



IT'S TIME TO INCLUDE US

Vic, August 14, 2023

We, the Chapter Assembly gathered in Vic for the celebration of Chapter XXVIII of the Congregation of Carmelites Sisters of Charity Vedruna representing the Vedruna Family present on four continents, address the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

We greet the Assembly and, in a special way, the women who are participants. We support you and feel represented by you. We also greet and thank Pope Francis for his willingness to invite the participation of women.

In our communities we have actively participated in the diocesan stage of the synodal process and we value it with hope of a new rebirth of the Church. Our deep sense of ecclesial belonging now impels us, as a chapter community, to say our word to the Synod.

We, like other women, experience different modes of exclusion in spaces and forums usually reserved for men, especially those who are ordained. Many times, our gifts, our vision and our words are ignored in the discernments, responsibilities, decision-making, in the interpretation of the Word and the magisterium, as well as in the way of organizing in the Church at different levels. The equality of our baptismal dignity as men and women, lay men and women, and the ordained is upheld, but we miss the practice that clearly demonstrates this equality.

All of this moves us to express our deep concern about this situation of exclusion. Believing that the Church is to be a living memory of Jesus, Good News for everyone, we also find that the clerical ecclesial culture contributes to the distance of the Church from the new generations.

We ask this Assembly to dialogue and deliberate with courage to open paths of hope towards a Church that is:

- A Community of communities that includes and recognizes the equal dignity of women and men, ordained or not, accompanying the processes of faith.
- A Community that exercises a shared leadership between the different charisms and services, effecting alternatives to relationships in an unequal patriarchal world.
- A Community sustained in the radical equality of having been created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gn 1,26-27), made manifest in its structures and its preaching; in teaching, biblical interpretation, celebrations and formation in diocesan seminaries; in social action and a commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of Creation.

Our foundress, Saint Joaquina de Vedruna, maintained a fraternal dialogue with the Church to discern and make decisions before, during and after the founding of the Congregation. We too seek to maintain this dialogue wherever we are and we claim it's possibility for all women.



We trust in the good work of the Synod in listening to this ecclesial and social cry. For our part, we ratify our commitment to walk in synodality, accompanying and being accompanied to weave together living communities of a vibrant, prophetic Samaritan Church wherever we are present.

Trusting that the Holy Ruah accompanies you, receive our blessings.

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