

Working Paper

RENEWAL AND RESTRUCTURING OF CELAM



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
SECTION I, SEE	15
1. A faithful look at reality	18
1.1. With the perspective that everything is connected	20
1.2 Tendencies characterizing the region	22
2. Challenges to the work of CELAM and opportunities envisaged	33
2.1. Some challenges to the work of CELAM	33
2.2 CELAM opportunities	41
SECTION II, JUDGE	45
1. Church: People of God sent to make present the Kingdom of God	51
1.1. Followers of Jesus Christ, incarnate Word, in faithfulness to the Gospel	52
1.2. Church on a mission for everyone to have life (cf. Jn 10,10)	54
1.3 Listening to the Holy Spirit who speaks to us	56
2. The vocation and synodal practice of the People of God	58
2.1. Synodality, constitutive dimension of the pilgrim Church in this history	59
2.2. Synodality and co-responsibility with all the faithful	61
2.3. Synodality and Collegiality	64

3. Pastoral conversion of the Church, a path for renewal and reform	67
3.1. The four dreams as horizon for a comprehensive evange- lization in the continent	69
3.2. The pastoral conversion of the Church as a path towards fulfillment of its dreams	76
 SECTION III, ACT	 85
1. About the challenges of the Church for the Renewal and Res- tructuring of CELAM	89
2. General guidelines for the Renewal and Restructuring of CELAM	90
3. Guiding principles for the Renewal and Restructuring	91
4. Global Proposal for the Renewal and Restructuring, CELAM 2033	95
4.1. Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives	96
4.2. Organizational Structure	99
5. Pastoral priorities	111
6. Projection of the Pastoral Centers of CELAM towards 2033	113
6.1. Center for Knowledge Management	113
6.2. Center for Education –CEBITEPAL	118
6.3. Center for Pastoral Action Programs and Networks	123
6.4. Center for Communication	127
 CONCLUSIONS	 131



INTRODUCTION





1. The Latin American Episcopal Conference - CELAM, was founded in 1995 by Pope Pius XII. As a response for the request made by the Latin American Catholic Bishop Conference formulated in one of the proposals at the First General Conference held in Rio de Janeiro. From its beginning, it fostered fraternal support amongst Bishops, it created a space for communion and provided pastoral support to the Catholic Bishops Conferences. Its establishment was the fruit of a maturation process of the Latin American and Caribbean Church. Its history, mainly after the Second Vatican Council, reveals a deep collegial experience in our region. On annex I, we remember the primary milestones of its trajectory until now.¹
2. Throughout its sixty-five years, the CELAM has cultivated values of communion, fraternity, collegiality, dialogue, service, reflection and exchange, which have enriched our Episcopate and all the People of God. While maintaining its original values it has gone through several reforms in light of the Second Vatican Council, the Popes teachings and the Catholic Bishops Conferences. Its main purpose is to provide answers of evangelization for the signs of the times and for the different sociocultural and ecclesiastic scenarios, that marked the historical development of our Continent.
3. In the context of this ecclesiastic dynamic and from the concerns recorded in the 2015-2019 Management Report, the XXXVII CELAM Ordinary General As-

Hch 15,22
CD 37

GS 4
2Re 19,29-31

1 Cf. CELAM, *Promoviendo la colegialidad episcopal y la integración latinoamericana*, 60 años CELAM, Bogotá, 2016.

sembly, held from May 17 to 19 of 2019 in Honduras, issued the reorganization and renewal at hand.²

4. We wish to respond to the *Honduras mandate* and follow its guidance. In order to do that, we have considered, conversed and reviewed our identity, mission and organization within the framework of the synodal and missionary renewal promoted by Pope Francis and from the Amazonian ecclesiastic experience directed towards finding new paths for the Church and to an integral ecology. This document gathers an intense itinerary of discernment which has involved different pastoral agents and demanded numerous enquiries, putting together an operating execution of the ecclesial sinodality and bishop collegiality. We carry this out within the wide frame of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its multiple effects in the world, especially in this region. For Pope Francis, from it we can “come out better,” as Church and as humanity. And for that, we need to be open to God’s Newness. GS 11
DAp 19

5. The Sacred Scripture passage presiding our reflection is an abstract from a divine speech enlightening the crisis of the People of God during the exile in Babylon, as indicated and interpreted in the second part of the book of prophet Isaiah (DT-Is). It is in that context where Is 42,18-25

2 On its *Management Report 2015-2019*, the General Secretary of the CELAM recommended “...review the current structure of CELAM and define the best way to continue being a communion, reflection and service organization in collaboration with the Church on a pilgrimage through Latin America and the Caribbean” (CELAM, *Management Report 2015-2019*, 2019, p. 57). Later, it adds: “the current structure of the CELAM needs to be reviewed, assessed and updated in order to respond to the real needs of the Catholic Bishop Conferences and of the Church on a pilgrimage through Latin America and the Caribbean so it continues to be an organization of communion, service and collaboration” (p. 105).



we find the inspiring phrase: “Behold, I am doing a new thing: now it springs forth, do you perceive it?” (Is 43,19). The prophet gives great importance to newness and the term «new» appears five times on that section of the book. The nominalized use of the adjectives creates direct contrast between the new and the old. The first speech announces: Behold, the *former things* have come to pass, and *new things* I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them. (Is 42,9)”. In the context of the exile and with the recollection of the Exodus, the «*new things*» are those who Yahweh carries out with his people. God announces a novelty and shows great power because He has fulfilled the «former things». The second divine speech calls for a look to the present: “Remember not the *former things*, nor consider the *things of old*.¹⁹ Behold, I am doing a *new thing*, now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? It will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the dessert” (Is 43,18-19).

Ex 33,1-4

6. The text symbolizes the transformation God makes of the People of the Covenant, similar to a «new exodus». The «former things» were the prodigies of the crossing of the sea to set it free from Egypt. Those wonders are at the heart of the faith of Israel. «*The new*» would be something very significant that would overcome the memory of such feat. *The new* seems to be the return of the deported, a divine work which redeems the people and expands until it transforms all creation (cf. Is 43,20).
7. Today we suffer great evils, aggravated by the pandemic and we hold a critical view of the present. The reality, in its appearance, it seems to say “there is nothing *new* under the sun” (Qo 1,3.9). However, we believe and proclaim the good news of the renewing presence of God,

Ex 14,15-31

Esd 1,1-3
Jr 25,11-12

1Pe 1,3
Jn 3,3

Lord of history, making all *newness* possible. From God new life always sprouts. In difficult times and despair we are invited to acknowledge the new things God is making. Only Him can create a “new heaven”, a “new earth”, a “new heart”, a “new spirit”, a “new man”, a “new covenant”, a “new song”. If the Lord acts in history, it is possible to expect that something truly new happens, which does not sprout from human initiative nor it fathoms from its mere possibilities. The novelty of the divine action claims for the conversion of the heart and the renewal of the covenant: “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you” (Ez 36,26). Therefore, we ask: “Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit” (Psalm 51,12).

Hch 10,20

Ap 21,1-5

Sal 33,3

Sal 33,15

DAp 19

8. We are open to God’s newness in the history of the Church and of CELAM in particular. To recognize it, we resumed the traditional method of our Latin-American style of reflection. For that, this text is structured into three sections. On the first section we highlighted some new aspects of our social, religious and cultural reality which questions the work of the church and of CELAM (See). On the second section, we presented the Newness of the Gospel and specified some theological-pastoral elements that enlighten the discernment process for the renewal of our institution (Judge). On the third section, using the strategic methodology, we anticipated a Proposal for the Renewal and Restructuring of CELAM, considered pertinent to better respond to the challenges set out to this Episcopal organization on these current times (Act). Every moment is enlightened by the Word of God which calls to pouring new

Sal 43,3

Lc 5,37-38

Ap 21,10

1Re 3,9



wine into fresh wineskins; a walk towards the new Jerusalem to communicate the Good News and discern the new under the wisdom of the Gospel.

9. Here is an invitation to read this document as framework for the discernments and decisions we will make and its future implementation. As every renewal and structuring process, this common path will be open to the permanent enrichment from new challenges and creative responses generated by the missionary dream to reaching out to everyone (cfr. EG 31).³ In the same way, as every ecclesiastic reform plan, this process will be transversely enriched in its evolution, in virtue of the principle according to which “everything is connected” (LS 91).

This discernment plan has been widely synodal and participatory, carrying out enquiries to the Council of European Bishop’s Conferences, *Consejo de Conferencias Episcopales de Europa*, CCEE (mar18, aug19, sep20); meetings with Pope Francis (sep19) and the dicasteries (sep19, apr21); work sessions and meetings with Bishop advisors selected at the Honduras Assembly to advise the Presidency during the pastoral restructuring process (jul19 to mar21); in person visits to the CCEE in Chile, Panama, Paraguay and to the SEDAC (nov19 to mar20); virtual meetings with the CCEE and with the regions (jul20 to ene21); work sessions with expert groups: Cardinals, bishops, priests, religious brothers and sisters, lay (mar19 to jul19) and work sessions

3 The acronyms of the most recent documents are presented herein: Med: Documentos de Medellín; SD: Santo Domingo; DAp: *Documento de Aparecida*; EG: *Evangelii gaudium*; LS: *Laudato si*; EC: *Episcopalis Communio*; QAm: *Querida Amazonia*; FT: *Frattelli tutti*.

with pastoral councils (jan21 to apr21) amongst others which have continuously enriched the renovation process of CELAM, and consequently, what it is set out in this document.

*«Behold I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you
perceive it?»*

(Isaiah 43,19)

SECTION I



➤ **SEE** ➤



We look at the new sociocultural realities and acknowledge new challenges facing the identity and mission of CELAM

10. In the Gospel we can find the famous statement made by Jesus on the novelty of the wine and wineskins: “new wine (νέον) into new wineskins (καινούρις).” (Mt 2,22). The context of this passage is the question asked to Jesus as to why him and his disciples don’t fast. His answer includes a sapiential *logion*.
Lc 5,37-39
Mt 7,12
11. “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast²⁰ The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.²¹ No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an *old* garment; if he does, the patch tears away from it, the *new* from the *old*, and a worse tear is made.²² And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but new wine is for fresh skins” (Mc 2,19b-22)
Mt 9,15
Lc 5,36
12. Jesus teaches with the language of popular wisdom and appeals to the experience with simple images of the daily life. The comparison is clear: *the new is incompatible with the old*. It is not a matter of being better or worse, but rather that they cannot be compared. It would be naïve to want to receive the new in context of the old or pretend to mend the old with the new. The saying is inserted in a response in which Jesus uses another metaphor (Mc 2,19-20). The *new* is linked to the *presence of the bridegroom*. While they have him with them, the guests cannot fast. When he is taken away they will fast. When Jesus the bridegroom dies, the garment will tear away and the wineskins will burst. Mark placed fast at the center of
Mt 7,12,23

five facts at issue (Mk 2,1-3,6), granting a new perspective. According to him, in order to receive novelty there is need for a rupture. In our context, the new realities present new challenges and invite us to communicate the novelty of the Gospel through new attitudes, actions and structures

Jn 6,67

AD 7
DAp 31

1. A FAITHFUL LOOK AT REALITY

13. We are pastors of the People of God, on a pilgrimage in the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and we feel the joy of the Gospel filling our hearts and lives. Encouraged by the Spirit of God, we provide a characterization of the main tendencies and significant situations influencing our societies and impacting the being and work of CELAM. We do not pretend to carry out a thorough analysis of the socioeconomic, political-institutional, and sociocultural processes, nor of the religious and ecclesiastic challenges piercing our region. In these situations, affected in many multiple ways by the COVID-19 pandemic and world changes, we recognize the signs of the presence and questions from God in our history, leading us to design a restructuration of the CELAM and to fix a roadmap for the renewal of its evangelizing service.
14. We are missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. We are conformed to the emotions of the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and gives his life for them. (cf. Jn 10,1-21). We are sent to graze with love the flock God gas entrusted to us (cf. 1 Pt 5,1-4). In order to carry out a

DAP 3



faithful, analytical and realistic reading of the signs of the times surrounding our region, we seek to look, listen and touch the realities affecting our people. In this way, as pointed out by prophet Ezekiel, we will be able to strengthen, the weak, heal the sick, care for the crippled and bring back the stray, seek for the lost, free them from the wild beasts and bring them together to form one flock. (cfr. Ez. 34,1-11). The faith leads to think about reality under the perspective of the Gospel in an ongoing dialogue with the inputs from history, philosophy and human and social sciences.

Jn 14,6

P0 9

Is 66,18-19

15. When contemplating the reality with faithful eyes and with an attitude of discernment to God's will, we continue with the firmly missionary conversion process, that the church in this continent has gone through. We walk inspired by the Magisterium of the Second Vatican Council documents, the pontiffs, the Medellin, Puebla, Santo Domingo and Aparecida Conferences, and by Pope Francis.

GS 45

Rm 12,2
DAp 368

16. We wish to consider some great tendencies envisaged in our Continent, and at the same time, we recognize the nuances of each region, every country and every local Church. We are trying to do this with an analytical look and a critical attitude before the frequent and rapid changes piercing through the social and ecclesiastic reality. At the same time, it is important to be aware that the change of era shows a world in which the different realities are connected and where progress and errors interact in different dimensions, times and spaces of life.

1.1 With the perspective that everything is connected

17. In march of 2020, our region along with the rest of the continent was surprised with the burst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of our countries are within those most affected in the world. If the great trends of the region showed a complex scenario in the different orders- social, economic, political, cultural, environmental and religious-, this health crisis has made us aware that every order is connected. The pandemic has placed the health systems on trial, and caused a deep crisis for employment and a great challenge for the educational systems. Also an opportunity to reassess the economic, social, family a work life. A repositioning of mass media and new technologies, as well as a demand for openness to pastoral innovation in the midst of other threats and opportunities. In our region, the current “cry” from our “sister mother earth” rises ever stronger and joins the clamor of the poor and rises the challenge of responding to the socio-environmental crisis as one. (LS 2).
18. The pandemic is transforming the situation even when changes are not fully manifested in our reality and in the world context. In the near future, it will be necessary to reconfigure several work and cultural environments. It seems essential to rethink the life in the city, given the dynamic of the spread of the virus which influences the great level of urbanization and deficits accumulated with regards to overcrowding, lack of health and water services, and crowded public transport. It is urgent to design strategies in benefit of the most vulnerable



groups.⁴ It is upon them that the risk for a serious social and economic crisis lies, to the point that, if serious measures are not taken, it could turn into an unprecedented humanitarian and food crisis for all the region.⁵

19. With the pandemic, the “change of era” has accentuated in every field and powerfully shown that everything is connected: society, economics, politics, religion, ecology and culture. God speaks to us though and in the historic realities. The current situation presents an opportunity to learn from long due mistakes in social life. This new social scenario presents a new pastoral challenge. The “newness” of the challenge, caused not only from the worsening of different problems but also from the “new” prophetic consciousness that seems to have awoken with the pastoral perspectives driven by Pope Francis and interjections of this time of the pandemic. He reminds us that “we are all in the same boat,” “no one is saved alone,” the path is not “save yourself” nor the “everybody against everybody,” we are called to

AG 3.9

LG 9
Mc 4,1

4 The inequality matrix in the region positions certain groups in a situation of vulnerability, amongst them are the elder (85 million), informal workers (54% of regional employment), women (most involved in informal activities with increasingly unpaid work and exposed to domestic violence), indigenous peoples (60 million people with communities at risk of disappearance), the afro-descendant (130 million people in 2015), people with disabilities (70 million) and displaced migrants. All these groups need special attention that mitigate their special vulnerability conditions.

5 The pandemic has caused the most unexpected recession in history, according to the estimations of the CEPAL, it implies a drop on the increase with an average of -8% in 2020 throughout the region. Followed by a rise on the unemployment rate of almost 13,5%, an increase of the poverty rate of 4 percentage points to achieve a 33,7% of the population, and an exacerbation of inequality with an average rise on the Gini index of 4,9 percentage points. According to the Social Outlook of the CEPAL for the 18 countries that comprised the region, 209 million people would be under the poverty threshold, from which 78 million would suffer extreme poverty cf. CEPAL (2021) 73-80.

work “everyone with everyone.” The global crisis puts into evidence our belonging to the common human family and brings the opportunity to “come out better,” meaning, being “more fraternal” (FT 32-14). During his conversations with journalist Austen Ivereigh and in line with the three reflection moments indicated, Francis develops his proposals for this time, which is time to contemplate, choose and act. At the end, he calls for a realistic hope and responsible creativity to decenter and transcend in benefit of others .⁶

1.2 Tendencias characterizing the region

20. When entering this new century, we highlight that “the «change of era» we are living in has deep repercussions in our way of living, in our spiritual life as well as our evangelizing mission.⁷ Later, in the Aparecida Document, we emphasized “the novelty of these changes, unlike others that have taken place in other ages, is that they have a global reach which, with variations and nuances, affect the entire world” (DAp 34). This new worldwide of the human phenomenon entails consequences in every sphere of social life, impacting culture, economics, politics, the sciences, education, sport, arts and naturally, religion as well. In Aparecida, Bishops said that “as pastors of the Church we are concerned about how this phenomenon affects the life of our peoples and the religious and ethical sense of

6 Cf. FRANCISCO, *Let Us Dream. The Path to a Better Future*, Buenos Aires, Penguin Random House, 2020, 139-143.

7 Cf. CELAM, *Globalización y Nueva Evangelización en América Latina y El Caribe. Reflexiones del CELAM 1999-2003*, Bogotá, 2003; CELAM, *Hacia una Evangelización. Aportes desde América Latina y El Caribe*, Bogotá, 2012.



our brothers and sisters who untiringly seek the face of God” (Dap 35).

21. Gathering all input from the different pastoral agents, as well as those from the academia and experts in diverse sciences, we peer at some change processes, with a wider influence in the region. We present then in a concise manner.⁸ These tendencies are not occurring uniformly. We know there is a diversity of situations among the countries of the region and in their inlands, according to the various geographic areas and socioeconomic and cultural groups. In *Aparecida*, we confirmed the cultural wealth and diversity of our peoples, in our region there are different indigenous, Afro-American, mestizo, rural, urban, and peripheral-urban cultures (cf. Dap 56).

2Sam 21,1

8 During the design process of the proposal CELAM 2033, before the Honduras Assembly, several sources were analyzed to determine tendencies and potential scenarios of Latin America and the Caribbean for 2030. Among them we have: *Latinoamérica 2030: estudio Delphi y escenarios. The Millenium Project. 2012* (LAC 2030); *Alerta democrática. Escenarios para el futuro de la democracia en América Latina 2015 – 2030*. Avina, Open Society Foundations, Ford Foundation. 2016. (AD); *América Latina y El Caribe 2030: escenarios futuros*. J. Marczack; P. Engelke; D. Bohl; A. Saldarriaga, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, BID y Atlantic Council. 2017; *Horizontes 2030. La igualdad en el centro del desarrollo sostenible*. CEPAL. 2016; *Agenda 2030 y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible. Una oportunidad para América Latina y El Caribe*. CEPAL (2018). From the elements provided by the previous studies, we consulted 31 people from 14 different countries of Latin America, from whom we can find Bishops, Theologians, Philosophers, Pastoral workers, Deans from Universities and Centers for Educations, Experts in Social Sciences and other disciplines, with the purpose of obtaining a different and more complete perspective. Later, we made a selection of five tendencies (from the thirty-two listed) as the ones with more influence in the next fifteen years in Latin America and the Caribbean. From such tendencies we made a selection of five challenges (from the twenty-three listed) which were considered essential and more relevant to the Latin-American and Caribbean Church on its mission to serve society from the Gospel perspective, and three perceptions were selected on each aspect of the services, organizations and pastoral agents.

a. Socioeconomic and Ecology Sphere

22. The inequality situation is not a new phenomenon. In our current context, poverty, inequality and exclusion are aggravated. Our region continues to be at the top for inequality in the world. Social gaps prevail when having access to information, education, health, housing, food, justice services and citizen rights. The “global throwaway culture” is emphasized because of a lack of a Project that includes everyone (FT 15-24).
23. The new faces of many “disregarded” continue to affect particularly: migrants, displaced and refugees, victims of human trafficking and kidnaps; missing people, sick, drug addicts, the elder; boys and girls, victims of child prostitution or labor; abused women, victims of exclusion and sexual trafficking; people with disabilities, large unemployed groups and excluded groups for technological illiteracy; people living on the streets in large cities; all in all, indigenous and Afro-Americans, farmers with no land and miners.
24. The formal unemployment rate increases against the lack of opportunities and informal work and popular economy extends. Between 60 and 65% of the labor force is working under high scarcity conditions or is submitted to a forced self-exploitation. On the other hand, the development of the nano and neuro technology, process automation, artificial intelligence, accumulation of information in Big Data, phenomenon merging into the so called “fourth industrial revolution,” which threatens with generating hundreds of thousands of new unoccupied in the years to come. Our region is still affected by the paradox of great contrast between the



existence of places where it seems that the first revolution has not yet taken place, while others are suffering the effects of the fourth.

25. Multiple experiences of a solidary economy, circular or social arise, developing from and towards common spaces and configuring the different social movements. The growth of new production, work and employment ways in the so called orange economy o economy of creativity, based on the production, promotion, diffusion and commercialization of goods, services and activities with cultural, artistic or patrimonial content, which spreads through social media.
26. Internal and external migrations continue to be a developing and multi-casual process. At this moment, is greater expression is in the migration of Venezuelan, central American and Caribbean populations. Given its volume, this situation has created changes in the economy and increased the informal work rate in other countries of the continent.
27. The large-scale urbanization is accelerated, with all its complexities, but without establishing more humane and dignified life conditions for all, nor housing policies that respond to the needs of the families; consequently, many peripheries grow, concentrating a large number of the population living in multidimensional poverty conditions.
28. With regards to harmony and care for the Common Home, there is more consciousness on the social responsibility of enterprises, but in the economy, the search for the maximization of the profit rate on socio-environmental balance still prevails. We have made progress

LSI 1
Rm 8,19

by signing of agreements in benefit of global warming reduction, but efforts are not enough. There is still a negative impact on weather, water bodies, animal species, forests, crops and human life in general. The deforestation of the Amazonia increases and it threatens the survival of the whole ecosystem, putting biodiversity in danger and changing the lifecycle of water which affects the survival of the tropical forest and the ecological balance as a whole.

29. The main cause of contamination continues to be the lack of responsible consumption habits, in addition to the lack of health, protection and environmental recovery policies from both the public and private sectors. The number of civil society organizations and local initiatives grows, especially among the youth, in favor of the care for the common home and in search for a new life style, encouraged by the leadership developed by Pope Francis.

b. Sociopolitical Sphere

30. The increase of social violence and lack of public safety establishes, along with a growing sentiment of powerlessness and helplessness before the lack of access mechanisms to quick and efficient justice, mainly from the poorest sectors. As a result, the lack of legitimacy of public institutions, political leadership and justice systems, persists and no new exemplary democratic leaderships, that will foster a culture of encounter and a search for the common good beyond personal interests,



has emerged. Although some countries have had a decrease, in relation to previous times, corruption persists which corrodes social protection networks, weakening the democratic institutionally even more.

31. The shadows of a world caving in impact our nations, needing to recreate their values and political institutions to develop a more open and integrated society. The questioning to political power and traditional democracy made by the popular public opinion expands, supported by the social media and the new ways of social communication. Populist proposals thrive, taking advantage of the discredited public institutions and traditional parties, as well as the popular unrest.
32. Organized crime, specially drug trafficking, increases and influences numerous local and national governments, mainly by controlling the most vulnerable regions and sectors. A beacon of hope is that young people in the cities, are starting to generate greater expressions of participation in public life, and are beginning to execute a social leadership from the many fronts, easily expressing their wish to change for the better our current society. Also, the growing role of the indigenous ethnic groups and indigenous peoples, which reject a simple assimilation to other cultures and to colonial interests, establish their cultural backgrounds and claim their rights, as person and peoples, to participate of the common goods.

c. Cultural Sphere

33. A more individualistic and isolated life style is extending, affecting interpersonal relations, trust and dialogue, the creation of family and social ties, and it nourishes a culture of indifference and lack of solidarity in the face of social inequalities. The loss of moral values and existential models, as well as the expansion of ethical relativism result in the grow of the meaning of life crisis and gives room for an increase in alcohol and drug abuse, on the suicide rate and percentage of people with depression.
34. The process of the loss of memory of the peoples, the value of the inherited patrimony and sense of belonging continues. The ancient and Afro-American cultures are ever more displaced and segregated by a consumerist society, even though there are relevant experiences of resistance and vindication of rights by the various peoples. Consequently, there is a lack of awareness of the role of the elder as guarantors of tradition and memory of families and peoples. This is accentuated by the national and regional disintegration and lack of historic consciousness. (cf. FT 10-14).
35. The process of a change of mindset continues and the increase of pluralism of visions on corporeality, sexuality, gender identity and family. The presence and input of the women in the family and society continues to be undervalued. Sexist visions remain, legitimizing violence against women and exclusionary and discriminatory practices, without enough social and legal containment.



36. The population is experiencing deep transformations affecting its growth and structure, increasing the amount of the elderly. Amongst the factors impacting the inversion of the population pyramid are infant mortality, a greater life expectancy at birth, the constant phenomenon of migration of young people, and the decrease of births, a phenomenon linked to the use of contraceptive methods.
37. The expansion of new communication and information technologies have created a new interaction and relation system, conforming a true digital continent or ecosystem. It is not only used but also in and from such ecosystem many build a life and live, and others leverage from it to use and harm others according to their personal interests. Virtual mediation has changed the traditional way of relations. In the pandemic framework, it has turned into a normal and daily way of social interaction, the health crisis has forced many to enter into that world of communication and virtuality, but has also revealed the huge digital gap that pierces social sectors.
38. The pandemic allows for the rescue and value, as beacons of hope, of the strength of ties that intertwine the social fabric, as well as the testimony of many common people who render with love, basic services in benefit of their fellow citizens. (cf. FT 54).

d. Religious and Ecclesiastic Spheres

39. The transformation process of the religious experience in the continent continues, due to the different cultural changes: the expansion of secularism and indifference, rejection of traditional religious institutions, the multiplication of creeds, as an expression of the religious freedoms, the expansion of the evangelic and neo-Pentecostal movements. The religious pluralism, in addition to the political participation of the evangelic creeds and of many of their pastors, creates a broad picture that has not yet been understood and accepted by the catholic church, and although it still holds the top place as the main religion, it is no longer the only religious reference in our society.

LG 13
GS 74

GS 75

40. The Christian identity of our culture tends to deteriorate as pointed out in Aparecida (cf. DA 38). The credibility of the Church as a religious entity decreases and the dissatisfaction with its structures and hierarchy increases as a result of the anti-testimony of some of their ministers. A high percentage of baptized have not gone through an authentic process of Christian initiation, encouraging them to a conversion and religious ignorance remains, leading to a gray pragmatism of the daily life of the church in which everything apparently continues normally. (cf. DAp 12).

41. In our Churches and communities, a faith, made out of popular piety and of the love and devotion to God, Jesus, the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph and many saints, that supports the everyday life in the midst of painful situations. It is a work of the Holy Spirit and a place of encounter with Jesus, its Church and the work of

SC 13
DAp 261

Hch 1,8



- evangelization. At the same time, there is still a need for a closer approach to learn, live and accompany from the Gospel, such wealth, and nourish a faith committed to serve a society ever more just, honest and peaceful.
42. Many lays are assuming responsibilities in secular realities and ecclesiastic activities. There are new lay associations that are turning into places for spirituality, education and ministry. However, there is a lack of a much greater lay presence in the world of politics, encouraged by social friendship and the search of the common good. LG 33
AA 15
DAP 174
43. Efforts towards understanding and operating a sinodality together with the People of God, are valued. However, we realize we are far from eradicating a clericalism that hinders the growth of the faithful laity. Pastors need to traverse a long path to move forward with an organic and co-responsible pastoral, where the several charismas and ministries find their place, and consecrated and lay life can participate. PO 9
1Cor 12,7
44. The participation of women in the daily life of the Church still continues to be a majority, but we are still missing, as pointed out by the Pope, the recognition of their specific input and of the feminine view on ecclesiastic matters. There is a need to strengthen the mechanisms securing effective participation in spaces for discernments, planning, decision making and execution. (cf. DAP 371). Rm 16,1-5
45. Efforts towards assuming the evangelization of major cities are valued as well as the cultural expansive forms they generate, but there is a lack of a real change of paradigm in the evangelization, that responds to the

urban and mega-urban dynamics. The socio-cultural dimension of the culture, appears today more than ever, as an essential element to consider the pastoral response of the Church, facing the challenges of the various sociocultural, geographical and ecological territories, where life calls out.

46. In this time of pandemic, many ecclesial communities and educational institutions are learning to communicate and work in a digital manner, even in prayer life and cult celebration. The interest and presence of the Church in the world of digital communication grows to give way for a conversation with today's mankind and lead them towards an encounter with the Lord. Pope Francis urges: "Do not be afraid of becoming citizens of the digital world".⁹ A church that accompanies, learns to walk with everyone. The revolution of communication and information constitutes a great and passionate challenge. That demands for renovated energies and a new imagination to convey to others, God's beauty reflected on the face of Christ.
47. In the midst of drama, uncertainty and hopes of this time, Francis invites us to dream and work for a universal fraternity. "How important is to dream together! Alone, we are faced with the risk of illusions, in which we see what is not there; dreams are built together." (FT 8)

9 Cf. FRANCIS, *World Communications Day*, January 24, 2014.



2. CHALLENGES TO THE WORK OF CELAM AND OPPORTUNITIES ENVISAGED

48. From an internal and external analysis of the life of CELAM we see an outstanding support provided to the National Catholic Bishop Conferences, in several aspects. First, the accompaniment and encouragement of great pastoral processes, through the organization of regional and continental meetings and the development of common guidelines and instructions for specific areas; the socio-pastoral analysis and discernment for decision making; in the advices and strengthening of many local pastoral groups, continental leadership and encouragement of pastoral projects proposed by the Holy See or by many other ecclesial organizations. Second, the great array of educational opportunities provided by CELAM through its bachelors, certification programs, classes, initiation or refresher workshops for bishops, priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters, and pastoral lay agents. Many educational proposals had the economic support of scholarships, or subsidies for grater coverage. Beyond these and other services provided, the reflection shared herein, puts forth new challenges and envisages new opportunities.

CD 38

2.1 Some challenges to the work of CELAM

49. Here, dreaming about an improved service to the Church in the region, we collect the most outstanding

challenges, presented to the work of CELAM and set forth in five articulated sections.

a. A new evangelizing presence for a new sociocultural reality

50. One of the main task of CELAM is to accompany the Catholic Bishop Conferences that need it, in the study of the socio-political reality of the region, on the evangelical enlightenment and on the search for pastoral ways to face the challenges of today's society and cultures. Therefore, from its beginning, it has promoted the discernment of the signs of the times in light of the Word of God, Latin American reception of Vatican II and conclusive documents from the Latin American Bishops General Conferences. In the reading of the reality, it has promoted the utilization of the See-Judge-Act method, taken from the Catholic Action of Saint John XIII and the *Gaudium et spes*, Constitution, implemented at an institutional level in our ecclesial context from Medellín to Aparecida (Dap 19), with an always updated approach. GS11
51. Today we feel called to discern the reality in order to identify evangelization paths, in a world of permanent change. “The peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean are now experiencing a reality marked by great changes that profoundly affect their lives. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we feel challenged to discern the «signs of the times», in the light of the Holy Spirit, to place ourselves at the service of the Kingdom proclaimed by Jesus who came so that all may have life «and have it abundantly» (Jn 10, 10)” (Dap 33). Pope Francis tells us that “today’s vast and rapid cultural changes demand Rm 12,2
Mt 16,3



that we constantly seek ways of expressing unchanging truths in a language which brings out their abiding newness.” (EG 41).

52. Times have changed and continue to change, societies are reorganized assuming new life paradigms, some of which were never imagined before by previous generations. CELAM, together with the National Catholic Bishop Conferences, are challenged to be the prophetic and sapiential voice, showing pertinent evangelization paths in the face of new sociocultural challenges. Without a doubt, the anthropological changes and conditions of the new sociocultural reality demand a new impulse on evangelization and the CELAM, could be one of the ecclesial organizations leading pastoral innovation and renovation processes. That requires a review and renewal of the collaboration practices with the Bishops Conferences, so that it can encourage ecclesial processes that leads us to a missionary church going forth.

1Sam
2,27-36

CD 37

b. An Episcopal heartfelt and recognized contribution of CELAM

53. On his first message to the CELAM, Francis outlined an episcopal profile centered on pastoral charity:
- “Bishops must be pastors, close to their people, fathers and brothers, gentle; patient and merciful. Men who love poverty, whether inner poverty as a sign of freedom of the Lord, whether outward simplicity and austerity of life. Men who do not have the « psychology of Princes». Men who are not ambitious and are husbands of a Church without being in constant search for another.

Men capable of caring for the flock entrusted to them and looking after everything that keeps it together; vigilant of the possible dangers that threaten it, but mainly to imbue hope and with sun and light in their hearts. Men capable of lovingly and patiently support the plans which God brings about in His people.”¹⁰

1Tm 3,2

Jn 10,14-16

54. Back in 1968, at the inauguration of the CELAM location in Bogota, Saint Paul VI expressed his desire for this Council to be an organization with its own features and a strong leadership by the insertion in the ecclesial journey of the church in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹¹ More recently, Pope Francis has insisted on the identity of CELAM and its insertion in the social and ecclesial reality of the Continent by asking for it to be “a home at the service of the communion and mission of the Church in Latin America; a center for the promotion of the missionary and discipleship consciousness; a vital reference for the understanding and deepening of the Latin-American catholicity, gradually outlined by this communion organization for decades of service.”¹²
55. Acknowledging the important contributions that CELAM has provided and which have been a source of

10 Cf. FRANCIS, *Meeting with the CELAM Coordination Committee*, Rio de Janeiro, July 28, 2013.

11 “May this location will always be the heart of spiritual fervor of every efficient ministry; a living testimony of fidelity to the Rome Cathedra and of the teachings of the recent Council; a point of mutual understanding, a unifying action for programs that, in order to become more efficient, need the solidarity of wills; a diligent service center for the support of the National Bishops” (PAUL VI, *Opening Speech of the new location of the CELAM in Bogota*, August 24, 1968).

12 FRANCIS, *meeting with the Executive Committee of the CELAM*, Bogota, September 7, 2017.



inspiration for the creation of similar organizations in other Continents, today, a new discernment it's essential, so that its service becomes more relevant in the particular churches of Latin America and the Caribbean and in the society as a whole.

1Re 3,9

c. A living sinodality of the People of God and an effective collegiality of Bishops

56. Aparecida confirms that "...bishops must cultivate the spirituality of communion in order to augment the bonds of collegiality that unite them to the other bishops in their own conference, but also the entire college of bishops and to the church of Rome, presided over by the successor of Peter: *cum Petro et sub Petro*. The bishops find in the episcopal conference their space for discerning in solidarity the major problems of society and the Church, and the stimulus for offering pastoral guidelines for encouraging the members of the People of God to assume their vocation of being missionary disciples faithfully and decisively." (DAp 181)¹³ When CELAM celebrated its 50th anniversary, Benedict XVI insisted that one of its main tasks is "promoting collaboration amongst bishops and of them with the Holy See, and in this sense, grow in collegial affection" and "increase the

1Co 1,9

CD 38

13 The continuous training of bishops must "learn to converse with other Churches in a spirit of episcopal solidarity... becoming a Bishop means to devote to a hard ministry, which cannot be experienced if is not through communion with others, thanks to a deep consciousness of the ecclesial identity of the Pastor" (CARD. M. OUELLET when presenting the book *Testimoni del Risorto* with the minutes of the annual formation course for new bishops, February 1, 2016).

spirit of mutual charity and communion in the inner life of the Church.”¹⁴

57. In fact, a significant service of CELAM has been the strengthening and deepening of the collegial spirit which has developed amongst our pastors, contributing to the consolidation of an effective and affective communion, that can be recognized in very different and concrete ways.¹⁵ It is essential not to lose sight of the identity of the CELAM which lies in the nourishment of the sinodality path, the experience of communion and promotion of the episcopal collegiality. From that identity, it is called to render its service to the Latin American and Caribbean Bishop Conferences, according to the conditions and demands of the current society, supported by the ecclesial structures ever more synodal and missionaries.

LG 23

Dp 151

58. Two concrete proposals emerge in these areas. The first, is in regards to ever more numerous emeritus bishops, whose importance cannot be denied nor it would be prudent to dispense with their wisdom. The elderly are guarantors of the memory and occupy a special place in the walk of the People of God. In the renewal of CELAM, it is important to incorporate them effectively, seek-

14 BENEDICT XVI, *The CELAM 50th Anniversary*, May 14, 2005.

15 In 1968, during the closing ceremony of the Medellín Conference, Cardinal Landázuri Ricketts expressed: “we believe is very beneficial to confirm, in view of all the pastoral implications it entails, that the collegial personality of our work comes from experience, joyfully heightened this past days, of our episcopal communion situated in this world and at this moment. Indeed, the sacramental reality of our collegiality resides on our communion, with a history whose specific depth, lies on the “convergence of prophetic circumstances” (J. LANDAZURI RICKETTS, “Closing Speech of the II Latin American Bishop General Conference” in: *Signos de renovación*, Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Lima, 1969, 248).



ing a way to «reunite them, listen to them, go to them and leverage their experience».¹⁶ The second proposal is in regards to the administration of material goods, not forgetting that “impediments are encountered in taking on economic support for pastoral structures. Solidarity in the spirit of good Stewardship is lacking in the sharing of resources within the local churches and between them.” (DAP 100e). CELAM can develop a strategy directed towards strengthening activate and form in and for financial sustainability for the Bishop Conferences and ecclesiastic subdivisions in need.

Dn 13,50

2Co 8,1-9,15

d. A more pertinent and efficient education for pastoral agents

59. Here lies the fundamental challenge we face: to show the church’s ability to promote and form disciples and missionaries who respond to the calling received and to communicate everywhere, in an outpouring of gratitude and joy, the gift of the encounter with Jesus Christ. We have no other treasure but that. We have no other happiness, no other priority, but to be instruments of the Spirit of God, as Church, so that Jesus Christ may be known, loved, adored, announced, and communicated to all, despite difficulties and resistances (DAP 14). Francis reminds us that “Aparecida is treasure whose discovery is yet incomplete.”¹⁷ There is a need to continue the promotion of the study and application of its

Hch 9,15

16 Cf. XXXVII CELAM ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN HONDURAS, *Síntesis de las líneas de proyección del CELAM para el cuatrienio 2019-2023*, n. 29. Such proposal had been devised in Aparecida (cf. DA 190).

17 FRANCIS, *Meeting with the Executive Committee of the CELAM*, Bogota, September 7, 2017.

suggestions, with its renovated current affairs. CELAM must continue to inspire the journey of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean and form missionary disciples to serve the current society.

e. A closer relationship with non-ecclesiastic international organization

60. CELAM has always maintained ties with diverse international ecclesial institutions. However, the new times require that in addition to the interaction with other international organizations linked to the Bishop Conferences and their pastoral work, it is necessary to strengthen relations with civil networks pursuing objectives similar to those of the Church, to address to the most urgent problems that surpasses everything we could achieve on our own. Beyond ecclesial limits, together with civil society organizations, the evangelizing action requires an influence on public policies at a regional level, from a comprehensive anthropological perspective considering the care for all creation. For that, CELAM can promote a situated and creative reception of Pope Francis on universal fraternity and social friendship to imagine and create a more open world in and from Latin America. (cf. FT 87-127)

Sal 133,1



2.2 CELAM opportunities

61. From the recognition of some aspects that have marked the work of CELAM in its recent history, we have distinguished the following opportunities for its future service.

a. With regards to other national Bishop Conferences

62. With regards to other National Bishop Conferences we are considering the opportunity to learn more about their realities, needs, challenges and goals. Is it essential to establish working methods and a more fluent communication, in order to establish the most pertinent services that CELAM can provide for our churches. CD 38

b. With regards to a form of government

63. As for the form of government, maintain a balance in the exercise of a personal and collegial authority, with regard to the agility and quality in decision making, the following institutional opportunities are considered: establish mechanisms to further initiatives that so require, without affecting the have more clarity on the priorities that CELAM needs to focus on; accomplish a better coordination of the work inwards and among the different areas of CELAM; achieve a higher rigidity and frequency on the follow up and monitoring of the ac-

tions taken and its results in order to obtain a successful performance management and decision making.

c. *With regards to the CEBITEPAL*

64. Regarding our relationship with CEBITEPAL, the following opportunities are considered: its Latin American and pastoral approach, since its contribution represents a peculiar offer in relation to other options; address its services according to the needs of the Bishop Conferences; increase the number of student through virtual programs and regional offerings; reach a larger diffusion of its offer, not only through a digital marketing strategy but also with a joint effort with the Bishop Conference, its bishops, the networks in which CELAM participates and other ecclesial organizations. Therefore, its services will be reflected on the corresponding demand, contributing to improve its financial sustainability.

d. *As to the four Departments*

65. As for the Departments, the opportunity for overcoming duplicity and juxtaposition of programs, fostering bigger impact processes beyond spot approaches centered in isolated instances are taken into consideration. Also, the opportunity of teamwork with greater coordination to achieve an effective systematization, socialization and diffusion of the reflections and conclusions of programs developed is considered.



e. *With regards to human talent*

66. As for the talent management God has given to every human being, other opportunities make way: improve talent development process and abilities in general, specifically for executive directors and of operational personnel, outlining profiles for leadership roles that enable for the identification of candidates; support a process for capacity development that includes evaluations through performance analysis with the purpose of improving teams feedback and implementing corrective plans and continuous improvement of their work. Mt 25,14-15

«See, I am making all things new»

(Revelation 21, 5)

SECTION II



➤ JUDGE ➤



In CELAM we discern our ecclesial service from the permanent Newness of Christ and with an ongoing process of missionary reform

67. The pilgrim church is contemplated under the form of a heavenly Jerusalem. The end of the book of Revelation present the consummated plan of God. After evil has been defeated, humanity's communion and creation in fullness of life shine. The three final sections of (Rev 21,1-8; 21,9-27; 22,1-5) comprise a three-part beauty and are a worthy colophon of the entire Scripture. In the first phrases the revelation of the «newness» is concentrated. The amazing picture paints the cosmos renewed in the life of the human city of God. The new world begins with a new humanity. Gal 4,26
Mc 1,27
Jn 13,34
Gal 6,15
68. “The I saw a new heaven and a *new earth*; for the first time and the earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.² And I saw the holy city, the *new Jerusalem*, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.³ And I Heard a loud voice from the throne saying: «See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away». ⁵And the one who was seated on the throne said: «*See, I am making all things new*» also he said: «Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true» (Rev 21,1-5). Is 65,17
Hb 11,10
2Pe 3,13
Rm 8,19-23
Ex 37,27
69. The background of the text gives by reference to «*new heavens and new earth*» (Is 65,17; 66,22). «*Jerusalem*» was a

- term with used to name the people and embodied in the covenant with God. The «*new Jerusalem*» is divine work and human city, with a radiant beauty. In her the new covenant is fulfilled, described with the engagement metaphor that from Hosea, expresses the love of God for his people. The nuptial love is consummated in the eschatological betrothal of the city/bride with the Lamb. The metaphor of the dwelling suggests a close presence and the formulation of the Covenant acquires a universal scope. The evil harming life is overcome; death, cry, pain- that turns into things of old (citing Is 43,18). 2Co 3,1
Sal 137,1
Ap 21,2
Ef 5,21
70. The description stops on a solemn moment on which God takes the floor: «*See, I am making all things new!* » (Rev 21,5, cite from Is 43,19). The divine creator initiative is complete. The renewal of the entire creation is an effect of the Passover of Christ, the Lamb sacrificed who is standing. The God who resurrected Jesus is capable of making all things new: the cosmos (“new heavens and new earth”) and the city (“new Jerusalem.”) Jesus Christ is the great newness inserted in human history. The risen is the new man, the beginning of new creation. Rm 8,19-21
Mt 19,28
Hb 9,15
Ef 4,24
71. The Church is the People of God, who is born from the new covenant of the Passover. The Christian community is an eloquent sign if the new life in the Spirit brought by the resurrection of Jesus (cf. Acts 2,42-47). In the permanent newness of the People of the Covenant, the pontificate of Francis opens a new phase in the reception of the Second Vatican Council, presenting the church as the People of God “present in all peoples of the earth” (LG 13; EG 114-115). The People of God LG 9
Jr 31,33
DAp 163



is comprised by all faithful Christians—*christifideles*— because of the baptism and, in whose “unity comprise one body of Christ” (LG 3). In Him people and communities “collaborate with their gifts to others and with the church” (LG 13).

72. This is the way of the Council,¹ understand the Church, with implications for evangelization, “the task of the entire Church.” Francis teaches: “as the agent of evangelization, is more than an organic and hierarchical institution; she is first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrim way towards God. She is certainly a mystery rooted in the Trinity, yet she exists concretely in history as a people of pilgrims and evangelizers, transcending any institutional expression, however necessary,” (EG 111). In the traditional council, all baptized are part of the People of God and of its evangelizing mission in light of the signs of our times (cf. GS 11).

LG 9

DAP 370

73. With the same spirit, today the CELAM, has started a discernment process, for the renewal of its mission and structure, in the framework of a most needed “ecclesial conversion” (EG 26). It is carried out with the acknowledgement of the commitment taken on by the Aparecida Conference of “giving up outdated structures that are no longer helpful for handing on the faith,” (DAP 365). We are not only committed to review lifestyles and the way on which we relate, but also the exercise of the ministry of coordinating and management of the decision making in our structure as a collegial organ at the service of the churches of the continent.

DAP 183

74. In the context of the reception of Aparecida and the teachings of Pope Francis, that confirm the renewal of

the Second Vatican Council, we are challenged to deepen on the ecclesiology of the People of God, explicitly stated in *Lumen Gentium*. According to the International Theological Commission, she “offers the essential principles for a correct understanding of synodality in the perspective of the ecclesiology of communion.” It “stresses that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is at the service of the People of God in order that the Church may carry out her mission in conformity with God’s plan of salvation, in the logic of the priority of the whole over its parts and of the end over the means” (SIN 54).¹⁸

Hch 15,22
LG 8

LG 10

75. The ecclesiology of the *Lumen gentium* is improved by Pope Francis when referring to the Church as “the holy People of God”, thanks to this anointing, which makes it infallible «*in credendo*». This means that it does not err in faith, even though it may not find words to explain that faith (...). God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith —*sensus fidei*— which helps them to discern what is truly of God. The presence of the Spirit gives Christians a certain connaturality with divine realities, and a wisdom which enables them to grasp those realities intuitively, even when they lack the wherewithal to give them precise expression” (EG 119).

CIL 20
LG 12

GS 11
1Ts 5,19-20
GS 45

76. With this experience we are encountered with the Word of God, in the community pastoral discernment, in the way of working out the differences and consensus are achieved by way of fraternal dialogue. Through this interventions of the Spirit who speaks to us today. Thus, our ecclesial and missionary conversion requires the

LG 9
CIC 465

18 With the SIN acronym we designate the document from the INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, *The Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, Rome, 2018. After the acronym we recorded the abstract.



practice of *sensus fidei* in our local churches and in the communion amongst them in the region. All members from the People of God are subjected to the Church and so we need to walk together on every level of the ecclesial life.

1. CHURCH: PEOPLE OF GOD SENT TO MAKE PRESENT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

77. As Pope Francis gets on, the pilgrim People of God is called to evangelize and be evangelized “to make the kingdom of God present in our world” (EG 176). In these times, “together with all the faithful and by virtue of baptism we are, first of all, disciples and members of the People of God” (DAp 186). We are identified as “disciples of the Way” (Acts 9,2) and want to walk as the messianic People, marked by the gift and responsibility of announcing the Kingdom of God. The image of the People of God called out amongst the nations (cf. Acts 2,19; 15,14), expresses the social, historical and missionary dimension of the Church, sharing the condition of a human walking in the history. LG 9
DAp 35
78. We are the People of God, a synodal Church. The synodality “is the specific *modus vivendi et operandi* of the Church, the People of God which reveals and gives substance to her being as communion when all her members journey together, gather in assembly and take an active part in her evangelizing mission” (SIN 6). The Scriptures and Tradition witness that synodality is a constitutive dimension of the Church. Through Ne 8,1-9

her is manifested and configured as the People of God, on her way and in an assembly called for by the risen Lord. Certainly, “making the synodal Church a reality is an indispensable precondition for a new missionary Energy that will involve the entire People of God,” (SIN 9) since it engages all baptized in the exercise of the multiform and orderly wealth of its ministries and charismas.

1.1. Followers of Jesus Christ, incarnate Word, in faithfulness to the Gospel

79. The Church must fulfill its mission by following the steps of Jesus and adopting his attitudes (cf. Mat 9, 35-36). Though he was Lord, he made himself servant and obedient even to death on the cross (cf. Phil 2,8); though he was rich, he chose to be poor for us (cf. 2 Cor 8,9), showing us the path of our calling as disciples and missionaries. In the Gospel we learn the sublime lesson of being poor following Jesus, himself poor (cf. Lk 6,20; 9,58)” (Dap 31). As Pope Francis gets on, “the entire history of our redemption is marked by the presence of the poor” (EG 197). In Jesus we find the Gospel of the Father, the face of his mercy. In following his steps, our discipleship is born and our mission lies. He is our model to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God.
80. In following Jesus, we cannot lose sight of his mission of establishing the Kingdom of his Father, Kingdom of Life, as an offer of full life for all. (cf. Dap 361; 386). Consequently, this is the evangelizing mission of the Church and our commitment in today’s region, reason

Lc 2,6-7

Jn 14,9
Jn 8,12
Jn 12,26

Mt 19,21



and scope of the renewal and restructuring process of CELAM. Faithful to the Council, we want to respond to “the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted (cf. GS 1). These social and cultural transformations naturally represent new challenges to the Church in its mission of building the Kingdom of God. Hence the need, in fidelity to the Holy Spirit who leads it, for an ecclesial renewal that entails spiritual, pastoral, and also institutional reforms,” (DAP 367), which we are discerning today.

Gal 5,25
1Ts 5,21
Rm 12,2

81. Saint Paul VI presented the evangelization from the Newness of Christ: “Evangelize means for the Church to hand the Good News to every human environment, and with its influence, transform from the inside, renew humanity: *‘Behold, I am making all things new’*” (EN 18, citing Rev 21,5). The purpose of evangelization is the renewal of humanity with the Good News of Christ, the New Man (Eph 2,15). He renews the human being and the world so: *“if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”* (2 Cor 5,17). To evangelize is to live and share the unique, universal and present Newness of Jesus Christ in the “new things” of men and of peoples.

Hb 9,15

Lc 22,20

Hch 13,47

82. Emphasizing the Newness of Christ, Pope Francis affirms: “Christ in the eternal Gospel (cf. Rev 14,6), is the same yesterday, today and forever (cf. Heb 13, 8) yet his riches and beauty are inexhaustible. He is forever young and a constant source of newness” (EG 11). Therefore, our renewal process it is not simply an intellectual update or an organizational adaptation, but a conversion

path to reread the Gospel in our current context and in fidelity with the Council.

83. It is a conversion that concerns everyone. The prayerful reading and situated practice of the Gospel are features of our Latin American and Caribbean church which must lead our discernment. According to the Vatican II, “it is the task of the entire People of God, especially pastors and theologians, to hear, distinguish and interpret the many voices of our age, and to judge them in the light of the divine word, so that revealed truth can always be more deeply penetrated, better understood and set forth to greater advantage” (GS 44). Therefore, as synod, the renovation must lead us to recreate languages, attitudes and structures to facilitate the transmission of faith during this transformation process.
- DAp 370
GS 11
DAp 9

1.2. Church on a mission for everyone to have life (cf. Jn 10,10)

84. This new ecclesial moment, under the influence of the Aparecida Conference, promoted by Francis in fidelity to the Second Vatican Council, requires that the Church leaves behind its own self-reference and goes out to the social and existential periphery to proclaim the Gospel. As “the missionary outreach is paradigmatic for all the Church’s activity” (EG 15), it is necessary to “overcome the pastoral ministry of mere conservation” (DAp 370), thus it will be possible for the program of the Gospel to continue to take root in the life of the Church everywhere” (DAp 370). Saint Paul VI has taught us that the purpose of evangelization is to “renew humanity” (EN 18; 23; 75) from the absolute newness of Jesus Christ
- Jn 21,21-22



and taking a deep look into the sign of the ages and interpreting them under the light of the Gospel. The renewal of the CELAM points towards updating our response to the Lord's mandate that tells us: "go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Mt 28,19).

85. We live in this spirit of outgoing renewing the testimony, proclamation and Eucharistic experience, "source and culmination of the Christian life" (Dap 175a) and, at the same time, "source and summit of all missionary life" (Dap 363). The Eucharist is the privileged place of the encounter of the disciple with Jesus Christ, who draws us and makes us enter into his dynamism with God and towards our neighbor. Moreover, "the Church's synodal path is shaped and nourished by the Eucharist" (SIN 47). Thus, synodality, "this *modus vivendi et operandi*, is carried out through communal listening of the Word and celebration of the Eucharist, the fraternity of communion and co-responsibility and participation of the People of God" (SIN 70). As a people on the way we recognize the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and discover the face of the poor as a sacrament of Christ.

Jn 6,45

86. A church which goes forth is accompanied by the mother of God, Our Lady of the Road. She is the first missionary disciple of Jesus, her beloved Son. We are under her protection, we are entrusted to her intercession, we feel questioned and accompanied by her to live our own discipular and missionary experience. In the Annunciation, she teaches us how to discern the will of God and embrace his Word with the strength of the Spirit; this way she shapes us in the attitude modeling a synodal Church. In the Visitation, she is an example of a Church on the way of proclamation and service,

Dap 1

Lc 1,26ss

Lc 1,39ss

lovingly aiding those who need it and joyfully communicating the blessing of Jesus, celebrating the wonders of our merciful God and contemplating from the heart, the events of salvation. Since the beginning of ecclesial history, the mother of God maintains the hope of the pilgrim People of God in our continent. “In the Guadalupe event, together with the humble Juan Diego, she presided over Pentecost, which opened us to the gifts of the Spirit. Since then, countless communities have found in her, the closest inspiration for learning how to be disciples and missionaries of Jesus” (DAp 269). Maria is the clear sign of the newness of the Gospel and the synodal renewal of the Church. She is the star of a forever renovated evangelization.

Ap 12,1

“There is a Marian “style” to the Church’s work of evangelization. Whenever we look to Mary, we come to believe once again in the revolutionary nature of love and tenderness.... This interplay of justice and tenderness, of contemplation and concern for others, is what makes the ecclesial community look to Mary as a model of evangelization” (EG 288).

1.3 Listening to the Holy Spirit who speaks to us

87. The Spirit if God convenes to a “path of pastoral and missionary conversion” (EG 25). As Saint Paul VI pushed on, “the Church begins by evangelizing itself... [She] always has the need to be evangelized, if she wants to maintain its freshness, impulse and strength to proclaim the Gospel” (EN 15). Faithful to a profile of an evangelized and evangelizing Church (cf. EN 13-16), Aparecida spoke about a Church as a “community

Ef 3,16-17



of missionary disciples” (DAp 364). Thus, we want to delve into walking together “continual reformation” (EG 26), with all the Church and with everyone in the Church, since “the renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as a part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented” (EG 27).

Ef 3,16-17

88. Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit to carry out his mission. The same Spirit that encourages all of our missionary activity, accompanies our discernment (Lk 4,1-15) and shows us the way of the preference of Jesus for the poor and excluded (Lk 4, 16-21). In fact, “the Holy Spirit, gift to us by the Father, identifies us with Jesus-Way, opening to us the mystery of salvation so that we may be his children and brothers and sisters of one another” (DAp 137). To the “followers of the Way” (Acts 22,4), the Spirit gives his gifts and charismas (1 Co 12,1-11) to put them at the service of the common good of the People of God. All baptized anointed by the Holy Spirit, have the same dignity and are invested with the same mission we need to fulfil logic of the gift and joint responsibility, listening to the Spirit who challenge us through the many voices and realities of our world (GS 44).

Mt 4,1

Rm 8,14

89. At the celebration of the 50⁰. Anniversary of the Institution of the Bishops Synod, Francis stated that “a synodal Church, is a listening church, with the consciousness that listening “is more than hearing.” Is a two-way listening in which each one has something to learn. Faithfull people, Episcopal College, Bishop of Rome: one listens the others and from others; and all listen to

Dt 6,4

the Holy Spirit, the «Spirit of truth» (Jn 14,17), to recognize what he «speaks to the churches» (Rev 2,7)”.¹⁹

90. So, the entirety of the faithful is called to learn and listen and discern what the Spirit is inspiring in the service of the Church and its mission. In a synodal church, “everyone plays a part, though the varied roles and contributions. The matter is presented to the whole Church in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 15,12), present throughout its development and involved in its final decision (apostles and elders decided together with the whole assembly)” (SIN 21). In summary, in a synodal church, the Spirit guides and accompanies us on every stage of the way, and helps us to live with an attitude of being attentive to his voice to discern the path to follow. It is about a discernment we make as “the People of God, motivated by faith and led by the Spirit” to “decipher authentic signs of God’s presence and purpose in the happenings, needs and desires in which this People has a part along with other men of our age” (GS 11).

Rm 12,2
Lc 11,28

GS 11

2. THE VOCATION AND SYNODAL PRACTICE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

91. The Church is the People of God on a pilgrimage with all humanity. Thus carrying out the service to the Gospel, which includes a social *diakonía* for the good of every people and the entire humanity. The Church recognizes in the Trinity, its origin, model and goal. Is the

GS 42
AG 5
LG 2

19 FRANCIS, *Speech on the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops*, October 17, 2015.



community that is directed towards communion with God the Father, through Jesus, in the Holy Spirit and its constituted as communion of the faithful in Christ, through the experience of the Father's charity in the gift of the Spirit of love.

LG 4

92. As a Church, we acknowledge the call to promote ecclesial communion in benefit of synodal responsibility of every member of the People of God and delve into our episcopal collegiality. In this new moment of the Church, we believe that, “in the gift and commitment of communion can be found the source, the form and the scope of synodality, in as much as it expresses the specific *modus vivendi et operandi* of the People of God in the responsible and ordered participation of all its members in discerning and putting into practice ways of fulfilling its mission” (SIN 43).

LG 10

LG 11
GS 11

2.1. Synodality, constitutive dimension of the pilgrim Church in this history

93. Pope Francis states that “the path to synodality is the path God expects of the Church of the third millennium. What the Lord is asking of us is already in some sense present in the very word «synod» - walk together —lay, pastors, Bishop of Rome”. Although “synodality is not explicitly found as a term or as a concept in the teaching of Vatican II, it is fair to say that synodality is at the heart of the work of renewal the Council was encouraging.” (SIN 6). Through synodality “we are configured as the pilgrim People of God” (SIN 42), subject of synodal and missionary communion.

Mt 4,18
Am 3,3

LG 9

94. Synodality is not an operational process or functional practice, but the peculiar way of living and working of the People of God. It expresses the constitutive dimension of the entire Church and of everyone in the Church. As baptized we are called to be companions of Jesus-way, summoned to assemble and co-responsible of his mission, active subjects of and evangelizing Church. The entire People of God is the subject of the proclamation of the Gospel, and in Him, each one is summoned to become a leader of the mission. In Aparecida, Pope Francis reminds us that “we are always missionary disciples” (EG 140). LG 10
GS 11
95. Synodality expresses the figure of the Church emerging from the Gospel of Jesus, and today is called to incarnate even more incisively in history, in creative fidelity to Tradition. The path is to follow the steps of Jesus since “Jesus is the pilgrim who proclaims the good news of the Kingdom of God (cf. Luke 4,14-15), teaches “the way of God” (cf. Luke 20,21) and points the way to it (Luke 9,51-19,28). In fact, He Himself is “the way” (cf. John 14,6) that leads to the Father; in the Holy Spirit (cf. John 16,13) He shares with everyone the truth and love of communion with God and our sisters and brothers” (SIN 16). Synodality manifest the social, historical and missionary dimension of the pilgrim People of God towards the eschatological homeland. GS 4
96. Pope Francis teaches that “to walk together is *the constitutive way* of the Church; *the figure* that enables us to interpret reality with the eyes and heart of God; *the condition* for following the Lord Jesus and being servants of life in this wounded time. Only in this way can we truly Gn 3,8



renew our pastoral ministry and adapt it to the mission of the Church in today's world; only in this way can we address the complexity of this time, thankful for the journey accomplished thus far, and determined to continue it with *parrhesia*" (SIN 120). And to walk together we are faced with the challenge of taking on synodal practices and attitudes, that help freely express opinions, listen to one another, converse, take advise, judge and assess the experience and implement it.

1Ts2,2

2.2. Synodality and co-responsibility with all the faithful

97. In the Church, "the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated" (LG 10). Every faithful Christian takes part on the universal vocation to holiness and is an active ecclesial subject by belonging to the People of God and sharing the *sensus fidei fidelium*. Therefore, "a synodal Church is a *participatory and co-responsible Church*, called to assemble everyone's participation, according to the vocation of each, with the authority conferred to the Bishops Conference by Christ, presided by the Pope. It is by the baptismal identity we share, that we assume the ecclesial mission and communion, which implies maintaining the connection between the *sensus fidei*, communal discernment and pastoral authority.

LG 7

LG 12

LG 11

98. As for the lay people, they carry out in their own unique way, the common condition as baptized as *christifideles*. The laity is a specific way living the Christian vocation and actively and co-responsible participating in the

mission of the Church, *suo modo et pro sua parte* (cf. AA 29). It is not a vocation delegated or derived from the clergy, nor is residual. Therefore, the CELAM wishes to delve into a synodal way of action in which the laity and religious life are integrated more effectively in every ecclesial structure. We are facing the great challenge of recognizing that the evangelizing mission of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean entails an “ability to be open to the Spirit’s boldness, to trust in, and concretely to permit, the growth of a specific ecclesial culture that is *distinctively lay*.” (QAm 94).

P09

LG31

99. In Aparecida we committed that the lay “must participate in the discernment, decision making, planning and execution” (DAp 371), an expression of an ecclesiology of communion of the People of God (cf. DAp 157) and of the calling to pastoral conversion (cf. DA 368). This discipular-missionary ecclesiology inspires the current renewal and restructuring process to the identity and mission of CELAM and it commit us to deepen on the synodal style of our institution. Pastors, “together with all the faithful and by virtue of baptism we are, first of all, disciples and members of the People of God” (DA 186).

GS43
P09

100. This allows for acknowledging the need of our own episcopal conversion within the frame of a synodal Church, as said in the Medellin Conference, it “requires, first of all, that mutual appreciation, respect and harmony, in the heart of the Church acknowledging all legitimate diversities in order to open with an increasing fruitfulness, the conversation amongst all those who are members of the only People of God, pastors and other faithful” (Med, *Pastoral de Conjunto* 22). Our

GS11



conversion, as pastors comprises understanding that “synodality, as an essential dimension of the Church is expressed on the level of the universal Church in the dynamic circularity of the *consensus fidelium*, episcopal collegiality and the primacy of the Bishop of Rome; she is called to set in motion a process of listening to all the subjects who together form the People of God in order to agree in discerning the truth and on the missionary path” (SIN 94).

101. Moreover, our pastoral and synodal conversion leads us to commit with the recognition of the role of the women in Church and society. Aparecida indicated that women continue to be the great excluded of our societies (cf. DAp 454) and are victims of “chauvinist mindset that ignores the newness of Christianity” (DAp 453). Pope Francis emphasizes “the present situation requires us to encourage the emergence of other forms of service and charismas that are proper to women” (QAm 102) because “in a synodal Church, women (...) should have access to positions, including ecclesial services, that do not entail Holy Orders and that can better signify the role that is theirs. Here it should be noted that these services entail stability, public recognition and a commission from the bishop. This would also allow women to have a real and effective impact on the organization, the most important decisions and the direction of communities” (QAm 103).

Rm 16,1-5

AG 17

102. It is important to have in mind that “The circularity of the *sensus fidei* with which all the faithful are endowed, the discernment carried out at the various levels on which synodality works and the authority of those who exercise the pastoral ministry of unity and governance

LG 12

shows the dynamic of synodality. This circularity promotes the baptismal dignity and co-responsibility of all, makes the most of the presence in the People of God of charisms dispensed by the Holy Spirit, recognizes the specific ministry of Pastors in collegial and hierarchical communion with the Bishop of Rome” (SIN 72). For that, it is necessary to listen to the brothers and sisters in Christ, who live in concrete ecclesial communities and in whom “the earth cry and the cry of the poor” echoes (QAm 8). So for the Church “reshapes her identity through listening and dialogue with the people, the realities and the history of the lands in which she finds herself” (QAm 66), so that an “incarnate form of ecclesial organization and ministry” is found (QAm 85).

LG 8

2.3. Synodality and Collegiality

103. Assuming this renovation path implies the deepening of episcopal collegiality in the heart of ecclesial synodality. The concept of synodality “refers to the involvement and participation of the whole People of God in the life and mission of the Church, the concept of collegiality defines the theological significance and the form of a) the exercise of the ministry of Bishops in the service of the local Church entrusted to the care of each of them, and b) of the communion between local Churches at the heart of the one universal Church of Christ, brought about by means of the hierarchical communion of the College of Bishops with the Bishop of Rome.” (SIN 7).

GS 11

LG 25



104. With *Lumen gentium*, Pope Francis states that “describes the most suitable interpretative frame to understand the same hierarchical ministry” (SIN 9). Therefore, as regional structure, the CELAM wishes to renovate in synodality, the exercise of episcopal ministry in the context of “communion between the local churches, at the heart of the universal Church” (SIN 7). However, “the renovation of the ecclesial hierarchy by itself, does not produces the transformation to which the Holy Spirit compels us”.²⁰ We need to put episcopal collegiality within the bigger frame of an ecclesiology that has at its heart, all the faithful who are members of the People of God: the Pope, bishops, priests, deacons, religious life and laity.

LG9

105. We must be attentive to avoid confusion of synodality with a particular structure, as a Synod or Assembly are, or as a mere instrument at the service of collegiality. While collegiality refers to the nature and the way of how the bishops relate with and under Peter, synodality is a constitutive dimension of the Church, which defines and structures the ecclesial life and manifests in “synodal life, structures, its processes and the events it will involve” (SIN 11). With the same spirit, we believe that our episcopal collegiality in the region, can continue renovating as a synodal collegiality, *as* it has been happening in the assemblies of the last Synods of Bishops.

Jn21,3

106. It is seeking to contribute with synodality for the entire Church, that the present process for the renewal of CELAM seeks to “encourage and develop the means

20 FRANCIS, *Letter to the Pilgrim Peoples of God in Chile*, May 2018.

of participation proposed in the Code of Canon Law and other forms of pastoral dialogue, out of desire to listen to everyone and not simply some” (EG 31). In the *Papal Letter to the Pilgrim People of God in Chile*, Pope Francis has requested to “to consciously and lucidly seek areas of communion and participation for the Anointing of the People of God may find its concrete mediations to express itself”.

107. The relation between collegiality and synodality introduces us in the horizon of personal and ecclesial conversion, prepared to listen to the voice of God through the entire People of God. Pope Francis, in the *Episcopalis communio* Constitution declares: “the Bishop is both teacher and disciple. He is a teacher when, endowed with the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, he proclaims to the faithful the word of truth in the name of Christ, head and shepherd. But he is a disciple when, knowing that the Spirit has been bestowed upon every baptized person, he listens to the voice of Christ speaking through the entire People of God, making it «infallible in credendo»” (EC 5). In fact, the clericalism entails the “tendency to decrease and depreciate the baptismal grace (...), and it forgets that visibility and sacramentality of the Church belongs to the entire People of God (LG 9-14) and not only to some chosen or enlighten”.²¹
108. Synodality is lived through the different levels of the life of the church - local, regional y universal, having the principle of subsidiarity present. At the regional context, there are intermediate agencies and institutions like CELAM. From the Council perspective, such bod-

Lc 11,28
Pr 16,20

1Tm 3,1-7

GS 75
Jn 6,32

21 FRANCIS, *Letter to Cardinal Marc Ouellet*, March 19, 2016.



ies would help “increase the spirit of episcopal collegiality” (SIN 87). This should be expressed not only in our daily way of living and working, but also in how we organize the ecclesial structure, in the service rendered to the Bishop Conferences as well as the way we celebrate the events of our regional Church. An important step in this process is the novelty of *the First Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean*, in which we seek to give voice to the entire People of God, to which we belong and serve.

3. PASTORAL CONVERSION OF THE CHURCH, A PATH FOR RENEWAL AND REFORM

109. The Aparecida Conference began the path for renovation of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, pushing forward the Second Vatican Council and acceptance from the previous General Conferences in Medellin, Puebla and Santo Domingo. And recognized that: “we have lacked the courage, persistence, and docility to grace to follow the renewal begun by Vatican II, faithful to the perennial Church, under the impulse of the previous General Conferences, and to affirm the Latin American and Caribbean face of our Church” (Dap 100h). proof of that is “to return to a certain type of ecclesiology and spirituality contrary to the Vatican II renewal” (Dap 100b). in this sense, Pope Francis has

led a reforms process for the church to become completely synodal in its mission and work.

110. The Vatican Council II has created a new self-conscious of the Church. However, some ecclesiological changes continue to be pending tasks: the experience of the church as a perfect society to a Church as People of God in conversation and at the service of the world; of a self-centered and self-referenced to a Church as sacrament of the Kingdom of God in history; from a centralized and centralizing Church to a synodal Church; from a Church identified with hierarchy to a Church of communion and ministry; from a Church of judgment to a Church of “advocacy” of the poor and merciful “where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel” (EG 114); from an aseptic Church to a poor Church for the poor, Samaritan and prophetic (cf. EG 198). LG 9
111. Walk towards a Church serving the Kingdom of God, called to make it present in the world, it implies to carry out a comprehensive evangelization covering “the entire person and humanity” (PP 14), as well as the work of creation. In *Querida Amazonia*, Francis designs the horizon of a comprehensive evangelization, beyond Amazonian limits, which includes the four dreams we wish to establish in Latin America and the Caribbean (cf. QAm 7). It is about becoming a Church that: encourages the continent to fight for the rights of the poor (social dream); that preserve its cultural riches (cultural dream); that it preserves its natural beauty (ecological dream); all in all, a Church with Christian communi- Gn 1,27



ties capable of giving the Church a Latin American and Caribbean face (ecclesial dream).

112. To continue with the renovation of the Vatican Council II and developing the comprehensive evangelization, the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, resolved in Santo Domingo, the demand for a pastoral conversion, later improved by Aparecida. In this historical moment beyond the difficulties to practice it, she is a safe and concrete path for the fulfillment of the four dreams of Francis. The Santo Domingo document states: “the New Evangelization demands for a pastoral conversion of the Church. Such conversion must be coherent with the Council. She covers everything and everyone: in consciousness, in personal and community practice, in equal and authority relations; with structures and dynamisms that make present, more and more clearly, the Church as an effective sign, sacrament of universal salvation” (SD 30). It is about the pastoral conversion of the Church, as a whole, in four areas: in the area of conscience, in the area of personal and community practice, in the area of equal or authority relations, and in the area of structures.

Dap 370

LG1

3.1. The four dreams as horizon for a comprehensive evangelization in the continent

113. To evangelize is “to make present the kingdom of God in the world” (EG 176) and so it includes human promotion and comprehensive development (cf. EG 178). Consequently, the Church is called to be present and work on the social, cultural and ecological. Pope Francis defines action guidelines on these four areas from the

Mt 6,33

dreams that, from the Amazon, question the continent and the entire Church. Given that salvation implies “the move from less human to more human situations” (Med, *Introduction* 6), the ecclesial dream is intrinsically linked to the social, cultural and ecological dreams. In reality, only from the perspective of a Council renovation, we will have ecclesial communities with a Latin-American and Caribbean face, if they are incarnated in the cultures of the continent, in harmony with the nature that shelters them at the heart of a society without excluded or marginalized.

a. A social dream: a continent fighting for the rights of the poor

114. The social dream, from a prophetic perspective, points towards a continent “fighting for the rights of the poor... where their voices can be heard and the dignity advanced” (QAm 7). Is that of “promote all of its inhabitants” into what the indigenous peoples call “good living” (QAm 8), an expression of the strong sense of community, in which everything is shared, life is a communal journey on the basis of common good (cf. QAm 20). Before our situation, we cannot get use to injustice and allowed for the numbing of our social awareness. We need to feel outraged as Moses did (cf. QAm 15), colonization has not tended, though disguised and concealed (cf. QAm 16). We need to overcome the colonizing mentality (cf. QAm 17). Historically, even missionaries, did not always take the side of the oppressed, which requires us to ask for forgiveness (QAm 19).

Pr 31,9



115. The wisdom of the way of life of the original peoples which privileges fraternal relations within a framework of acknowledgment and esteem for the different cultures and ecosystems (cf. QAm 22). For this effect. It is important that our peoples find paths for a common fight and communion. The rest of the institutions, including our Church, are called to participate as guests, learn from them, to whom we need to listen out of a duty of justice, and from whom we must ask permission before presenting our proposals (cf. QAm 26). The option on behalf of the poor, requires their prominence in “good living,” as they understand it for themselves and their descendants (cf. QAm 27).

Gn 32,28

Lc 4,18

116. This requires a profound change of attitudes, to move from: injustice to justice, from exploitation of indigenous peoples to recognition of their rights; from the different types of colonialism to freedom; from the exploitation of people to the recovery of their dignity through solidarity networks and a comprehensive human development; from indifference to fraternity, where tasks and responsibilities are divided and shared having common good at heart; from the monologue of the power holder to a conversation which not only favors the poor, but also grants them respect as protagonists (cf. QAm 8-40).

b. A cultural dream: A continent that preserves its natural riches

117. At the center of the cultural dream, from the Amazon, there is a utopia of a continent that “can preserve its distinctive cultural riches, where the beauty of humanity

shines forth in so many varied ways” (QAm 7), and so it brings out the best of itself (cf. QAm 28). In our continent, there are many peoples and nationalities that co-exist in a polyhedron of cultures, some in a very fragile. There are cultures that have a message yet to be heard but are under threat (cf. QAm 28). Each of the peoples possesses its own cultural identity and unique richness in our multicultural universe (cf. QAm 31). Each one of the develop its own form of wisdom which improves the entire humanity (cf. QAm 32). Today consumerism, is the heart of an economy that kills, it tends homogenize cultures and diminish the immense variety of cultures which is the heritage of all humanity (cf. QAm 33). Leaving behind all colonizing perspective, it is important to cultivate without rooting, Foster growth without weakening, and be supportive without being invasive (cf. QAm 28). It is necessary to love roots and care for identities (cf. QAm 33).

Lc 13,29
Pr 9,1-6

118. As peoples and nations we need to sit around the common table, a place for conversation. The difference, which could seem like a Wall, can become a bridge through intercultural conversation. With an encounter, differences enrich, while isolation impoverishes. Diversity is not a synonym for threat. (cf. QAm 37). To care for the cultural values of our peoples, must be at interest for everyone, for their riches is also our own. (cf. QAm 37). The development of a people includes the right of a culture of their own (cf. QAm 38). Move forward on this path, requires a change of attitude to avoid homogenization of cultures, instead to respect and strengthen roots, and from these attitudes, live and practice inculturation and Interculturality, where diversity does not



mean threat, and does not justify hierarchies of power, but dialogue between different cultural visions.

c. An Ecological dream: A continent that preserves its natural beauty

119. In the face of ecological problems, the third dream designed by Pope Francis is the appropriate relation between human being and nature. With continued creativity with *Laudato si'*, *Querida Amazonía* points out the urgency to care for the Common Home because thousands of vegetable and animal species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right. (cf. QAm 54). In general, the environmental impact of economic projects of extraction, Energy, timber, and other industries, are ignored or minimized, without the courage to realize that the planet has limited resources (cf. QAm 49). Such evasiveness serves as a license to carrying on with our present lifestyles and models of production and consumption. This is the way human beings contrive to feed their self-destructive vices: trying not to see them, trying not to acknowledge them, delaying the important decisions and pretending that nothing will happen (cf. QAm 53).

Jr 27,5

120. Together with the nature ecology there is a “human ecology”, which in turn, is linked for “everything is connected” (cf. QA 41). To abuse nature is to abuse of our ancestors, of the Creation and Creator, jeopardizing our future. The current situation of our planet demands for a new lifestyle. A comprehensive ecology does not consist only on adjust to technical matters with political

Sal 8

GS 12. 13

legal and social decisions. It implies the education for the creation of new habits in relation to nature, people and the Creator. We won't be able to achieve a healthy and sustainable ecology if we do not change, if we are not incentivized to adopt a different lifestyle, more respectful and fraternal to nature (cf. QAm 56). We do not contemplate Creation from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings (cf. QAm 55). The powerful are never satisfied with the profits they make, all of us should insist on the urgent need to establish a legal framework which can set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems, otherwise the present economic model will compromise future generations (cf. QAm 52).

d. *An ecclesial dream: A Church with a Latin American and Caribbean face*

121. According to Pope Francis, in order to promote a Church with its own face, we need to implement the culture of encounter towards a multifaceted harmony (cf. QAm 61). The inculturation of the Gospel and incarnation of the Church entails letting the Spirit shape its identity. For the inculturation of the faith, which rejects nothing of the goodness in culture, but brings it to fulfillment in the light of the Gospel. A faith that does not turn into culture, is a faith not fully embraced, not entirely thought through, nor faithful with fidelity. The Tradition of the Church, which is not a static deposition but the root of a constantly growing tree (cf. QAm 66). Grace supposes culture, and faith becomes flesh in

Lc 7,11-17

Lc 1,26ss



those who receive it, creating a new synthesis (cf. QAm 68) and giving rise to a Church with a multi-faceted face. We would not do justice to the logic of the incarnation if we thought of Christianity as mono cultural (cf. EG 117).

122. Given the present situation of poverty and neglect experienced by so many inhabitants of the Amazon region, and we might add, of our continent, inculturation will necessarily have a markedly social cast, accompanied by a resolute defense of human rights; in this way it will reveal the face of Christ, who wished with special tenderness to be identified with the weak and the poor (cf. QAm 75). At the same time, the inculturation of the Gospel must better integrate the social and the spiritual, so that the poor do not have to look outside the Church for a spirituality that responds to their deepest yearnings. This does not mean an alienating and individualistic religiosity that would silence social demands for a more dignified life, but neither does it mean ignoring the transcendent and spiritual dimension, as if material development alone were sufficient for human beings (cf. QAm 76).
123. A Church that assumes the face of its peoples, needs the growth of a “specific ecclesial culture that is distinctively lay” and “present at every level and with a broad and active involvement of the laity” (QAm 94). Consequently, it is not simply a question of facilitating a greater presence of ordained ministers who can celebrate the Eucharist, we need to promote an active participation of the lay and the creation of ministries entrusted to them (cf. QAm 93). A Church with Latin American and Caribbean features requires the stable presence of ma-

LG31

ture and lay leaders endowed with authority (cf. QAm 94).

Dap 174

124. Francis Exhortation that in Amazon, in spite of the absence of priests, “there are communities that have long preserved and handed on the faith because of the presence of strong and generous women who, undoubtedly called and prompted by the Holy Spirit, baptized, catechized, prayed and acted as missionaries” (QAm 99). Thus, the Pope “recognizes that in a synodal Church, those women who in fact have a central part to play in Amazonian communities should have access to positions, including ecclesial services,” which will allow them “to have a real a real impact on the organization, in order to “better express their specific place in Church.” Such services “entail stability, public recognition and a commission from the bishop.” This would allow women to “have a real and effective impact on the organization of the Church,” as well as to the most important decisions and the direction of communities (QAm 103). These pastoral lines enlighten our Church, not only in the Amazon region, but also across the entire Continent.

DAp 455

Rm 16,1-5

3.2. The pastoral conversion of the Church as a path towards fulfillment of its dreams

125. Pastoral conversion is a good path towards fulfillment of the four dreams designed by Pope Francis. Its goal is the essence and work of the Church and its purpose is the aim of evangelization, which is the universal salvation by connection with the Kingdom of God, from which



the Church needs to be, ever more clearly, its sacrament, it is to say, sign and instrument for redemption. As it encompasses the Church as a dynamic entirety, pastoral conversion points towards changes in four areas: in the consciousness of the ecclesial community, in the practice or personal and community actions, in equal and authority relations, and in the structures of the Church.

a. Conversion of consciousness of the Church

126. As it is about “the conversion of the Church,” the conversion of mindset or of the consciousness of the ecclesial community, it is more than anything, what Saint Paul VI indicated as self-consciousness of the Church. And given that conversion must be in accordance with the Council, conversion in ecclesial consciousness it refers to the ecclesiology of Vatican Council II. It is about a perceived need due to some efforts to a certain type of ecclesiology contrary to the council renewal (DAP 100b).

LG 9

127. The conversion of the consciousness is the deepest level of pastoral conversion. It concerns every individual member of an ecclesial community and also to the community as a whole, as it depends on a new community consciousness. A community is more than the sum of its members. The church is subject and object of conversion. As Saint Paul VI declared, “as evangelizer, the Church begins by evangelizing itself” (EN 15).

Rm 12,4-5

128. Ultimately, conversion of the ecclesial community consciousness refers to the prominence of the Holy Spirit in its life and mission, for the Church is not unfamiliar

Ef 4,3

with the dynamism of the Spirit. The Spirit constitutes and encourages the Church. The Spirit dynamism is the source of life and sustenance of hope. To become a missionary Church, we need to “be jolted to prevent it from becoming well established in comfort, stagnation and lukewarmness, aloof from the suffering of the continent’s poor”. Therefore, Aparecida closes with, “We hope for a new Pentecost that will free us from fatigue, disillusionment, and conformity to the environment” (DAP 362).

Hch 2,1ss

b. Conversion in personal and community actions

129. The second area of “pastoral conversion” refers to personal and community actions, or what is properly called, pastoral. The conversion of mindset entails a change at action level which consist in the continuation of work of Jesus Christ and begins by the lovingly encounter with Him (cf. DAP 243), the acknowledgment of his presence and following of his path (cf. DAP 244). Therefore, the evangelizing action must reach out to every person, beyond communities of ecclesial belonging (cf. DAP 226a).

Jn 5,17

Mt 28,19

130. Conciliar renewal demands practice, in consequence with its proposals. There are pre-conciliar pastoral models which responded to the needs of its age, but turned obsolete. A pastoral action proposing “fulfillment of life” for everyone, must be the answer to the real needs of people and society. “For God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual person but also the social relations existing between men” (DAP 359). Therefore, evangelizing is also “engender alternative cultural

LG 9



models for contemporary society.” (DAp 480). A full life in Christ leads to assume, evangelically, the tasks which contribute to the promotion of human beings.

131. To make the Kingdom of God present in the world, we need to work with together with other citizens and institutions (cf. DAp 384), helping the poor become agents for changing and transforming their situation (cf. DAp 394) and avoiding paternalism (cf. DAp 474). This mission demands for the inculturation of the Gospel (cf. DAp 479), particularly in the urban realm (cf. DAp 501) and public life (cf. DAp 509). The Church is called to be “advocate of justice and of the poor” in the face of intolerable social and economic inequalities,” which “cry to heaven (DAp 395), it needs to make a preferential option for the poor “permeate all our pastoral structures and priorities” (DAp 396).

Sal 8,5

Am 8,1-8

c. *Conversion of equal and authority relationships*

132. Pastoral conversion includes a synodal conversion, since it concerns the area of equal and authority relationships in the Church. It implies walking together as People of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a relationship of communion, participation and co-responsibility. It demands seeking new paths to charisms and ministries and shape a face of our own in our churches in which the role of the lay is manifested, especially women. There is no pastoral conversion of the Church, in accordance to the Council, without eradication of clericalism. *Evangelii gaudium* explicitly states the need for a “healthy decentralization” in the Church (EG 32).

Jn 21,2-3

Nm 11,16

133. The synodal communion is a pastoral emergency for persons and communities (cf. DAp 374). The witnessing of fraternal charity is the first and primary proclamation of the Gospel (cf. DAp 138), which is carried out in charity and unity: “at the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others” (EG 177). As an expression of co-responsibility of all baptized and in the exercise of the *sensus fidei* we need to continue promoting the celebration of Assemblies and Pastoral Councils in every area of the Church, as well as the co-ordination teams for the different pastoral services and ministries entrusted to the lay. Aparecida remind us the need for an “attitude of openness, dialogue, and willingness to promote the stewardship and real participation of all the faithful in the life of Christian communities” (DAp 368). LG 10
LG 12
134. Given the importance of co-responsibility, as a note for communion and synodality, we must move forward in that same direction: from cult to the “I” to devotion of a fraternal and solidary “us;” from solitary confinement to open conversation where we can speak with *parrhesia* and listen with humility; from envy, suspicion and belligerent confrontation, to closeness, appreciation and trust to brothers: from bitter and systematic criticism to fraternal correction, considered and kind; from personal prominence to prominence of the ecclesial community with and amongst the peoples. AA 25
1Ts 2,2

d. Conversion of structures

135. Lastly, pastoral conversion requires a long revision of the structures of the Church. Aparecida declares that



the firm missionary decision “must be imbued in all ecclesial structures and all pastoral plans at every ecclesial level and any Church institution, giving up outdated structures that are no longer helpful” (DAp 365). For Pope Francis, the renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: “as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself” (EG 27).

136. The structures reform is the moment for the most concrete pastoral conversion of the Church that seeks to pour “new wine into new wineskins” (Mk 2, 21-22). Is the moment for the discernment of to which point, the “essence” of the Church, in its structures, brings support to its “work” in the present context. The structures are an essential element of the visibility of the Church since they show its sacramental figure. The structures are also message. Without structures according to the Gospel, and therefore, without new structures in the present Church, there is no Church, according to the Second Vatican Council. In addition to being structures of communion, they need to be flexible to become truly ecclesial structures, a condition to accompany the dynamism of the Spirit in the history.

Mt 9,17

Ef 2,21

137. The wrongful social structures challenge pastoral structures for they cannot respond to the needs of the needy. In order for the option for the poor can be preferential means that it should “permeate all our pastoral structures and priorities” (DAp 396). The Church as the

“home of the poor” (DAp 8) and “Samaritan Church” (DAp 26), needs to build open structure to welcome everyone (cf. DAp 412) and share abundance of life (cf. DAp 121). We need to move forward with “the structuration of an organic pastoral, to better serve the needs of the faithful” (DAp 99c). Every evangelizing process entails human promotion and authentic liberation, without which a just order in society is not possible (cf. DAp 399).

138. With regards to the ecclesial institution, conversion in the area of structures directly concerns the organs ensuring the execution of synodality of the entire People of God, as are the Pastoral Councils and Assemblies at every ecclesial level. At a national level, following the example of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon (CEAMA) and the First Latin American and Caribbean Assembly, the Bishop Conferences are challenged to integrate new ways of channeling synodality and expressing *sensus fidei fidelium*. At the local Church, with regards to structures, the parish calls for an urgent renewal. It is the living cell of the Church but it needs a valiant action to be truly a place for Christian initiation, of education and celebration of the faith, open to the full range of charisms, services, and ministries, organized in a communal and responsible way, capable of utilizing existing movements of the apostolate, attentive to the cultural diversity of the people, open to pastoral projects which go beyond the individual parish, and alert to the world in which they live (cf. DAp 170). Therefore, it is advisable “to break them up into smaller territorial units with their own leadership and coordination teams, so as to allow closer contact with

Hch 2,46-47



persons and groups living in the territory”. It is also advisable that that missionary agents promote “the creation of communities of families to foster sharing their Christian faith and responses to problems” (DAp 372).

«Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old»

(Mat 13,51-52)

SECTION III



➤ **ACT** ◀



Before the new realities and with the wisdom of the Good News we move forward with the Renewal and Restructuring process of CELAM

139. Jesus wisdoms is share in the Gospel according to Matthew. After a long and difficult preaching, the Lord finds us, like the disciples, at the end of the parables: « Have you understood all this? They answered: «Yes». And he said to them: « Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what *is old*» (Mt 13,51-52)
140. Jesus proposes, with the three final words of this phrase, an inclusion and establishes a priority to formulate a criterion to lead the disciples. How the new and the old must be administer? The image refers to the owner of a home who knows what his provisions are and knows what he can dispose of at every moment and for whom Jesus refers to a wisdom that discerns what we receive from the Kingdom of God. Jesus, the only master, Jesus, from which we are all disciples, teaches us to act in wisdom, mainly because we are called to «make disciples» of all nations (cf. Mat 28,18-20). When he is in front of people, He discerns what he need to communicate to them without worrying to determine whether is old or new. His disciples must learn such supreme art for the good of others. The sapiential discernment of the ancient and the new, inspires the Church to be at the service of the Kingdom of God and enlightens our renewal with creative fidelity.

1Co 1,30
Mc 4,13

Lv 26,10

Lc 12,39
1Re 3,9
Jn 3,2

Mc 4,34

Rm 12,2

GS 44

141. We are situated in the conciliar renewal process of the Church for which Pope Francis reminds us: “the Second Vatican Council, presented ecclesial conversion as permanent openness to a reform of itself in faithfulness to Jesus Christ: «The renewal of the Church essentially consists on an increased fidelity to its vocation [...] Christ calls the pilgrim Church to an eternal reform, from which the Church itself, as human and earthly institution, is always in need for» (EG 24). With pastoral spirit, letter and dynamism from the Vatican Council II we walk as a Church Latin America and the Caribbean.
142. On Section I of this Document we discern some new realities questioning the work of CELAM. On Section II, we explicitly state the newness of Christ inspiring synodal and missionary communion of the People of God, and within that frame, we presented some theological-pastoral principles driving the redefinition of the identity and mission of CELAM. Now, on this Section III, we present the Renewal and Restructuring Proposal of CELAM.
143. This third section is structure into three parts: First, we indicate the great challenges the Church needs to undertake in Latina America and the general guidelines that will lead the renovation process of our Council; on the second part, we develop the Renewal and Restructuring Global Proposal of CELAM for years 2021-2033; on the third part, we provide elements for the development of projects and programs of the four Pastoral Centers from which CELAM wishes to fulfill its Mission.

GS1



1. ABOUT THE CHALLENGES OF THE CHURCH FOR THE RENEWAL AND RESTRUCTURING OF CELAM

144. The tendencies of our region and the sociocultural change we are experimenting, considered in light of the theological and pastoral elements, led us to identify four great challenges:
- a. Grow as a missionary Church going forth, inserted in a dynamic of pastoral conversion. Promoting a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and strengthening the processes for Christian initiation and up-to-date education of pastoral agents. Mt 28,9
 - b. Become a presence at the service of life, committed to the care of our common house, promotion of human rights and of peoples, defense of the family and most vulnerable of society. EG 1
 - c. Promote intercultural dialogue in the present world, recognize culture values where it is inserted as local church and live through processes of inculturation of the good news. Dap 4
 - d. Be configured as a synodal church, in which the listening, dialogue, spiritual discernment and participation structures, enable each one of its members, put their gifts and talents at the service of mission and make visible the contribution of the laity and women in the construction of the ecclesial communion. Hch 15,1ss

2. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE RENEWAL AND RESTRUCTURING OF CELAM

145. To support that the renewal of CELAM, contributes to give an answer to the challenges the Church faces today in the Continent, we need to take into account the following guidelines, which derive from the concerns identified on the work of CELAM and its opportunities, in light of the theological and pastoral elements implied.
- a. The CELAM seeks to become an organ at the service of the Gospel, invigorating and fostering synodality and co-responsibility of the Church in Latina American and the Caribbean, in communion with the universal Church.
 - b. An organ in line with a Church going forth, which knows the reality of the national Bishop Conferences, their needs, demands and priorities in order to provide appropriate services.
 - c. An organ that encourages and goes forward with a pastoral conversion to consolidate a missionary Church, incarnated, qualified and committed to carrying it out.
 - d. An organ that keeps the passion alive for the People of God and its ability to discern on the difficulties of its history, to point towards paths for the integration and greater equality, justice and peace.
 - e. An organ based on its identity of communion, reflection and service from which to share its prophetic

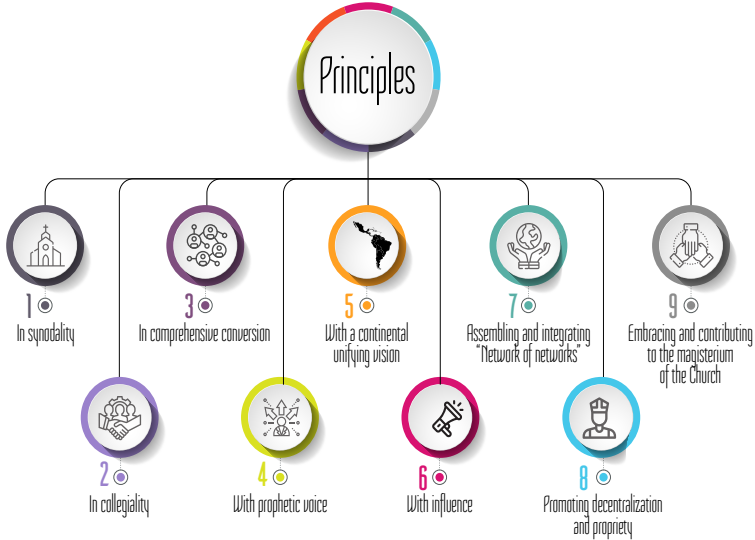


voice when facing all that attempts against life and dignity of the human being in the continent, and fostering pastoral audacity.

- f. An organ determined to serve Jesus Christ and his work, Lord of Life, and from Him and with Him, to the People of God through the National Bishop Conferences for the evangelizing mission of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE RE-NEWAL AND RESTRUCTURING

146. The basic principles defined here, are the result of discernment which throughout the process has turned into a widely participative process, with the contributions of the presidents of the CCEE, religious priests and sisters, laics and even the Holy Father. The graphic synthesis provides a general vision of the same, with a brief description of each of them and highlighting its vital interdependence.



Encouraging the personal and community encounter with Jesus Christ and serving the Bishop Conferences

147. *Principle 1: In synodality.* Synodality is not a new principle, but the Holy Father has set it on stage. This principle assesses: the response of CELAM to the needs and importance of collaborative work; it defines shared responsibilities and allows for a constant conversation inwardly to the CELAM and outwardly with the CCEE; it also enables, the assessment on how its structure allows for a strategic definition of priorities, in such way, that it gives priority to those in need; likewise, ecclesial participation is assessed in view of the overcoming of authoritarianism and clericalism, giving importance to the lay, especially women.

Rm 16,1-5

Hch 15,1ss
LG 9
UR 12

CD 4

148. *Principle 2: In collegiality.* Collegiality is inserted in the very nature of CELAM. This principle assesses: the response



to the communion among bishops in the Continent and of them with the Bishop of Rome; the promotion of cooperation amongst them and for the common good of the particular Churches entrusted to them in the specific territories.

149. *Principle 3: In comprehensive conversion.* As a finishing and starting point of the Synod for the Amazon, this principle assesses: the response of CELAM to the demand for the renewal of the concept and experience of the Church as the People of God; the organization promotion of the option for the poor; the support of the preservation of cultural riches of the Continent and its engagement to care for the common home; also, the constant process assessment for improvement.

LG 9

DAp 105

150. *Principle 4: With prophetic voice.* This principle, repeatedly noted in our enquiries to the CCRR, it assesses the CELAM response to the imperative of maintaining the discernment alive for the development of our peoples, to indicate paths of greater equality, justice and peace and to raise our voice before all that attempts against life and dignity of the human being.

Jn 12,28-30

151. *Principle 5: With a continental, unifying vision.* This principle assesses: the passion of CELAM for our peoples; how it tries to obtain of a Latin American and Caribbean vision and approach; how it pushes the regional and sub-regional of our Continent in the ecclesial and social realms without losing sight of a holistic perspective.

152. *Principle 6: With influence.* This principle assesses the true evangelizing impact of CELAM in the churches of the Continent, in the Latin American and Caribbean soci-

eties and in the decision makers, in response to the signs of the times and ensuring continuity of the processes.

153. *Principle 7: Assembling and integrating, Network of networks.* GS 4
The vocation of CELAM is encouraging vital processes, contributing with its coordination and integration. This principle assesses: the integration and strengthening of the work in networks of service; ensures a comprehensive structuring of plans and projects with National Bishop Conferences, with the Religious Latin-American Confederation-CLAR, with the Caritas Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean – SELACC, as well as other ecclesial service organizations and ecclesial and social Networks – thematic and territorial; and the CELAM boost for the exchange of resources, based on the means of people and ecclesial institutions. Jn 21,3
154. *Principle 8: Promotion decentralization and propriety.* This principle assesses: the CELAM drive of understanding of the different contexts; the promotion, enabling and evidencing of work in all of the Latin American and Caribbean territories: the identification of the specific capacities and needs of each one of them, and clarifying priorities and guidelines for the decision making on every territory: the promotion of a healthy decentralization with specialized services, widening and deepening on regional work, particularly where there is more need or opportunity. Nm 11,16-17
1Tm 3,1ss
155. *Principle 9: Embracing and contributing to the Magisterium of the Church.* This principle assesses: the faithful creativity of CELAM to the Church and the Holy Father; to his shepherding style and Magisterium; the assumption and



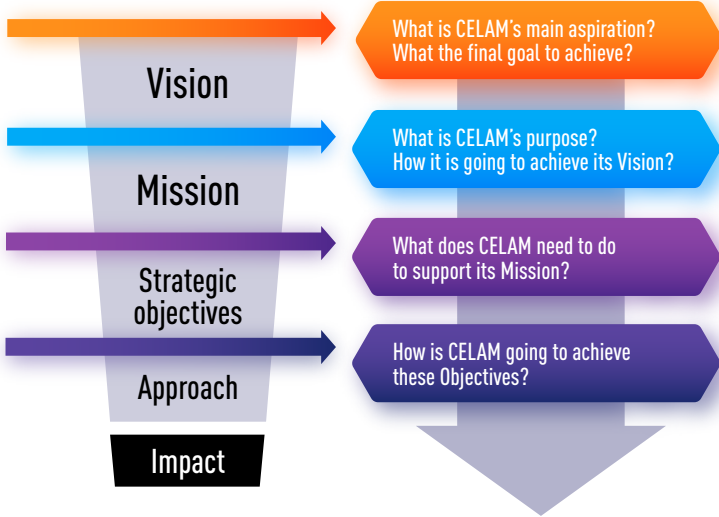
projection of the Latin American Magisterium, particularly expressed on the conclusions of the five Latin American and Caribbean Bishop General Conferences.

4. GLOBAL PROPOSAL FOR THE RENEWAL AND RESTRUCTURING, CELAM 2033

156. Having identified the Challenges to be faced by the pilgrim Church in Latin America and the Caribbean and having discerned the Guidelines and Principle that will lead our efforts, we present the Global Proposal for the Renovation and Restructuring, considering a horizon that extends until year 2033, in which we will celebrate the second millennium of our redemption.
157. We have used the strategic methodology which includes two lines of work: the first, focused on the definition of the Vision, Mission and strategic Objectives; and the second, presents the design of the organization structure, which responds to the how, to achieve its Objectives.

4.1. Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

158. The next chart presents a general overview of every component.



The Vision of CELAM towards 2033

159. To express the higher aspiration that CELAM wishes to achieve with regards to the contribution to make, we have defined the following Vision:

“The CELAM by year 2033 will be recognized as an episcopal-eclesial organ at the service of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishop Conferences, which by the support of communion and collegiality among bishops, encourages the personal and community encounter with Jesus Christ and the synodality of the churches going forth, with a preferential option for the poor and care for the common home, to make visible the Kingdom of God”.



Mission of CELAM towards 2033

160. In order to express the purpose of our Council, it is to say, how to achieve its higher aspiration (Vision), we have defined the following Mission:

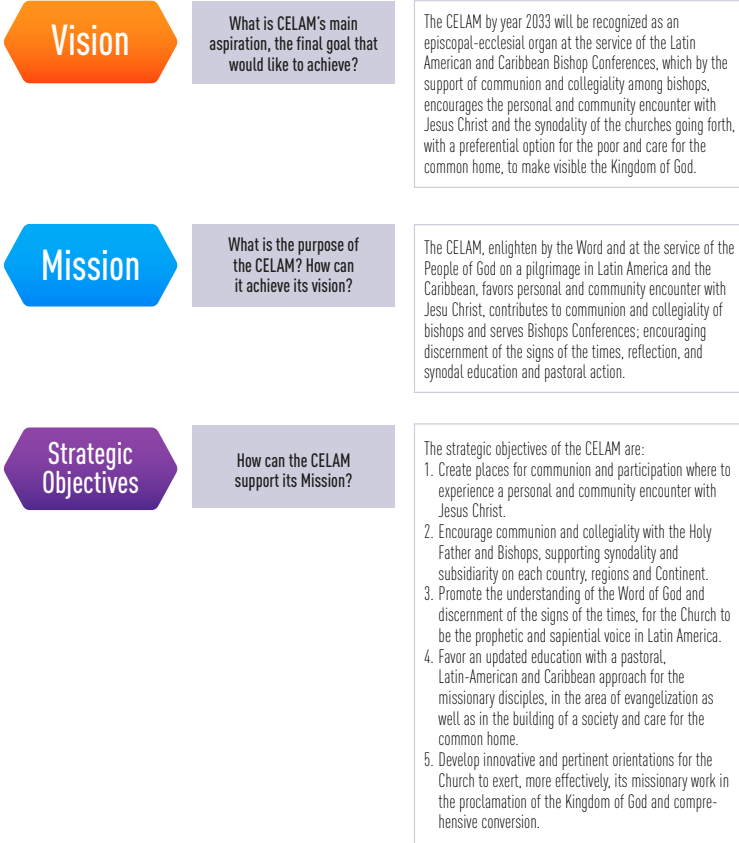
“The CELAM, enlighten by the Word and at the service of the People of God on a pilgrimage in Latin America and the Caribbean, favors personal and community encounter with Jesu Christ, contributes to communion and collegiality of bishops and serves Bishops Conferences; encouraging discernment of the signs of the times, reflection, and synodal education and pastoral action.”

The Strategic Objectives of the CELAM towards 2033

161. To fulfil its Mission, the CELAM defines and assumes five strategic objectives:

- a. Create places for communion and participation where to experience a personal and community encounter with Jesus Christ.
- b. Encourage communion and collegiality with the Holy Father and Bishops, supporting synodality and subsidiarity on each country, regions and Continent.
- c. Promote the understanding of the Word of God and discernment of the signs of the times, for the Church to be the prophetic and sapiential voice in Latin America.
- d. Favor an updated education with a pastoral, Latin-American and Caribbean approach for the missionary disciples, in the area of evangelization as well as in the building of a society and care for the common home.
- e. Develop innovative and pertinent orientations for the Church to exert, more effectively, its missionary work in the proclamation of the Kingdom of God and comprehensive conversion.

162. The next chart shows in a graphic and synthetic way, the elements of the Pastoral Strategy of the CELAM considered until now.





4.2. Organizational Structure

163. The organizational structure is an essential enabler of the Strategy. It concerns three complementary components to each other: Structure (areas, functions and report lines); decision agencies (organs that assemble and make decisions); and Organizational Culture.

a. *Basic guidelines of Organizational Structure*

164. In virtue of the Tegucigalpa Assembly mandate and after the discernment by the Presidency and group of advisory bishops, the new CELAM organizational structure must respond to the following guidelines:

- a. *Communion, Collegiality and Synodality*: the structure must favor collaborative work, share of responsibilities and promotion of a constant conversation, expression of the synodality experience from a synodal structure.
- b. *Decentralization and Propriety*: a more pertinent structure to the needs and requests from Bishop Conferences, in interaction with all regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, taking into consideration, the capacities and needs of each of them.
- c. *Participation*: a structure that supports the listening, co-responsibility and networking with the CCEE and partner organizations, promoting inward participation of the lay, especially women in CELAM.
- d. *Effectiveness, Efficiency, Flexibility and Agility*: a lighter, simpler, agile, more flexible and effective structure in providing answers, especially pastoral.

b. From the strategic objectives to the four Centers of the CELAM

165. From the strategic objectives, which to a large extent, indicate the work of CELAM in fulfilling its Mission, some action areas derive which took form in the configuration of four Pastoral Centers from which the CELAM intends to provide its services to the Bishop Conferences and to the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- a. The first strategic objective: Create places for communion and participation from where to experience personal and community encounter with Jesus Christ. This is taken on as a transversal objective to be promoted across CELAM, in the Presidency and in and from each of the four Pastoral Centers briefly presented.
 - b. The second strategic objective: Encourage communion and collegiality with the Holy Father and with the Bishops, supporting synodality and subsidiarity on each country, region and in the Continent. It is led from the same Presidency.
166. The order of presentation of the Pastoral Centers, that follows, responds to the pastoral process that has become common in our Latin-American and Caribbean style: in the first place the Center for Knowledge Management, linked to the *See and Listen*; in second place, the Center for Education –CEBITEPAL, linked to the *Judge and enlighten*; in the third place, the Center for Pastoral



Programs and Action Networks, linked to the *Act*; lastly, the Center for Communication, closely linked to the three previous Centers.

Center for Knowledge Management

167. To drive the strategic objective number three: “promote understanding of the Word of God and discernment of the signs of the times, for the Church to become the prophetic and sapiential voice in Latin America and the Caribbean,” we have constituted the Center for Knowledge Management.
168. To respond to the objective which gave it origin, this Center is assembled with the Theological-Pastoral Reflection Team and other three Centers of CELAM. Also, it seeks: joint work among Centers, groups and social academic-pastoral research observatories in the continent; it integrates an organic work with other research centers; it identifies, formalizes, prioritizes and diffuses knowledge generated by the CCEE and other ecclesial organs; it offers a permanent analysis of the reality of the times with its implications for the pastoral; and it generates relevant knowledge, of pastoral use to better design the services of CELAM and influence the Church and society.

Center for Education CEBITEPAL

169. To implement the strategic objective number four: “Favor an updated education with a pastoral, Latin-American and Caribbean approach for the missionary disciples,

in the area of evangelization as well as in the building of a society and care for the common home,” we have constituted the Center for Education – CEBITEPAL. In order to respond to the objective that gave its origin, this Center supports the education programs and adapts to the contexts, methods and needs of the People of God, it is to say, Bishops, pastoral agents and the lay in general, in organization with networks and institutions for pastoral formation in the region.

Center for Pastoral Action Programs and Networks

170. To drive the strategic objective number five: “Develop innovative and pertinent orientations for the Church to exert, more effectively, its missionary work in the proclamation of the Kingdom of God and comprehensive conversion,” we have constituted the Center for Pastoral Action Programs and Networks, this Center is supported in the ecclesiology of the People of God, a pilgrim in history and historic object of evangelization. The entire People of God proclaims the Gospel, as established in *Evangelii Gaudium*, given that every baptized is called to become a leader in mission. In this sense, this Center has been configured in two priority pastoral lines to serve and accompany the mission of the CELAM together with CCEE and the Church in the continent: the integral human development and ecology; and the synodal Church going forth.
171. This Center: Develops processes for the encouragement of territorial and/or thematic networks that contribute to the comprehensive conversion; it encourages the or-



dinary pastoral to become a missionary pastoral going forth and in conversion; it makes visible the Pontifical and Latin-American Magisterium to have an impact on an explicit response to the major social issues; it interprets reality, it informs against the abuse of our peoples and influence, together with the CCEE, partner ecclesial organizations and civil society organizations. In governments, international institutions, etc., to achieve policies that take into consideration the rights of people.

Center for Communication

172. To drive the set of objectives transversally, we have established the Center for Communications. This Center contributes to the Mission of the Church in the continent, through the consolidation of a communication and technology innovative *ecosystem*, in collaboration with ecclesial and social agencies and institutions of regional and international influence and it promotes the theological pastoral services of CELAM, in conversation with the CCEE and with the Dicastery for Communication of the Holy See.
173. There are multiple voices of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, specially of the CCEE, which have expressed the need to strengthen the *technological and communicative ecosystem* at the service of the evangelizing mission of the continent. This center represents a qualitative jump in communication for the pastoral and the pastoral for communication, from the imperative of synodality, culture of encounter and digital transformation. We need that the prophetic voice of the Catholic

Church echoes in Latin America and the Caribbean and contributed to the positioning of values of the Gospel in society. All of this, with the joint work of the presidency of CELAM, other pastoral centers and especially the Bishop Conferences.

c. The Theological-Pastoral Reflection Team

174. The Second Conference of the Latin-American Episcopate, held in Medellin in 1968, made the first collegial, situated and creative reception of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. In such way that on its sixteen final documents the theological reflection emerging on our region, collaboration among bishops and theologians in line with the conciliar experience of Vatican II was perceived.
175. Later, within the CELAM organization, such spirit of reflection was consolidated in several dimensions: in 1969, the Reflection Team was created; in 1974 the four institutes were unified into the ITEPAL which later gave origin to CEBITEPAL; in 1975, the Medellin magazine was founded, which has contributed to the education of several generations and continues to enlighten our evangelizing mission.
176. Since then, the Reflection Team has gone through several configurations (structures) and tasks: a) it promoted an uncultured theological reflection rooted in the Word of God and with a defined pastoral orientation; b)it enlighten the doctrinal problems of every moment; c) it drove a fruitful exchange between the pontifical magisterium and the Latin-American theology; d) it accompanied, the preparation, celebration and reception



of the orientations of our Episcopate General Conferences; e) it collaborated with the contribution of the CELAM to the synodal assemblies, specially of those referred to justice (1971), evangelization (1974) and new evangelization (2012). After the V General Conference in Aparecida the Team was reconstituted to continue with its support to the theological-pastoral reflection on the missionary discipleship.

177. In the Church's synodal vocation, the theology charism provides a specific service through the listening of the Word of God in the tradition of the People of God; the faith's sapiential, scientific and prophetic intelligence; the evangelical discernment of the sign of the times; and the conversation with society and cultures from the joy of the Gospel.
178. In the context of the Renewal and Restructuring process, we drove the service of the Theological-Pastoral Reflection team in CELAM and to the Bishop Conferences to help with a deeper understanding of the Gospel and revitalize the faith of the Christian communities. As in every ecclesial vocation, the theologian ministry is personal and communal.
179. We wish to restructure the Reflection Team by incorporating theologians who represent the different disciplines, institutions and generations to encourage a synodal exercise of the theological work. Synodality inspires the creation of a circular and incarnated theology, it is to say, fostering the ability to listen, converse, discern and integrate the diversity of voices in the chorus of the Latin-American theological community.

d. The Regions

180. The Regions are essential to the promotion and enabling of the work in each and every one of them, indicating the specific capacities and needs of each one, and facilitating the clarification of priorities and guidelines that support the decision making on every region. CELAM promotes a healthy decentralization with specialized services, broadening and deepening the regional work to assess, discern and project actions.

e. Support Areas

Planning Directorate

181. This Directorate is responsible for two important functions to support achievement of the mission objectives of CELAM:
- a. On one side, it coordinates planning processes (annual operation plan – AOP,) monitoring, follow up and assessment of CELAM, in such way, that the programs, projects and actions of CELAM are assembled and through follow up and accompaniment, it can make informed and timely decisions.
 - b. On the other hand, it is also responsible of taking on initiatives and coordinating activities required to strengthen relations with economic support and fraternal cooperation agencies and carry out due management of the pastoral projects, obtaining the required resources.

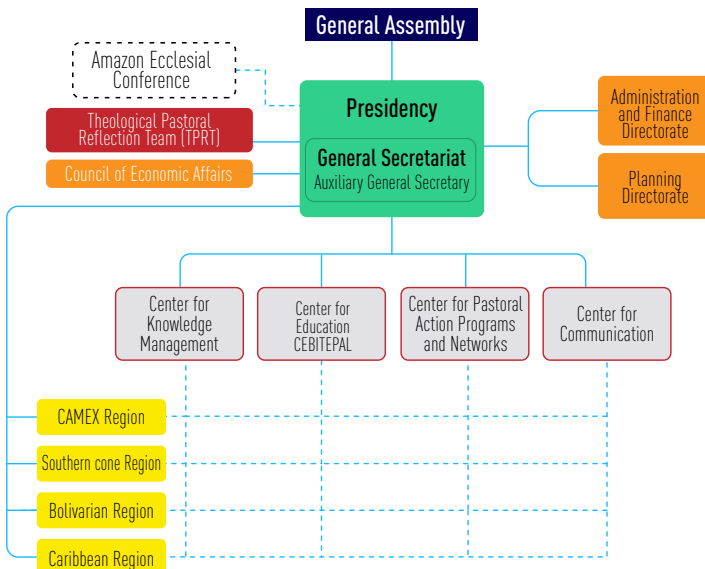


Administrative and Financial Directorate

182. This directorate integrates what was previously in separate areas, such as treasury, human talent, systems, purchasing and support services (cafeteria, cleaning, gardening, etc.). under this sole direction, all administrative and financial processes are assembled, in such way that it can respond in an integrated, efficient and effective way to the needs of the Presidency and of the Pastoral Centers.

f. Organizational Structure

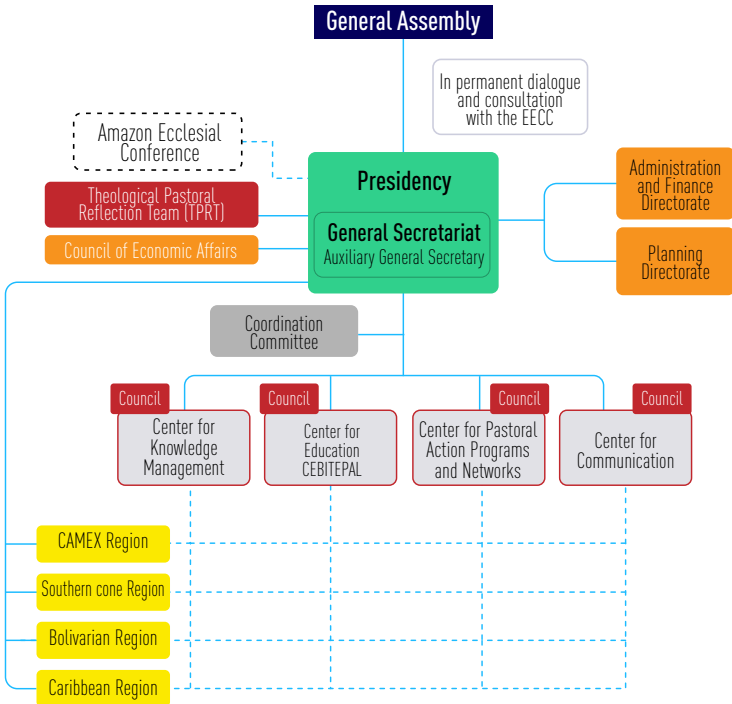
183. Next, we are presenting as a general organizational chart or structure. Where the Presidency, the four Pastoral Centers, the Theological-Pastoral Reflection Team Regions, the Planning Directorate Administrative and Financial Directorate can be appreciated.



g. Decision agencies

184. In addition to having a general or formal structure, the organizational structure requires the definition of decision petitions. These are aimed at institutionalizing that the decision making privileges the consensus to ensure integration, assembly, synergy and propriety, that is, a structure for and from synodality.

185. The next diagram shows and explains such aspects.





186. As set out in the statutes of CELAM, the General Assembly is the highest authority which determines the course the service of our Council must follow and appoints the Presidency members.
187. The Presidency leads the ordinary management of CELAM and ensures execution of the mandates, guidelines and other conclusions of the Assembly. It is a collegiate organ, comprised by the President, the First and Second Vice-Presidents, the President of the Council of Economic Affairs and the General Secretariat. It holds a meeting at least two times a year or as many times as deemed necessary by the President. The suggestion is that the Assembly reelects (only once) one or several members to ensure and support continuity of programs indicated by the Assembly.
188. The General Secretariat is the immediate and permanent executive organ of the Presidency, responsible for encouraging and coordinating the activities of the CELAM. It holds contact and communication with the different Bishop Conferences in order to understand their realities, needs, and thus, serve them better. It directs the definition of the Global Plan and Annual Operation Plan of the effect of CELAM, and leads and prepare the Coordination Committee of the Pastoral Centers, which is the assembling agency for the implementation of the annual operation plan of the CELAM, amongst other functions.
189. The Economic Affairs Council (EAC), is presided by a Bishop appointed by the Assembly, from a three candidate group, proposed by the appointed members of

the Presidency, advised by the outgoing Presidency, and who cannot be reelected.

- a. The EAC is comprised by the President of CELAM, the General Secretary and coordinator Bishops of the Pastoral Centers Councils designated by the Assembly all with a right to vote. The suggestion is that the outgoing President of the EAC is part of the same.
 - b. Members with voice but no vote rights are: The Administration and Finance Director, the Planning Director, two representatives of the Agencies supporting CELAM, designated by the Presidency, the Fiscal Auditor, the General Accountant (when invited by the President of the Council) and technical advisers, competent in the area of finance and economy, in number no greater than 4, for a term of 4 years (should not be reelected more than twice.) candidates are presented by the President of the Economic Affairs Council and the Administrative and Financial Director to the Presidency of the CELAM for approval.
 - c. The EAC is responsible for safeguarding the patrimony of CELAM with all designations and responsibilities entailed and in virtue with the applicable canonical regulations; also, it distributes the assets and funds of CELAM, as a collegial body, in coordination with the General Secretary, from whom it receives pastoral criteria and priorities that must direct the administrative and financial tasks. It holds meetings at least every three months, it reports to the Presidency and accompanies the pastoral process of CELAM.
190. On track on the path of synodality, the Pastoral Centers Councils are places for representativeness of Bishops



participating in the discernment and execution processes according to the programs and projects of each Pastoral Center. They will also be constituted by lay people, religious brothers and sisters and ordained ministers, experts on the operational areas of each Center. Every Pastoral Center Council is led by a bishop who will have the support of an Auxiliary Bishop.

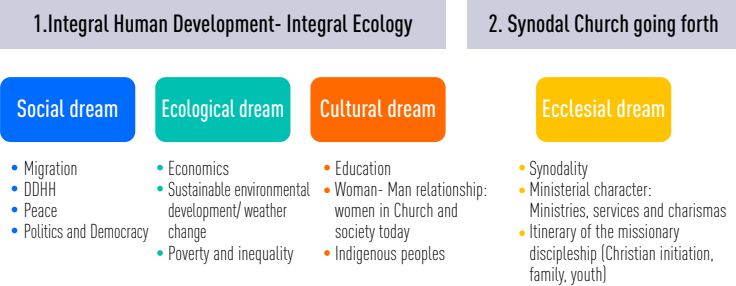
191. The Coordination Committee will be comprised by the President of CELAM who leads it, the General Secretary, bishops coordinating the 4 Pastoral Centers, the Director of each Center, and according to the issue, the responsible for the Planning Directorate or the Administration and Financial Directorate. This Committee enables the coordination among the four Pastoral Centers, supporting the integration of the action plan in effect. It holds meetings at least every month.

5. PASTORAL PRIORITIES

192. Before presenting into more detail the broad outlines of each of the Pastoral Centers, it is important to keep in mind, considering the discernment process we have been following, we have established two main service dimensions that, as two main routes, give way to the common priorities of the four Pastoral Centers. They facilitate that the issues presented as focus of one of the Centers, find the space to ensure *transversality*. The Centers are not independent and isolated entities but service agencies, whose intrinsic complementarity is defined and understood from the methodological background

of the *See, Judge or Enlighten and Act* giving an imprint to every Center, and integrating them in one process.

193. The first priority, dimension or theme route has been entitled “*Integral Human Development and Ecology*” and is directed at giving way to three of the four “dreams” of Pope Francis, expressed in *Querida Amazonia*: the social dream, the cultural dream and the ecological dream. The second priority, dimension or route, is entitled “*Synodal Church going forth*” and is directed at taking on the last of the four dreams proposed by Pope Francis: the ecclesial dream.
194. Within this two main routes some transversal issues are outlined, it is to say, they are taken on by the four Pastoral Centers of the CELAM.





6. PROJECTION OF THE PASTORAL CENTERS OF CELAM TOWARDS 2033

195. From the Renewal and Restructuring Global Proposal, presented in previous sections, we will describe next, the concrete implementation from each one of the Pastoral Centers, for the term ending in 2033 and that will become more specific in the annual Plan.

6.1. Center for Knowledge Management

196. Reconsider what the previous structure called “Socio-Pastoral Observatory,” led to a broader and complex need: is required to generate and manage *significant knowledge*, that supports CELAM in the discernment of the times of the region, with the purpose of contributing to the prophetic voice of the Church in society.

197. From this need, the Vision is described next: The Center for Knowledge Management, in coordination and conversation with other Pastoral Centers of the CELAM, it will become:

- a. A source of information, knowledge and understanding of the signs of the times in Latina America and the Caribbean (LAC) at the service of CELAM, the Bishop Conferences and every member of the People of God.
- b. A structure aimed at collecting, processing and disseminating pastoral and socio-anthropological experiences and knowledge of great impact, according to

- the new role of the Church in LAC and promoting integral human development.
- c. A center for knowledge management able to listen the various voices of the People of God and gather expert knowledge from different internal and external academic, social and ecclesial sources internals of our Church.
 - d. A research agency able to process knowledge in a timely manner, with appropriate costs and quality and able to present it in a friendly manner to the different decision makers it serves.
 - e. A team of specialists able to value judgements based on the evidence on several issues and dilemmas of the people in LAC, from a socio pastoral perspective and in discernment.
 - f. A center that will be featured by its ability to converse in the knowledge generation process, since in the interaction, the experiences and learnings can be explained as well as the discernment and respond processes carried out by communities, and it will integrate them within a theological-pastoral Reading with the input from the Theological Pastoral Reflection Team (TPRT) assigned to the Presidency.
 - g. A center with ability to influence inward and outward from the church on relevant issues or object of interest of the Presidency of CELAM.
198. To achieve this Vision, the Center for Knowledge Management, resolved on the following Mission: “Promote the creation and management of knowledge, from the



CELAM, based on evidence and useful for the discernment of the signs of the times in light of the Word of God, the theological reflection and ecclesial Magisterium, with the purpose that the Church, the People of God, becomes a prophetic and sapiential voice in Latin America and the Caribbean.”

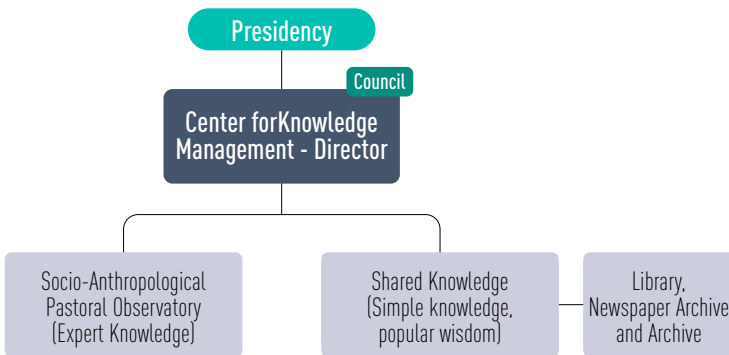
199. From this Mission, the following functions for the Center for Knowledge Management are identified:
 - a. Create socio-anthropological and pastoral knowledge to contribute to the prophetic and sapiential maturation of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, observing the signs of the times and needs of the People of God.
 - b. Capture and process, systematically and in synodality, existent knowledge through direct enquiries to the People of God on a pilgrimage in LAC, expert networks and qualified informants, self-studies or reports, or ad hoc researches.
 - c. Identify and consult with expert and non-expert relevant sources of experience and knowledge belonging to the different pastoral, socio-anthropological and academic areas.
 - d. Integrate knowledge management together with the other 3 centers, as pastoral practice stimulating the share of experience and knowledge to make the Kingdom of God, living and effective.
 - e. Support the discernment of the pastoral and socio-anthropological reality of LAC from the analysis and organization of knowledge in a Smart, friendly manner, accessible to everyone.

- f. Set out action lines based on managed knowledge and proposed with a transforming impact on society and life of the Church,
 - g. Disseminate self-knowledge, in coordination with the Center for Communications, seeking to collaborate to the prophetic and sapiential prominence and to improve the decision making of the receptors, in particular of the Presidency of CELAM, its Centers and the CCEE.
 - h. Participate in social and ecclesial public debate through the dialogue, proposal and influence of key issues.
 - i. Promote share of experiences, knowledge and learning among pastoral and community agents from the perspective of the People of God on the way, who share and listens to its joys and hopes, its sadness and anguish.
 - j. Promote analog agencies to the Center for Knowledge Management of national and regional reach; create new networks and become part of the already existent ones, according to the mission of the Center and acting as a hub.
200. The Source of knowledge of this Center comes from the enquiry, listening and permanent conversation of the People of God, expert networks from diverse academic fields, from bishops and Bishop Conferences, from Priests of the Latin-American Church, from the Centers for Pastoral Action Programs and Networks, and certainly, from our own or third party elaboration,



within the framework of the Word of God, the universal and Latin-American Magisterium, social sciences and humanities, as well as the complex and dynamic social and ecclesial Latin-American and Caribbean reality.

201. In the formal structure of this Center, we have the *Socio-anthropological and Pastoral Observatory*, directed to gather, process and issue studies or enquires with the purpose of having diagnoses and understanding the signs of the times in Latin America and the Caribbean, and from accumulated testimonies, experiences evidence and knowledge.
202. In this Center we also have the *Area for shared Knowledge*, from which the Library, Newspaper Archive and Archive of the CELAM depends on. Shared Knowledge, through a digital platform and which will be directed towards the identification, formalization, processing and dissemination of knowledge and pastoral good practices at political, academic, social and pastoral levels (with the aid of other agencies), as seen on the next diagram.



203. Even when the transversal issues, already indicated on paragraph 55, the next table allows for the appreciation of the range of issues considered in this Center and that will be addressed thanks to the coordination of capacities already existing in the Church

1. Integral Human Development- Integral Ecology		2. Synodal Church going forth	
Social dream	Ecological dream	Cultural dream	Cultural dream
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequality and poverty • Life health and culture • 3T: Land, Work and Ceiling • DDHH • Democracy • Migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Ecology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Man-woman relationship • Ethnic group and races • Family, social and structural violence • Youth and change of the times • Latin-American integration • Horizon 2031-2033 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synodality • Religious freedom • Transformation of the imaginary of the Church in the continent • New programs of Christian initiation • Ministry, services and charismas • Pastoral Planning

6.2 Center for Education –CEBITEPAL

204. From the experience of this Center, and open to the renovation and restructuring proposal, its Vision has been defined as follows: “CEBITEPAL is the Center for Education of the which will respond with propriety and efficacy to the basic and specialized education and research needs of Latin America and the Caribbean, for a prophetic and real transformation of its peoples in light of the Latin-American, universal and pontifical Magisterium with an integrating approach of the theory and praxis, based on the theological, biblical, ecological and social dimension.”

205. As for its mission, it states the following: “Support education, reflection and research programs that adapt with flexibility to the contexts, methods and needs of the



People of God: Bishops, Pastoral Agents and lay people in general; in coordination with the other three Pastoral Centers of CELAM, education networks and institutions, to make a dignified life, possible and effective, for our peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean”.

206. The following characteristics are indicated to better explain its identity:
 - a. Theological, biblical, ecological/social thought, enlighten by the Latin-American, universal and pontifical Magisterium and by the praxis of our peoples.
 - b. Comprehensive coordination among the three areas: theological, biblical and ecological/social, in theory and praxis, always present in every formation.
 - c. In synodality and coordination with the other three Centers of CELAM, other education, research and network centers.
 - d. In communion, it provides places for the interaction of different theological, biblical and ecological/social reflections, providing the best of itself together for the whole continent in relation with the Universal Church.
 - e. With an intercultural vision and action in favor of a regional and continental integration.
207. With regards to its functions:
 - a. It provides education on vanguard and relevant issues for the evangelizing action of the Church in our peoples.

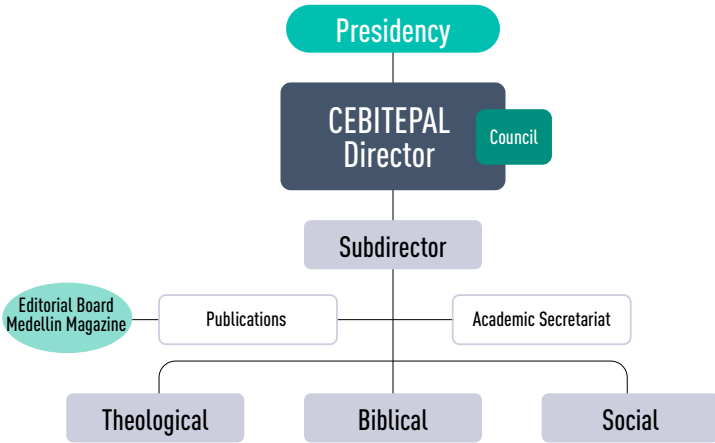
- b. It provides education (on-site, semi-virtual and virtual) programs and methods that can flexible adapt to the contexts and needs of those seeking its services.
 - c. It provides its own education in coordination with the different networks and institutions.
 - d. It encourages research and reflection through its educational programs and publications.
 - e. It coordinates, together with the Center for Knowledge Management (CGC), a network of pastoral and biblical theologians in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a regional and continental vision, promoting issues that are a priority to its peoples and in conversation with the Universal Church.
 - f. It issues the *Revista Medellín (Medellin magazine)* of long history and it provides the opportunity for new publications of its action areas, according to the expressed needs.
 - g. It monitors and measures its education and research impact in the evangelizing mission of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean.
 - h. It coordinates its actions with the other Pastoral Centers of CELAM.
208. The educational offer of the CEBITEPAL aims at fulfilling the following characteristics:
- a. In harmonious interaction with verification of the specific needs from other Pastoral Centers.
 - b. As a response to a need requested by: The Regions, Bishop Conferences, Dioceses, Networks, Congregations, Based Communities, Ecclesial Movements



- or other institutions from the People of God requiring it.
- c. Providing continuity to those educational projects of greater and constant demand to CEBITEPAL.
 - d. With the participation of advisors from the Theological, Biblical and Ecological/Social Dimension.
 - e. Ensuring programs, examined every four years, as well as changing programs according to the Reading of the signs of the times, in line with the pontifical Magisterium or at the request of the CCEE.
 - f. Providing answers to critical issues discerned in conversation with other Pastoral Centers of CELAM.
 - g. Adapting every educational program to the cultural characteristics, needs and requirements of each segment, territoriality and method and to multiple educational programs: learning communities, classes, workshops, diploma and specialized courses.
209. CEBITEPAL will insist on the assemble of a wide network of educational institutions, interaction with educational places and agencies of the Bishop Conferences, Universities (ODUCAL), Centers for Education of different expressions of the Church, Research Centers, various Networks and Organizations. For the CEBITEPAL the establishment of agreements with local institutions of well-known quality, is a priority for the existent educational offer to expand the scope of its regional initiatives. In this way, the existent educational offer in this wide network of educational institutions joins the capacities of CEBITEPAL, which will fulfill the educational needs of those issues where there is no offer on

the continental network or where the existent offer does not have the required quality or propriety.

210. The structure proposed for the Center is the following, where the three areas – theological, biblical and ecological/social- are working jointly and comprehensively in every educational program:



211. The educational offer presented next is organized in segments and according to the four dreams contemplated by Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation “Querida Amazonia.” This educational offer will be achieved thanks to the coordination with existing educational universities and centers in the Church.



1. Integral Human Development- Integral Ecology

Social dream

- New DSI horizons and its transforming capacity
- Human Mobility: Where is your sibling?
- Human dignity in the difficult reality of the Latin-American prisons
- The Earth a Place and Right for everyone
- Dignified life and Housing: A Fundamental Right
- Work: Performance, Commitment and Right
- Health: A Christian fundamental challenge
- Politics, the highest of Charity
- Human Rights
- Ethics and values in light of the Laudato Si

Ecological dream

- Integral Ecology
- Integral Economy from and for our Peoples

Cultural dream

- Mission, Interculturality and Popular Religiosity of the People of God
- Interculturality and inculturation: Wealth and input from Indigenous Peoples
- An urgent anthropological turn: for a just and dignified woman-man relationship
- The importance of Communication in the Latin American and Caribbean Church
- The new narratives: a path towards truthfulness of the news
- Multiple scenarios for Education in Latin America

2. Synodal Church going forth

Ecclesial dream

- Thought and Action in Pope Francis Pontificate and his influence
- Integral and participative Pastoral Planning
- Vocational Planning
- Theological Update of missionary disciples from Latin-American perspectives
- Biblical Update in the Latin-American perspective
- Biblical Pastoral: Approach, Community Experience and Generativity
- Law at the service of Love and Justice
- Latin-American Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue
- Latin-American Church: an original path of evangelization with historic vision

6.3 Center for Pastoral Action Programs and Networks

212. Its vision is stated as follows: CELAM and Bishop Conferences with the encouragement of Latin America and Caribbean pastoral action:

- Develops pastoral processes on territorial and/or theme networks that contribute to the comprehensive conversion.
- It promotes and positions the pontifical magisterium and Latin-American and Caribbean Episcopate and corresponding elaborated pastoral methodology.
- It is able to position the proposals of the Church in LAC on the governments and civil organizations' agenda to recognize the moral authority of the pon-

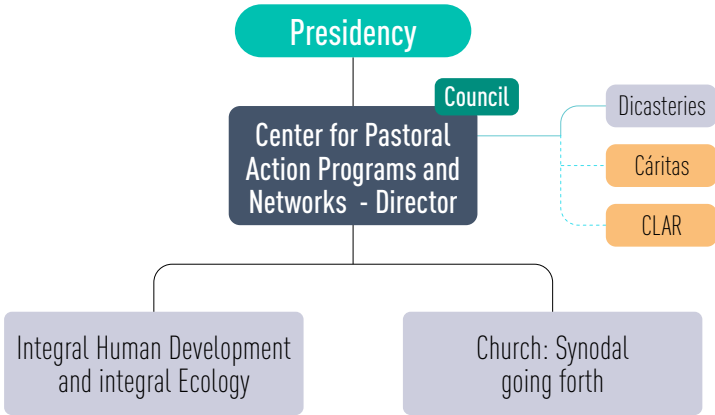
- tifical Magisterium and Latin-American and Caribbean Episcopate. It also has influenced the explicit response before the most urgent social problems.
- d. It strengthens the Church institutions working for the most vulnerable.
 - e. It strengthens the positioning of the Social Doctrine of the Church in society, in political, economic, social. Cultural environmental, educational and spiritual areas.
 - f. It facilitates the path from a conservation pastoral to a missionary *journeys* pastoral for a synodal church going forth.
213. The Center for Pastoral Action Programs and Networks takes on as Mission: “Develop innovative and pertinent directions, foster processes and provide pastoral services so the Church live more effectively, its missionary work in the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, the following of Christ and comprehensive conversion”.
214. With regards to its functions:
- a. Coordinate networks where pastoral work and services are improved.
 - b. Encourage ordinary pastoral to become a missionary, synodal and going forth pastoral in conversion.
 - c. Make visible the Latin-American and pontifical Magisterium.
 - d. Create teaching tools and elaborate subsidies to organize the pastoral.
 - e. Interpret reality, inform against the abuse suffered by our people and influence, together with the CCEE



and civil society organizations, governments, global institutions, etc., to achieve politics that guarantee the rights of the persons.

215. With regards to the characteristics of its action:
- a. Insist on the encouragement of *processes* and not of events, favoring the listening and accompaniment; tracing concrete action lines, feasible and pertinent; providing pastoral animation and innovation tools; creating a procedural methodology in the pastoral.
 - b. Multi-scale: Local (diocese), National (Bishop Conference), Regional (Latin- America and the Caribbean) and International (Holy See.)
 - c. Multidimensional, according to the proposal of the pastoral category of the integral Ecology set forth in *Laudato Sí*, on the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, educational and spiritual.
 - d. Cross-sectional: participating the whole People of God, in synodality and with the Pastoral as a whole.
 - e. Realization: Territories or themes of special urgency to whom the Church wants to respond.
 - f. Historic Reflection – a concrete experience and of all its symbolic capital.
 - g. Integrating all Latin America and the Caribbean. Understanding and responding to the different realities of the regions.
216. As mentioned in the restructuring section, this Pastoral Center has outlined two priority lines to serve and accompany the mission of CELAM in its entirety, the CCEE and the Church in the continent: The Integral

Human Development and Integral Ecology; and the synodal Church going forth. This Pastoral Center will work closely together and concertedly with the Dicasteries of the Holy See, the SELACC and the CLAR.



217. The next table allows for the appreciation of the series of issues considered in this Center and that could be addressed thanks to the collaboration with other Pastoral Centers and with the several ecclesial organizations of the Church in the continent and other dicasteries.

1. Integral Human Development- Integral Ecology		2. Synodal Church going forth	
Social dream	Ecological dream	Cultural dream	Ecclesial dream
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration • DDHH – democracy and peace • Integral Economy and Education within the frame of the global agreement • Children's Pastoral, minor protection and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial Ecclesial Networks of Integral Ecology RETEI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women as subject/victim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministerial Education: Ministries, services and charismas • Missionary discipleship program – (Christian initiation, family, youth)



6.4. Center for Communication

218. During the building process of this Center for Communication, we identified some challenges which are grouped into five categories:

- a. *Communicate to transform reality and influence Latin America and the Caribbean.* CELAM communication wagner is called to accompany and echo its actions on the continent, under the inspiration of the Word of God and perspective of the Social Doctrine of the Church, considering the input from the Observatory and Center for Knowledge Management.
- b. *Communicate for the prophetic positioning of CELAM.* The preferential option for the poor, present in the Magisterium of the Latin-American and Caribbean Church and in its pastoral action, it is constituted in a fundamental path to make the communication of CELAM, an expression of its prophetic vocation, true and hopeful, corroborated by the testimony of the martyrs of yesterday and today who have given up their lives for justice, equality, and peace.
- c. *Communicate for synodality and ecclesial collaboration.* The imperative of synodality on the Church must translate into communication options that provide value to participation processes and ecclesial collaboration, from the prominence of the People of God and the primacy of the “culture of encounter”.
- d. *Pastoral for Communication and the Communication of the Pastoral.* The acknowledgement of communication as a place for evangelization, and at the same time, validate that “evangelization, proclamation of the King-

dom, is communication” (DP 1063), it constitutes a path for the communication action of CELAM.

- e. *Communication at the service of the Latin-American and Caribbean Church.* CELAM needs to strengthen its communication and technological ecosystem at the service of the Latin American and Caribbean Church, as well as its promotion strategies for theological pastoral educational programs. Including, the need to create a news agency to strengthen communication networks and provide communication support to bishop conferences.

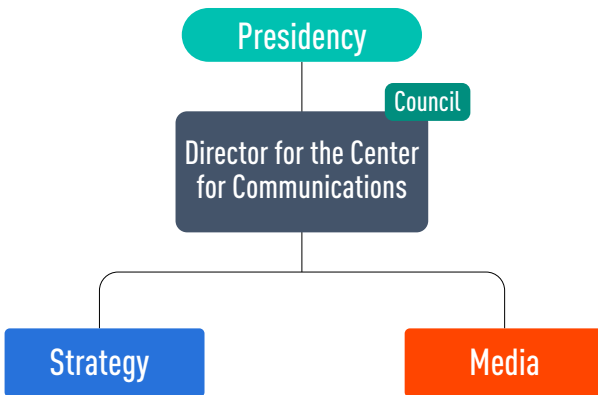
219. With regards to its Vision, “The Center for Communication of CELAM will become a model for communication strategies at the service of the People of God, adapted and in accordance to the current technologies, with the purpose of fostering the prophetic positioning of the Church and its influence in the transformation of the reality, as well as to contribute to the communication of the pastoral and to the Pastoral for Communication in Latin America and the Caribbean , in synodality and in the preferential option for the poor perspective.”

220. With regards to its Mission: “The Center for Communication of CELAM discerns, designs, executes and assess communication strategies at the service of the People of God, that contribute to the mission of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, through the consolidation of a communication and technology innovative ecosystem, the collaboration with social, and ecclesial agencies, and regional and international institutions, the promotion of theological-pastoral services of CELAM,



in conversation with the CCEE and with the Dicastery for Communication of the Holy See”.

221. In order to fulfill its Mission, this Center has two departments: The *Strategy* department, responsible for the establishment of the communication plan of CELAM, its policies and Brand manual, the promotion and implementation of communication networks, at the service of the evangelizing mission of the Continent, and for the strengthening of the Pastoral for Communication; and the *Media* department, responsible for the implementation of what has been determined by the Strategy department. For this effect, it will be responsible for the relationship with the Media (press office), of the strengthening of digital media (website, social networks, among others) and digital marketing, editorial and production (video, translations, etc.).





222. The Document set forth gathers and integrates the reflection of many pastoral agents who throughout the discernment program have participated in synodality, in the renovation and restructuring process of CELAM and its contents have been structured considering style most considerate in the pastoral action of our Continent; See, Judge and Act.
223. In consistency with the pastoral method we have taken on, we consider that this conclusion is really the door to a new introduction. The discernment process continues, we acknowledge that it must be permanent, for which our Document remains open to the input of its readers, and mainly, to the plans, programs and projects that make it operational on concrete plans.
224. The love to Our Lady and her mysteries define the faith of the People of God in a pilgrim way in Latin America and the Caribbean, as perceived in many expressions of its Marian piety or spirituality. “Our peoples... find the tenderness and love of God, on the face of Mary” (DAP 265). The beauty, joy and tenderness of God are shown on the Mother of God. Since 1530, the mestizo and native-like face of Our Lady of Guadalupe who carries her people on the pupils of her eyes and shelters it with her cape. We pilgrim to the sanctuaries to find the mercy of the Father expressed on the Paschal cross of Jesus and maternal tenderness of Mary. On them, we see Our Lady and we submit to her tender gaze. She, “our life, sweetness and our hope,” turn them most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us and show Jesus unto us. “Mary brings together her children who with great effort come as pilgrims to see her and to be seen by her” (EG 286). “Your steadfast love, O LORD,

endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands” (Psalm 138), “our mouths filled with laughter, and our lips with song. Then the nations kept saying, ‘What great deeds Yahweh has done for them!’” (Psalm 125).

225. “Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands” (Psalm 138,8). “The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.” (Psalm 126,3). We are heading towards the fifth centenary of the presence of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2031. She accompanies us because she is the queen and mother of mercy, cause of our joy, protector of America. We entrust our path of CELAM in our new synodal process of the Church of the Continent and ask for the grace of renewal to the pace of the Holy Spirit and attentive to the signs of this historical moment.

