



Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Bishops

From: Bishop James F. Checchio, CCLV Chairman

Date: 26 July 2021

Re: Correspondence from CICSAL on the next Synod of Bishops: *“For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, and mission”*

Your Eminence / Your Excellency:

I take this opportunity to share with you the enclosed letter (Prot. 2633) from João Braz Cardinal de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICSAL), regarding the participation of consecrated men and women in the Synod of Bishops to be held next October 9th and 10th and will conclude in October 2023. The theme for the Synod is: *“For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, and mission.”*

The infographic mentioned by His Eminence on the last page of his correspondence to consecrated men and women can be accessed online [here](#) and downloaded as an image [here](#).

Please share the enclosed correspondence with the various consecrated communities in your dioceses.

Thank you for your kind attention to this memorandum.



CONGREGATIO
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Vatican, 24 June 2021

Prot. n. Sp.R. 2633/21

To the Bishops of the Local Churches

Dear brother in the episcopate,

Enclosed you will find the letter we addressed to all consecrated men and women on the occasion of the ecclesial journey towards the celebration of the next Synod of Bishops with the theme "*For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, and mission*".

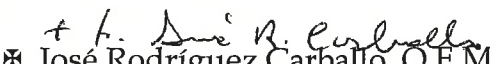
The letter asks and encourages consecrated men and women throughout the world to take an active part in this journey. We ask you to keep in mind the different communities of consecrated life present in your diocese as well as the specific character of different forms of consecrated life.

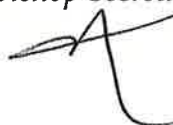
The letter encourages consecrated men and women to freely share experiences, insights and desires, overcoming any timidity, sense of inferiority or worse still, reproaches, but also with a sense of the value of simplicity. At the same time, we are writing to you because we are aware that, in some instances bishops have limited knowledge regarding the communities or charisms present in their dioceses and therefore consecrated life remains isolated from the section of the people of God present in the local church.

We hope that this first phase of the synodal journey, characterized by listening, will become an expression of *mutuae relationes* based on the principles of communion and co-essentiality.

We thank you in advance for what you will do and we accompany you in prayer.


João Braz Card. de Aviz
Prefect


✠ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.
Archbishop Secretary





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PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE
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Vatican, 24 June 2021

Prot. n. Sp.R. 2633/21

To all members of consecrated life

Dear consecrated men and women,

It is with great joy that we make our own Pope Francis' invitation to set out on an ecclesial journey that begins next October 9 and 10 and will conclude in October 2023 with the celebration of the next Synod of Bishops on the theme "*For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, and mission*". Attached is the infographic of the itinerary for the synod process that describes the entire journey.

This path is presented as already being an experience of synodality because, as Pope Francis reminds us: "A synodal Church is a Church which listens, which realizes that listening 'is more than simply hearing'. It is a mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the college of bishops, the Bishop of Rome: all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the 'Spirit of truth' (*Jn 14:17*), in order to know what he 'says to the Churches' (*Rev 2:7*)".

"It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium" because the world in which we live, and which we are called to love and serve, even with its contradictions, demands that the Church strengthen cooperation in all areas of her mission" (*Address of Pope Francis at the Ceremony Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops, 17 October 2015*).

These words strongly challenge the prophetic dimension of consecrated life, which finds its source in the *sequela Christi*, in communion with the Church and in the discernment that helps her to seek God's will and to transform it into a life that can awaken the world!

No one should feel excluded from this ecclesial journey. The first phase, characterized by consultation and feedback from the local churches and other ecclesial groups begins in October 2021 and ends in April 2022.

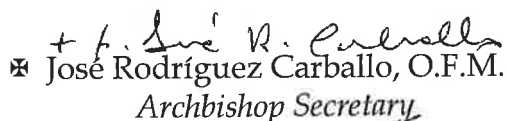
Various methods of participation will be possible, both on a personal and community level: the potential participation of individual consecrated men and women in the existing local church structures, the drafting of a proposal formulated by the individual communities within a specific diocese, national or international input from national conferences of Major Superiors or Conferences of Secular Institutes, Federations, Monastic Associations, other coordinating groups, Continental Conferences, the International Union of Superiors General (UISG e USG) and the World Conference of Secular Institutes (CMIS).

A variety of contributions will also be offered by members of various forms of consecrated life: religious, apostolic and contemplative institutes, secular institutes, members of the *ordo virginum*, hermits, new forms of consecrated life, and societies of apostolic life.

Be open to the challenge offered by the three significant words of the theme of the Synod of Bishops on the Synodal Church: *communion, participation, and mission*. Pray, reflect, discuss and share your experiences, insights and desires. Do it with the freedom of those who place their trust in God and are thus able to overcome timidity, a sense of inferiority or worse still, reproaches and complaints, Let it be done in all simplicity, moved by the Holy Spirit, avoiding arrogance, without presumption but always having a sense of co-responsibility because "All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients" (EG n. 120).

To ensure that the synodal church is not a mirage, but rather a dream to be realized, it is necessary to dream together, to pray together, and to work together.


João Braz Card. de Aviz
Prefect


✠ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.
Archbishop Secretary

