



Conference of Catholic Bishops of India

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To
All the Member Bishops of the
Conference of Catholic Bishops of India

Your Eminence/Grace/Excellency/Dear Monsignor,

First and foremost, I would like to wish you and all your collaborators a truly grace-filled Lenten Season.

As we journey together in the implementation phase of the Synod on Synodality, the General Secretariat of the Synod in Rome has outlined a clear roadmap ahead, leading to the Ecclesial Assembly in October 2028 at the Vatican. This phase builds on the fruits of the synodal process, fostering a more synodal Church in India. The key milestones include:

1. June 2025 – December 2026: Implementation activities in local Churches.
2. May 2027: Evaluation Assemblies in Dioceses.
3. July 2027: Evaluation by Assemblies in Regional Councils.
4. Second Half 2028: Evaluation by the Episcopal Conference
5. April 2028: Continental Evaluation.
6. October 2028: Ecclesial Assembly in the Vatican.

We now focus on the Implementation Phase (June 2025 – December 2026), a vital period for our local Churches to embody synodality in daily life.

Attached herewith please find the letter Prot. N. 260014, dated 28th January 2026, sent by the three Heads of the Dicasteries of the Holy See and the Secretary General of the Synod Secretariat, namely, Card. Luis Antonio Tagle, Card. Claudio Gugerotti, Abp. Filippo Iannone, O.Carm. and Card. Mario Grech. All four of them highlight the crucial importance of the Year 2026 as “the final stage of this time of implementation and consolidation, in view of the subsequent **assemblies scheduled for 2027.**”

I. What is the Implementation Phase, and what are its Objectives? This phase is not an additional exercise or task. Every local Church and parish community will practise synodality by promoting new practices and structures within its ordinary pastoral ministry, to make Church life more participatory and missionary.

Its core objectives are: (1) to foster synodal conversion through formation pathways tailored to diverse ecclesial contexts; (2) to carry out the mission of evangelization more effectively, aligning with the Church's call to be a listening, discerning and outward-facing community (cf. Final Document [FD]).

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-2-

II. Who Participates and What is Expected? The Diocesan Bishop bears the primary responsibility: (a) to initiate the phase and define its duration, methods and objectives; (b) to accompany its progress and validate the results. The key participants include: (1) The Diocesan Participatory Bodies: The Diocesan Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Diocesan Finance Council; (2) The Diocesan Synodal Team tasked with animating the process (cf. FD 87-94).

III. The Synodal Team, in particular, must promote the following priorities:

- a) Synodal spirituality (FD 43-46)
- b) Access to leadership roles for qualified women, men, lay and consecrated persons (FD 60)
- c) New forms of service and ministry responsive to pastoral needs (FD 75-77)
- d) Ecclesial discernment practices (FD 81-86)
- e) Synodal decision-making processes (FD 93-94)
- f) Transparency, accountability, and evaluation mechanisms (FD 95-102)
- g) Renewal of participatory bodies in dioceses and parishes, as required by law (FD, 103-106)
- h) Regular local and regional ecclesial assemblies (FD 107)
- i) Promotion of Diocesan Synods (FD 108)
- j) Renewal of parishes in a synodal, missionary spirit (FD 117)
- k) Verification of synodal elements in Christian Initiation journeys and formation programmes (FD 142-151).

The CCBI has already constituted the National Synodal Team. Fr. Christopher Vimalraj, Associate Deputy Secretary General of our Conference, is its Coordinator. Each Diocese has also constituted its Diocesan Synodal Team. I kindly request you to send the names of the members of your Diocesan Synodal Team at the earliest to the email ID: synod@ccbi.in

The CCBI National Synodal Team will convene monthly online meetings to accompany and support the Diocesan Synodal Teams. Therefore, I request you to kindly ensure that the Coordinator of your Diocesan Synodal Team regularly participates in these meetings.

Let us seize this grace-filled opportunity to renew our Churches in India. I urge each Diocese to form or activate its Synodal Team promptly and to integrate the synodal process into its pastoral plans. Resources from the General Secretariat of the Synod and the CCBI Guidelines will support this work. Together, let us prepare ourselves for the 2027 evaluations and the 2028 Vatican Assembly.

May the Holy Spirit guide us toward being a truly synodal Church!



+Filipe Neri Card. Ferrão

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President, Conference of Catholic Bishops of India
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