able to exercise according to the precepts of the law.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| c) greater recognition and support for the lives and charisms of consecrated men and women and their employment in positions of ecclesial responsibility;                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| d) a greater number of qualified lay people serving as judges in all canonical processes;                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>Can. 1421</b> - §1. In a diocese, the bishop is to appoint diocesan judges, who are to be clerics.</p> <p>§2. The conference of bishops can also permit the appointment of lay persons as judges; when it is necessary, one of them can be selected to form a college.</p> <p>§3. Judges are to be of unimpaired reputation and doctors or at least licensed in canon law.</p> <p><b>Can. 1425</b> - §1. With every contrary custom reprobated, the following cases are reserved to a collegiate tribunal of three judges:</p> <p>1) contentious cases: a) concerning the bond of sacred ordination; b) concerning the bond of marriage, without prejudice to the prescripts of cann. 1686 and 1688;</p> | <p>Can. 1421 - §1. In a diocese, the bishop is to appoint diocesan judges, clerics and lay persons.</p> <p><i>Eliminate § 2 and replace it with the following text</i></p> <p>§2. Judges are to be of unimpaired reputation and doctors or at least licensed in canon law.</p> |

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|                                                                                                                                  | <p>2) penal cases: a) concerning delicts which can entail the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state; b) concerning the imposition or declaration of an excommunication.</p> <p>§2. The bishop can entrust more difficult cases or those of greater importance to the judgment of three or five judges.</p> <p>§ 3. Unless the bishop establishes otherwise in individual cases, the judicial vicar is to assign the judges in order by turn to adjudicate individual cases.</p> <p>§ 4. If it happens that a collegiate tribunal cannot be established in the first instance of a trial, the conference of bishops can permit the bishop, for as long as the impossibility continues, to entrust cases to a single clerical judge who is to employ an assessor and auditor where possible.</p> <p>§ 5. The judicial vicar is not to substitute judges once they have been assigned except for a most grave cause expressed in a decree.</p> | <p>Can. 1425 - § 4. If it happens that a collegiate tribunal cannot be established in the first instance of a trial, the bishop is to entrust the case to a single judge, cleric or lay, man or woman, who is to employ an assessor and auditor where possible.</p> |
| e) effective recognition of the dignity and respect for the rights of those who are employed in the Church and its institutions. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Part Two:

### EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES / PARTICULAR COUNCILS / BISHOPS

#### Areas of action:

FD No. 71 (cann. 403, 450)

FD No. 76 (cann. 1112)

FD No. 129 (cann. 440, 443, 444, 446)

| FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SYNOD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | CURRENT LEGISLATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | PROPOSALS and RECOMMENDATIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p><b>71.</b> ... The need also surfaced to clarify the role of auxiliary Bishops and to expand the tasks that Bishops can delegate. The experience of Bishops <i>emeriti</i> in their new way of being at the service of the People of God should also be taken into consideration.</p> | <p><b>Can. 403</b> - § 1. When the pastoral needs of a diocese suggest it, one or more auxiliary bishops are to be appointed at the request of the diocesan bishop. An auxiliary bishop does not possess the right of succession.</p> <p><b>Can. 450</b> - § 1. To a conference of bishops belong by the law itself all diocesan bishops in the territory, those equivalent to them in law, coadjutor bishops, auxiliary bishops, and other titular bishops who perform in the same territory a special function entrusted to them by the Apostolic See or conference of bishops. Ordinaries of another rite can also be invited though in such a way that they have <b>only</b> a consultative vote unless the statutes of the conference of bishops decree otherwise.</p> | <p>Can. 403 - § 1. When the pastoral needs of a diocese so require—such as its size, its large number of the Christian faithful, or its particular complexity—the Holy See, in its prudent judgment, can appoint, at the request of the diocesan bishop, one or more auxiliary bishops. An auxiliary bishop does not possess the right of succession.</p> <p>Can. 450 - § 1. To a conference of bishops belong by the law itself all diocesan bishops in the territory, those equivalent to them in law, coadjutor bishops, auxiliary bishops, and other titular bishops who perform in the same territory a special function entrusted to them by the Apostolic See or conference of bishops. Ordinaries of another rite can also be invited though in such a way that they have a consultative vote unless the statutes of the conference of bishops decree otherwise.</p> |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | § 2. Other titular bishops and the legate of the Roman Pontiff are not by law members of a conference of bishops.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | §2. <i>Idem</i><br><br>Can. 450 - § 3. Bishops emeriti can be called upon to be part of commissions that may be established, according to their competence and experience.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 76. ... The canons of the Latin and Eastern Churches already provide that, in certain cases, the lay faithful, men or women, may also be extraordinary ministers of Baptism. In the Latin canons, the Bishop (with the Holy See's authorisation) may delegate assistance at marriages to lay faithful, men or women. Responsive to the needs of local contexts, consideration should be given to extending and stabilising these opportunities for the exercise of lay ministries...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Can. 1112</b> - § 1. Where there is a lack of priests and deacons, the diocesan bishop can delegate lay persons to assist at marriages, with the previous favorable vote of the conference of bishops and after he has obtained the permission of the Holy See. without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1108 §3<br><br>§ 2. A suitable lay person is to be selected, who is capable of giving instruction to those preparing to be married and able to perform the matrimonial liturgy properly. | Can. 1112 - § 1. Where there is a lack of priests and deacons, the diocesan bishop can delegate lay persons, men and women, to assist at marriages, with the previous favorable vote of the conference of bishops and after he has heard the presbyteral council, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1108 § 3. (see also above on page 9)<br><br>§ 2. Suitable lay persons are to be selected, who are capable of giving instruction to those preparing to be married and able to perform the matrimonial liturgy properly. |
| 129. To realise a “sound ‘decentralization’” (EG 16) and an effective inculturation of faith, <u>it is necessary not only to recognise the role of Episcopal Conferences, but also to rediscovery the institution of particular councils, both provincial and plenary. The periodic celebration of these councils was an obligation for much of the Church's history and is currently provided for in the canon law of the Latin Church (cf. CIC cann. 439-446). They should be convened periodically. The procedure for the recognition of the conclusions of particular councils by the Holy See (recognitio) should be reformed to encourage their timely publication by specifying precise deadlines or, in</u> | <b>Can. 440</b> - § 1. A provincial council for the different particular churches of the same ecclesiastical province is to be celebrated whenever it seems opportune in the judgment of the majority of the diocesan bishops of the province, without prejudice to can. 439, §2.<br><br>§ 2. When a metropolitan see is vacant, a provincial council is not to be convoked.<br><br><b>Can. 443</b> -- § 3. The following must be called to particular councils but with only a consultative vote:     | Can. 440 - § 1. A provincial council for the different particular churches of the same ecclesiastical province is to be celebrated every ten years, without prejudice to can. 439 § 2.<br><br>§ 2. <i>Idem</i><br><br>Can. 443 - § 3. The following must be called to particular councils with a consultative vote:                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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| <p><u>cases of purely pastoral or disciplinary matters (not directly concerning issues of faith, morals, or sacramental discipline), by introducing a legal presumption equivalent to tacit consent.</u></p> | <p>1° the vicars general and episcopal vicars of all the particular churches in the territory;<br/> 2° major superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life in a number for both men and women which the conference of bishops or the bishops of the province are to determine; these superiors are to be elected respectively by all the major superiors of the institutes and societies which have a seat in the territory;<br/> 3° rectors of ecclesiastical and Catholic universities and deans of faculties of theology and of canon law, which have a seat in the territory;<br/> 4° some rectors of major seminaries elected by the rectors of the seminaries which are located in the territory, in a number to be determined as in n. 2.</p> <p><b>Can 443</b> - § 4. Presbyters and other members of the Christian faithful can also be called to particular councils, but with only a consultative vote and in such a way that their number does not exceed half the number of those mentioned in §§ 1-3.</p> <p><b>Can. 443</b> - § 5. Moreover, cathedral chapters and the presbyteral council and pastoral council of each particular church are to be invited to provincial councils in such a way that each of them sends two of their members designated collegially by them; however, they have only a consultative vote.</p> | <p>1° the vicars general and episcopal vicars of all the particular churches in the territory;<br/> 2° major superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life in a number for both men and women which the conference of bishops or the bishops of the province are to determine; these superiors are to be elected respectively by all the major superiors of the institutes and societies which have a seat in the territory;<br/> 3° rectors of ecclesiastical and Catholic universities and deans of faculties of theology and of canon law, which have a seat in the territory;<br/> 4° some rectors of major seminaries elected by the rectors of the seminaries which are located in the territory, in a number to be determined as in n. 2.</p> <p>Can. 443 - § 4. Other members of the Christian faithful can also be called to particular councils with a consultative vote and in such a way that their number does not exceed those mentioned in §§ 1-3.</p> <p>Can. 443 - § 5. Moreover, cathedral chapters and the presbyteral council and pastoral council of each particular church are to be invited to provincial councils in such a way that each of them sends two of their members designated collegially by them; however, they have a consultative vote.</p> |
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|  | <p><b>Can. 444</b> - § 2. Those who are called to particular councils and have a deliberative vote in them can send a proxy if they are prevented by a just impediment; the proxy has only a consultative vote.</p> <p><b>Can. 446</b> - When a particular council has ended, the president is to take care that all the acts of the council are sent to the Apostolic See. Decrees issued by a council are not to be promulgated until the Apostolic See has reviewed them. It is for the council itself to define the manner of promulgation of the decrees and the time when the promulgated decrees begin to oblige.</p> | <p><b>Can. 444</b> - § 2. Those who are called to particular councils and have a deliberative vote in them can send a proxy if they are prevented by a just impediment; the proxy has a consultative vote.</p> <p><b>Can. 446</b> - When a particular council has ended, the president is to take care that all the acts of the council are sent to the Apostolic See. Decrees issued by a council are not to be promulgated until the Apostolic See has reviewed them.</p> <p><i>(TWO PROPOSALS ARE SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION. Depending on the choice made, the first part of the canon will need to be amended)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A) The Apostolic See will fulfill this duty with due solicitude, within one year.</li> <li>B) If the Apostolic See does not respond within one year, the decrees can be promulgated.</li> </ul> <p>It is for the council itself to define the manner of promulgation of the decrees and the time when the promulgated decrees begin to oblige.</p> |
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## Part three:

### PARTICIPATORY BODIES

#### Areas of action:

FD No. 84 (can. 127).

FD Nos. 91, 92, 93 (cann. 466, 473, 500, 511, 514, 536, 537)

FD No. 94 (can. 399).

FD No. 101 (cann. 391, 399, 495, 511)

FD No. 102 (cann. 493, 514)

FD No. 103 (cann. 461, 536, 537)

FD No. 106 (can. 512)

FD No. 108 (cann. 463)

| FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SYNOD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | CURRENT LEGISLATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | PROPOSALS and RECOMMENDATIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p>84. The steps of ecclesial discernment will differ depending on the various places and their traditions. Based on the synodal experience, we have identified some elements of discernment which should be included:</p> <p>a) clearly setting out the object of discernment and disseminating information and the means for adequately understanding it;</p> <p>b) giving sufficient time for prayerful preparation, for listening to the Word of God and for reflection on the question;</p> <p>c) an inner disposition of freedom regarding one's own interests, both personal and as a group, and a commitment to the pursuit of the common good;</p> <p>d) listening attentively and respectfully to each person's voice;</p> | <p><b>Can. 127 - § 3.</b> All whose consent or counsel is required are obliged to offer their opinion sincerely and, if the gravity of the affair requires it, to observe secrecy diligently; moreover, the superior can insist upon this obligation.</p> | <p>Can. 127 - § 4. The authority seeking consent or counsel has a duty to provide those whose consent or counsel is requested with the necessary information and to ensure that they have ample time and freedom to express their opinion.</p> |

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| <p>e) searching for the widest possible consensus which will emerge when our hearts burn within us (cf. Lk 24:32), without hiding conflicts or searching for the lowest common denominator;</p> <p>f) the leaders of the process formulate the consensus in such a way that allows the participants to say whether they recognise themselves in it or not.</p> <p>The discernment process should lead to a mature acceptance by all of the decision, even by those whose individual opinions are not accepted. The process should also provide for a period for reception by the community that will lead to further review and assessment.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>91. Those in authority are, in several instances, obligated by current law to conduct a consultation before taking a decision. Those with pastoral authority are obliged to listen to those who participate in the consultation and may not act as if the consultation had not taken place. Therefore, those in authority will not depart from the fruits of consultation that produce an agreement without a compelling reason (cf. CIC, can. 127, § 2, 2°; CCEO can. 934, § 2, 3°) ...</p> <p>92. In a synodal Church, the authority of the Bishop, of the Episcopal College and of the Bishop of Rome in regard to decision-taking is inviolable as it is grounded in the hierarchical structure of the Church established by Christ; it both serves unity and legitimate diversity (cf. LG 13). Such an exercise of authority, however, is not without limits: it may not ignore a direction which emerges through proper discernment within a consultative process, especially if this is done by participatory bodies. It</p> | <p><b>Can. 466</b> - The only legislator in a diocesan synod is the diocesan bishop; the other members of the synod possess only a consultative vote. Only he signs the synodal declarations and decrees, which can be published by his authority alone.</p> <p><b>Can 473 § 4.</b> Where the bishop has judged it expedient, he can establish an episcopal council, consisting of the vicars general and episcopal vicars, to foster pastoral action more suitably.</p> <p><b>Can. 500</b> - § 2. The presbyteral council possesses only a consultative vote; the diocesan bishop is to hear it in affairs of</p> | <p>Can. 466 – The only legislator in a diocesan synod is the diocesan bishop; the other members of the synod possess a consultative vote. Only he signs the synodal declarations and decrees, resulting from the work of discernment of all the members. Such declarations and decrees can be published by the authority of the bishop alone.</p> <p>Can. 473 § 4: In order to foster pastoral action better, the bishop is to establish an episcopal council if, in addition to the vicar general, there is at least one episcopal vicar or episcopal delegate in the diocese, as mentioned in can. 476 §2.</p> <p>Can. 500 § 2. The presbyteral council ordinarily possesses a consultative vote. In accord with canon 127 § 2, 2°, the diocesan bishop is to hear</p> |

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| <p>is not appropriate to set the consultative and deliberative elements involved in reaching a decision in opposition to each other: in the Church, the deliberative element is undertaken with the help of all and never without those whose pastoral governance allows them to take a decision by virtue of their office. For this reason, the recurring formula in the Code of Canon Law, “merely consultative” vote (<i>tantum consultivum</i>) should be reviewed to eliminate the possibility of ambiguity. It seems appropriate to carry out a revision of Canon Law from a synodal perspective, clarifying the distinction and relation between consultation and deliberation and shedding light on the responsibilities of those who play different roles in the decision-making process.</p> <p>93. It is of fundamental importance, if the processes of decision-making envisaged here are to bear fruit, that they be conducted in an orderly manner and that the people involved assume their own responsibilities:</p> <p>a) in particular, it is up to the relevant authority to: clearly define the object of the consultation and deliberation, as well as clarify with whom ultimate responsibility for taking the decision resides. They need to identify those who ought to be consulted, including those who have a specific competency or are affected by the matter under consideration. They also need to ensure that everyone involved has access to relevant data so that they may make an informed contribution to the process;</p> <p>b) those who are consulted, whether individually or as members of a collegial body, assume the responsibility of: offering their input honestly,</p> | <p>greater importance but needs its consent only in cases expressly defined by law.</p> <p><b>Can. 511</b> - In every diocese and to the extent that pastoral circumstances suggest it, a pastoral council is to be constituted which under the authority of the bishop investigates, considers, and proposes practical conclusions about those things which pertain to pastoral works in the diocese.</p> <p><b>Can. 514</b> - § 1. A pastoral council possesses only a consultative vote. It belongs to the diocesan bishop alone to convoke it according to the</p> | <p>it in affairs of greater importance, but needs its consent in the following cases:</p> <p>1° to erect, suppress, or modify parishes after having heard the interested pastors and the parish pastoral councils;</p> <p>2° to reduce a church to profane use or to construct a new church;</p> <p>3° to erect or suppress a seminary;</p> <p>4° to incardinate presbyters and to receive ministers from Churches or ecclesial communities not in full communion with the Catholic Church;</p> <p>5. to sell cultural goods and those of particular significance and artistic value (cf. can. 1292).</p> <p>Can. 511 § 1 – In every diocese, a pastoral council is to be constituted which, under the authority of the bishop, investigates, considers, and proposes practical conclusions about those things that pertain to the pastoral works of the diocese, and also conducts, together with the bishop, a periodic evaluation of the implementation of the diocesan pastoral plan.</p> <p>Can. 511 - § 2 The pastoral council must be convoked at least three times a year, and it belongs to the bishop to determine the questions to be treated or to welcome questions proposed by the members.</p> <p>Can. 514 - § 1. It belongs to the diocesan bishop alone, according to the needs of the apostolate, to convoke and to preside at the</p> |
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| <p>sincerely, with an informed conscience and acting in good conscience, respecting the confidentiality of the information received, offering clearly formulated thoughts that identify their main points. This will enable the pastoral authority to explain how they have taken the consultation into account should the decision differ from the opinions offered;</p> <p>c) finally, when the competent authority has formulated the decision, having respected the consultation process and clearly expressed the reasons for it, by reason of the bond of communion that unites them, all the Baptised should respect and implement the decision. They should do this even if it differs from their own opinion, but they should also be free to participate honestly in the evaluative phase. There is always a possibility of making an appeal to the higher authority according to the provision of the law.</p> | <p>needs of the apostolate and to preside over it; it also belongs to him alone to make public what has been done in the council.</p> <p>§ 2. The pastoral council is to be convoked at least once a year.</p> <p><b>Can. 536</b> - § 1. If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune after he has heard the presbyteral council, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity.</p> <p>§2. A pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms established by the diocesan bishop.</p> | <p>pastoral council which has a consultative vote in accord with canon 127 § 2, 2°; it belongs to the diocesan bishop to making public the issues treated in the council.</p> <p>Can 514 - §2. <i>Eliminated</i></p> <p>Can. 536 - § 1. A pastoral council is to be established in every parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish by virtue of their office, collaborate in promoting pastoral activities and in ensuring that the life of the People of God is lived in accordance with the Gospel.</p> <p>Can. 536 - § 2. The pastoral council possesses a consultative vote and is governed by the norms established by this Code and by the diocesan bishop.</p> <p>Can. 536 - § 3. The pastoral council participates in the formulation of pastoral guidelines and decisions that the pastor is to implement by virtue of his pastoral authority, taking into account can. 127 §2, 2°.</p> <p>Can. 536 - § 4. It belongs to the pastor to determine the questions to be treated, welcoming also those proposed by the members.</p> |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p><b>Can. 537</b> - In each parish there is to be a finance council which is governed, in addition to universal law, by norms issued by the diocesan bishop and in which the Christian faithful, selected according to these same norms, are to assist the pastor in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 532.</p>         | <p>Can. 537 - § 1. <i>Idem</i></p> <p>Can. 537 - § 2. In accordance with the provisions of particular law, the finance council will publish an annual financial report, certified to the extent possible by independent auditors, that gives a transparent account of the management of the goods and financial resources of the parish.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>94. Implementing the processes of decision-making correctly and resolutely, and in a synodal style, will further the progress of the People of God in a participatory way, especially by utilising the institutional means provided for in Canon Law, in particular participatory bodies. Without concrete changes in the short term, the vision of a synodal Church will not be credible, and this will alienate those members of the People of God who have drawn strength and hope from the synodal journey. Local Churches need to find ways to implement these changes.</p> | <p><b>Can. 399</b> - § 1. Every five years a diocesan bishop is bound to make a report to the Supreme Pontiff on the state of the diocese entrusted to him, according to the form and time determined by the Apostolic See.</p> <p>§2. If the year determined for submitting a report falls entirely or in part within the first two years of his governance of a diocese, a</p> | <p>Can. 399 - § 1 <i>Idem</i></p> <p>Can. 399 - § 2. Before sending this report to the Holy See, the diocesan bishop will present at least a summary of it to the Christian faithful of his diocese, particularly through the presbyteral and pastoral councils.</p> <p>(PLEASE REFER TO THE INSTRUCTIONS TO BE PROVIDED BY GROUP 7)</p> <p>Can. 399 - § 3. If the year determined for submitting a report falls entirely or in part within the first two years of his governance of a diocese, a bishop can refrain from making</p> |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | bishop can refrain from making and submitting his report on this one occasion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | and submitting his report on this one occasion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 101. Local Churches and their groupings are responsible for developing effective forms and processes of accountability and evaluation in a synodal way in addition to adhering to the criteria and oversight of structures already established by canonical norms. These should be appropriate to the context, including the requirements of civil law, the legitimate expectations of society and the availability of experts in the field. It is also necessary to draw on the skills of those, especially laypeople, who have greater expertise regarding accountability and evaluation. Best practices within civil society should be discerned and adapted for use within Church contexts. The way in which accountability and evaluation processes are implemented at the local level should be included in the report presented during the visits <i>ad limina</i> . | <p><b>Can. 391 - § 1.</b> It is for the diocesan bishop to govern the particular church entrusted to him with legislative, executive, and judicial power according to the norm of law.</p> <p>§ 2. The bishop exercises legislative power himself. He exercises executive power either personally or through vicars general or episcopal vicars according to the norm of law. He exercises judicial power either personally or through the judicial vicar and judges according to the norm of law.</p> <p><b>Can. 495 - § 1.</b> In each diocese a presbyteral council is to be established, that is, a group of priests which, representing the <i>presbyterium</i>, is to be like a senate of the bishop and which assists the bishop in the governance of the diocese according to the norm of law to promote as much as possible the pastoral</p> | <p>Can. 391 - § 3. The diocesan bishop, taking into account the norms issued by the conference of bishops, is to establish norms regarding the criteria and modalities to exercise the obligation of accountability and evaluation by entities subject to his jurisdiction or vigilance; these duties are to be performed in a synodal manner, in accord with local civil laws and with the assistance of experts in the matter, including lay members of the Christian faithful.</p> <p>Can. 495 - § 1. In each diocese, a presbyteral council is to be established, that is, a group of priests which, representing the <i>presbyterium</i>, is to be like a senate of the bishop; it belongs to the presbyteral council to assist the bishop in the governance of the diocese according to the norm of law, so that the pastoral good of the portion of God's people entrusted to him</p> |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | good of the portion of the people of God entrusted to him.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | be promoted in the most effective manner, and also to carry out, together with the bishop, a periodic evaluation of the pastoral and administrative leadership of the diocese, in relation to the implementation of the diocesan pastoral plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>102. It seems necessary to ensure, at the very least, the establishment everywhere of the following in forms appropriate to different contexts:</p> <p>a) effective functioning of finance councils;</p> <p>b) effective involvement of the People of God, in particular of the more competent members, in pastoral and financial planning;</p> <p>c) preparation and publication (appropriate to the local context and in an accessible form) of an annual financial report, insofar as possible externally audited, demonstrating the transparency of how the temporal goods and financial resources of the Church and its institutions are being managed;</p> <p>d) the preparation and publication of an annual report on the carrying out of the local Church's mission, including also safeguarding initiatives (the protection of minors and vulnerable adults), and progress made in promoting the laity's access to positions of authority and to decision-making processes, specifying the proportion of men and women;</p> <p>e) periodic evaluations of all the ministries and roles within the Church.</p> <p>We need to realise that this is not a bureaucratic task for its own sake. It is rather a communication effort that proves to be a powerful educational tool for bringing about a change in culture. It also</p> | <p><b>Can. 493</b> - In addition to the functions entrusted to it in Book V, The Temporal Goods of the Church, the finance council prepares each year, according to the directions of the diocesan bishop, a budget of the income and expenditures which are foreseen for the entire governance of the diocese in the coming year and at the end of the year examines an account of the revenues and expenses.</p> | <p>Can. 493 - § 1. In addition to the functions entrusted to it in Book V, the finance council prepares each year, according to the directions of the diocesan bishop, a budget of income and expenditures that are foreseen for the entire governance of the diocese in the coming year and approve at the end of the year an account of revenues and expenses.</p> <p>Can. 493 - § 2. The finance council will present an annual financial report, certified to the extent possible, by independent auditors to the presbyteral council and the diocesan pastoral council, so that the administration of the goods and financial resources of the diocese and its institutions are transparent.</p> |

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| <p>enables us to give greater visibility to many valuable initiatives of the Church and its institutions, which too often remain hidden.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>103. The Baptised participate in decision-making, accountability and evaluation processes through institutional structures, primarily through those already provided for the local Church set out in the existing Code of Canon Law. In the Latin Church these are: Diocesan Synod (cf. CIC, can. 466), Presbyteral Council (cf. CIC, can. 500, § 2), Diocesan Pastoral Council (cf. CIC, can. 514, § 1), Parish Pastoral Council (cf. CIC, can. 536), Diocesan and Parish Finance Council (cf. CIC, cann. 493 e 537). In the Eastern Catholic Churches these are: Eparchial Assembly (cf. CCEO, cann. 235 ss.), Eparchial Finance Council (cf. CCEO, cann. 262 ss.), Presbyteral Council (cf. CCEO can. 264), Eparchial Pastoral Council (cf. CCEO cann. 272 ss.), Parish Councils (cf. CCEO can. 295). Members participate on the basis of their ecclesial role and their differentiated responsibilities and capacities (charisms, ministries, experiences, competencies, etc). Each of these bodies plays a role in the discernment needed for the inculturated proclamation of the Gospel, for the community's mission in its milieu, and for the witness of the Baptised. They also contribute to the decision-making processes through established means. These bodies themselves become the subject of accountability and evaluation, as they will need to give an account of their work. Participatory bodies represent one of the most promising areas in which to act for rapid implementation of the synodal</p> | <p><b>Can. 461</b> - § 1. A diocesan synod is to be celebrated in individual particular churches when circumstances suggest it in the judgment of the diocesan bishop after he has heard the presbyteral council.</p> | <p>Can. 461 - § 1. A diocesan synod is to be celebrated in individual particular churches at least every ten years so that its members, through a common discernment, consider well-defined and specific issues, periodically verify the implementation of the pastoral plan of the diocese, and propose a new plan for the future.</p> |

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| guidelines, bringing about perceptible changes speedily.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 106. Equal attention needs to be given to the membership of the participatory bodies so as to encourage greater involvement by women, young people, and those living in poverty or on the margins. Furthermore, it is essential that these bodies include Baptised who are committed to living their faith in the ordinary realities of life, who are recognisably committed to an apostolic and missionary life, not only those engaged with organising ecclesial life and services internally. In this way, the ecclesial discernment will benefit from a greater openness, an ability to analyse reality and a plurality of perspectives. It may be appropriate to provide for the participation of delegates from other Churches and Christian Communions, as happened during this Synodal Assembly, or representatives of the religions present in a territory. Local Churches and their groupings can more appropriately indicate criteria for the composition of participatory bodies suitable to each context. | <b>Can. 512 - § 3.</b> No one except members of the Christian faithful outstanding in firm faith, good morals, and prudence is to be designated to a pastoral council.                                                                                                                                 | Can. 512 - § 3. Members to be designated to the pastoral council are in particular the Christian faithful who are distinguished by the authenticity of their witness to the faith. This does not exclude that, depending on the circumstances, it be opportune that other faithful are also invited, without the right to vote.<br><br><b><i>Proposed c. 512 § 4:</i></b><br><b><i>(decide to insert it in the preceding paragraph or as a separate one):</i></b><br><br>Others can be invited to the pastoral council to participate without the right to vote, including those who belong to a Church or ecclesial community not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church. It belongs to the diocesan bishop to determine their role in the diocesan pastoral council. |
| 108. The Assembly proposes that the diocesan Synod and eparchial Assembly be more highly valued as bodies for regular consultation between the Bishop and the portion of the People of God entrusted to him. This should be the place for listening, prayer and discernment, particularly when it comes to choices pertaining to the life and mission of a local Church. Moreover, the diocesan Synod may provide scope for the exercise of accountability and evaluation whereby the Bishop gives an account of pastoral activity in various                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>can. 463 - § 1, n. 5</b> lay members of the Christian faithful, even members of institutes of consecrated life, chosen by the pastoral council in a manner and number to be determined by the diocesan bishop or, where this council does not exist, in a manner determined by the diocesan bishop. | Can. 463 - § 1, n. 5 lay members of the Christian faithful, even members of institutes of consecrated life, chosen by the pastoral council according to the criteria established by the bishop, such that they constitute the majority of members.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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| <p>areas: the implementation of a diocesan pastoral plan, reception of the synodal processes of the entire Church, initiatives in safeguarding and the administration of finances and temporal goods. It is, therefore, necessary to strengthen the existing canonical provisions in order to better reflect the missionary synodal character of each local Church, making provision that these bodies meet on a regular, and not rare or infrequent, basis.</p> |  |  |
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