

**Questionnaire to activate the diocesan stage  
of next Synod of the Catholic Church**  
(October 2021 – August 2022)

Our dioceses are determined to listen to the proposals of the faithful and hear their opinions on a variety of issues. The collection of these proposals from the dioceses of the Holy Land will be collated and sent to the Assembly of Catholic Patriarchs of the East and the Conference of Latin Bishops of the Arab Regions. During a second stage, these proposals will be merged with the proposals of the other dioceses in the Middle East and these will be sent to Rome, where they, together with the proposals sent from all over the world will form the basis for reflection of the next Synod which will take place in the Vatican in October 2023. Because of the importance of the diocesan process, we ask you to answer the following questions which we have formulated along the general lines laid out in the preparatory document for the Synod and adapted to our reality in the Middle East.

To facilitate giving answers in discussion groups, you can begin with a reading from the Scriptures (First Epistle to the Corinthians 12:4-31), taking time to reflect on it in order to underline the role that each one plays – consecrated and laity, men and women, young and old, those distant from the Church and those close to the Church – in building up the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church.

May we remind ourselves of the importance of the mission of the laity in the Church. They are the major part of the Body and without their collaboration and prayers and their taking responsibility, the Church would be weakened. The church's founder desired that the Church fosters unity gather and promotes dialogue rather than division and control.

The document published by the Second Vatican Council, "Mission of the Laity in the Church", declared:

*"In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but a oneness of mission. Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world. They exercise the apostolate in fact by their activity directed to the evangelization and sanctification of men and to the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel. In this way, their temporal activity openly bears witness to Christ and promotes the salvation of men. Since the laity, in accordance with their state of life, live in the midst of the world and its concerns, they are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardor of the spirit of Christ."*

It would be good to meditate the text from the First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians 12:4-31 at the beginning of the discussion group.

Thank you for the contribution of your time and your love in the realization of this noble goal!

+ Pierbattista Pizzaballa  
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem