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Press Release

Work begins for the *Instrumentum laboris* 2

Discernment meeting of theologians

Vatican City, 05 June 2024

*Around twenty theologians from around the world have arrived in Rome to begin work on the *Instrumentum laboris* for the Second Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.*

With the document [Towards October 2024](#) sent last December to all the bishops of the world, the General Secretariat of the Synod asked the local churches and groups of Churches to deepen some aspects of the [Synthesis Report](#) that are fundamental to the theme of the Synod, starting from a guiding question of the entire synodal process: **‘HOW to be a synodal Church in mission?’**

During these months, the individual local Churches have carried out their work by sending their contribution through the Bishops’ Conferences, the Eastern Catholic Churches and the International Reunions of Bishops’ Conferences.

“I am particularly impressed to see the involvement of the entire church community in this long process of discernment”, says **Cardinal Mario Grech**, Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the Synod. “In addition to the reflections arising from the *Synthesis Report* of the [First Session](#), the material received often adds real testimonies on how the particular churches not only understand synodality, but also how they are already putting this style into practice. The synodal Church is not a dream to be realised, but already a living reality that generates creativity and new relational models within the same local community or between different churches or church groupings’.

The General Secretariat of the Synod also received contributions from the USG-UISG and a congruous number of comments from international realities, university faculties, associations of the faithful or individual communities and individuals. Another significant source of reflection will be the reports presented by parish priests during the three-day work session of the recent International meeting for [Parish Priests for the Synod](#).

From Tuesday, 4 June 2024, the group of theologians, experts in various disciplines (dogmatic theology, ecclesiology, pastoral theology, canon law, etc.), will analyse all this material. ‘We are not leaving anything to chance. Each document is to be carefully read with the aim that at the end of this meeting, the group will present a text that reflects the work, questions and insights received from the grassroots’ says Cardinal Grech.

For his part, Fr. Giacomo Costa S.J., Special Secretary of the XVI Assembly, specifies: ‘It is not yet a question of writing the *Instrumentum laboris* for the Second Session of the Synod on Synodality, but rather of carrying out an initial analysis of the reports and good practices implemented by the local communities, and a discernment in common, on the questions and theological reflections in order to prepare the way for the actual drafting of the *Instrumentum laboris*’.

The work of this international team, which is taking place behind closed doors, began with a half-day spiritual retreat and will continue until 13 June. The days will be marked by different moments of work (individual, group, plenary). The daily celebration of the Eucharist and moments for personal prayer will ensure that the work takes place in the atmosphere required for discernment.

The *Instrumentum Laboris* drafting process will continue with further stages: once the structure of the future document has been identified through the articulation of the material received from the theologians, the Ordinary Council will carry out an initial discernment of what has been drafted. This will be followed by the stages of drafting the actual document followed by a wide-ranging verification; then the Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat approves the document to be submitted to the Holy Father for his final approval.

The text is expected to be published by the first ten days of July. Information on this will be provided in due course.