



THE ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC ORDINARIES OF THE HOLY LAND
Latins, Melkites, Maronites, Syrians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Custody of the Holy Land

Re. : 06/2022

**Letter from the Catholic Ordinaries
to the Heads of the Christian Churches in the Holy Land**

We have begun an important process in the Catholic Churches in the Holy Land, invited by His Holiness Pope Francis to a synod. His Holiness has proposed to all the faithful throughout the world to engage in this synod. It focuses on setting out on a journey together, listening to one another and growing in communion, strengthening participation of all and engaging more enthusiastically in the mission of the Church. As we walk together, we realize yet again that we do not walk alone.

The aim of this synod is to renew our Church at a time when we face so many crises at every level. The pandemic has had tragic effects on the life of the Church. The political situation continues to create innumerable obstacles to our mission and in the lives of our faithful. Our faithful are exhausted and often despair, seeing little or no future for Christians in our region. We all need to renew our energies, recommit to our faith and believe that walking with Christ leads to a horizon of hope.

His Holiness Pope Francis has invited us to engage in a first level of this Synod at the local level. This stage will continue until the beginning of September 2022. During this time, our parishes, Christian institutions, congregations and movements will be walking the synodal way together. We will be keeping track of what is going on in order to write a full report on the state of the Church at the end of these months. We will then move to regional, continental and finally international levels of the process so that a new way of being Church can be initiated, a way that draws upon the calls and the gifts of all members in the Body of Christ.

We write during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, to you to commit to our fraternal relations with you, desiring to inform you of what is happening in the life of our Churches. We would be delighted to share with you what we are learning and also learn from you, listening to your wisdom and experience. Pope Francis has said and written repeatedly that Catholics have much to learn from the Orthodox regarding the exercise of synodality. As we set out on this way, we are more aware than ever that we, all together, as disciples of Christ in this Land, which is His home, are called to witness to him. We remember that his dearest wish was that we should be one (cf. John 17).

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Beatitudes, Most Reverend Archbishops and Bishops
Heads of Christian Churches in Jerusalem
Their residences

مجلس رؤساء الكنائس الكاثوليكية في الأرض المقدسة



אספת ההגמוניים הקתוליים
של ארץ הקודש

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This Synod is one in which we are invited to listen more than to speak. We are listening for the voice of the Lord as we encounter Him and the way, the voice of the Holy Spirit as it comes to us through reading the Scriptures and encountering our neighbors. With listening being at the center of the Synodal process, we wish not only to inform you of this process but also listen to anything you might want to say to us. We encourage our priests to be in touch with the priests and pastors of all the Christian communities that live in their areas. You are present in our prayer and our pastoral commitment, as we all recommit to encountering the Risen Lord and be renewed in a new pouring out of the Spirit.

Catholics throughout the world pray with all Christians that the Synod will proceed in an ecumenical spirit:

Synodal Prayer
on the occasion of the week for Christian Unity

Heavenly Father,
as the Magi journeyed towards Bethlehem led by the star,
so by your heavenly light,
guide the Catholic Church to walk together with all Christians during this time of synod.
As the Magi were united in their worship of Christ,
lead us closer to your Son and so to one another,
so that we become a sign of the unity that you desire for your Church and the whole creation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

The President of the A.C.O.H.L.

+ Pierbattista Pizzaballa

+ Pierbattista Pizzaballa, ofm
Patriarch of Jerusalem for Latins



The Secretary general

Pietro Felet scj

Jerusalem, January 24, 2022



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Members of the A.O.C.H.L.

+ Yousef MATTA
Greek Melkite Cath. Archbishop of Akko,
Haifa and Galilee

+ Moussa AL-HAGE
Maronite Archbishop of Haifa
Maronite Exarch of Jerusalem
Vice-President

+ Joseph GEBARA
Greek Melkite Cath. Archbishop of Petra and
Philadelphia (Amman)

+ Selim SFEIR
Maronite Archbishop of Cyprus

+ Michel SABBAAH
Former Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

+ Fouad TWAL
Former Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

+ Boutros MOUALLEM
Former Gr. Melkite Cath. Arch. of Akko

+ Elias CHACOUR
Former Gr. Melkite Cath. Arch. of Akko

+ Yaser Al-AYYASH
Gr. Melkite Cath. Patr. Vicar/Jerusalem

+ Joseph Jules ZEREY
Former Gr. Melkite Cath. Patr Vicar

+ Yacoub Afram SEMAAN
Syrian Catholic Exarch of Jerusalem

Rt.Rev. Joseph ZABBARA
Armenian Catholic Exarch of Jerusalem

+ William SHOMALI
Latin Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem

+ Kamal-Hanna BATHISH
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+ Selim SAYEGH
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Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Cyprus

Rt.Rev. Jamal KHADER
Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan

Rt.Rev. Piotr ZELAZKO
Patriarchal Vicar for St James Vicariate

Rt.Rev. Nikodemus SCHNABEL, osb
Patr. Vicar for Migrants and Asylum seekers

Rt.Rev. Zaid HABBABA
Chaldean Vicar General for Jordan

Rt.Rev. David NEUHAUS, S.J.
Representative of Religious men

Rev.Sr. Bruna FASAN
Representative of Religious Women