

Press Release

Parish Priests for the Synod

World Meeting of Parish Priests

Vatican City, 3rd February 2024

Three hundred parish priests identified by the Bishops' Conferences and the Oriental Catholic Churches will participate in a **worldwide meeting of listening, prayer and discernment** promoted by the General Secretariat of the Synod and the Dicastery for the Clergy, in accord with the Dicastery for Evangelisation (Section for First Evangelisation and New Particular Churches) and the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches, have decided to organise an international meeting for representatives of parish priests entitled "Parish Priests for the Synod. An international meeting". This encounter will have the aim of listening to and valuing the experience parish priests live in their respective local Churches, and to offer them an opportunity to experience the dynamism of synodal work at a universal level.

The initiative responds to the indication expressed by the participants in the First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (4-29 October 2023) who in the [*Synthesis Report*](#) had identified the need to "develop ways for a more active involvement of deacons, priests and bishops in the synodal process during the coming year. A synodal Church cannot do without their voices, their experiences and their contribution". The meeting will require the active involvement of participants and include round-tables for the sharing of best practices, workshops around pastoral proposals, dialogue with experts and liturgical celebrations.

The meeting will take place from **Sunday 28 April to Thursday 2 May 2024** at the Fraterna Domus in Sacrofano, near Rome. On Thursday 2 May, the Holy Father will receive the participants in audience.

The number of participants was determined using a criterion similar to that used for the election of the members of the Synodal Assembly. For the Latin Rite Church, the number of participants will be based on the number of members of each Episcopal Conference: 1 representative for Episcopal Conferences with fewer than 25 members; 2 representatives for Episcopal Conferences with between 26 and 50 members; 3 for Episcopal Conferences with between 51 and 100 members; 4 for Episcopal Conferences with more than 100 members. In addition, 1 parish priest from each continent representing ecclesiastical territories without an Episcopal Conference. For the Oriental Catholic Churches: 1 representative for each Synod of Bishops or Council of Hierarchs of the Oriental Catholic Churches with no more than 25 members; 2 representatives for each Synod or Council with 26 to 50 members; 3 representatives for each Synod or Council with more than 50 members.

For the selection of participants, the Bishops' Conferences and Oriental Catholic Churches were asked to consider the following criteria as far as possible:

- give preference to parish priests who have significant experience in the perspective of a synodal Church;
- favour a certain variety of pastoral contexts of origin (rural, urban, specific socio-cultural contexts, etc.).

Participating parish priests are to be indicated by the Bishops' Conferences/Oriental Catholic Churches by 15 March 2024; they will then be sent the final programme for the meeting (currently being drawn up), which will also include a time for dialogue with the Holy Father.

The results of the meeting will contribute to the drafting of the *Instrumentum laboris*, the working document for the Second Session of the Synodal Assembly in October 2024.