



CONGREGATIO
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

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!

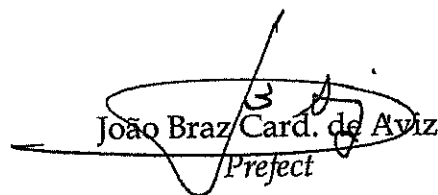
No one should feel excluded from this ecclesial journey. The first phase, characterized by consultation and feedback from the local churches and other ecclesial groups begins in October 2021 and ends in April 2022.

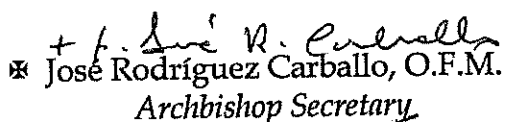
Various methods of participation will be possible, both on a personal and community level: the potential participation of individual consecrated men and women in the existing local church structures, the drafting of a proposal formulated by the individual communities within a specific diocese, national 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).

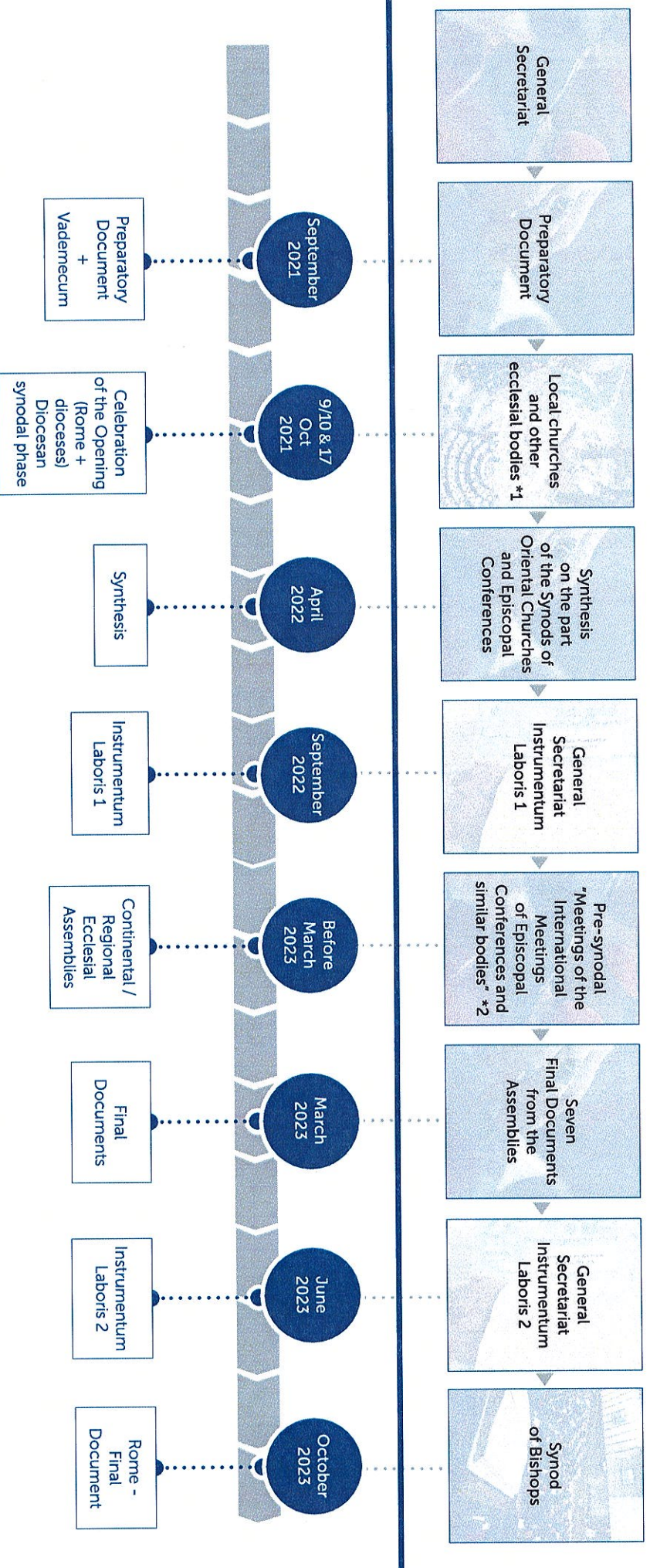
To ensure that the synodal church is not a mirage, but rather a dream to be realized, it is necessary to dream together, to pray together, and to work together.


João Braz Card. de Azevedo
Prefect


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

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION AND MISSION

XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS



*1 Dicasteries, Consecrated Life (USG-USG, UNIONS & FEDERATIONS), Associations of the Faithful, Institutions of Higher Education

*2 Africa (SECAM), Oceania (FCBCO), Asia (FABC), Middle East (CPCO), Europa (CEE), Latin America (CELAM), North America (USCCB+CCCB)

