

**SYNOD OF BISHOPS  
SPECIAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE PAN-AMAZONIAN REGION  
AMAZONIA: NEW WAYS FOR THE CHURCH AND FOR A HOLISTIC ECOLOGY  
FINAL DOCUMENT**

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**Note: The Spanish original can be found [here](#). The final vote tally on each paragraph can be found [here](#).**

## INTRODUCTION

1. "And he who sat on the throne said: "Look, I make all things new" And he said: "Write: these words are faithful and true!" (Rev. 21.5)

After a long synodal path of listening to the People of God in the Church of the Amazon, which Pope Francis inaugurated during his visit to the Amazon, January 19, 2018, the Synod was held in Rome in a 21-day fraternal meeting in October 2019. The climate was an open, free, and respectful exchange on the part of the pastoral bishops of the Amazon region, male and female missionaries, laymen and laywomen, and representatives of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon. We were witnesses participating in an ecclesial event marked by the urgency of the issue that claims to open new paths for the Church in the region. Serious work was shared in an environment marked by the conviction of hearing the voice of the Spirit present.

The Synod was held in a fraternal and prayerful environment. Several times the interventions were accompanied by applause, singing, and all with deep contemplative silences. Outside the synodal hall, there was a notable presence of people coming from the Amazonian world who organized acts of support with different activities, processions, such as the opening with songs and dances accompanying the Holy Father from Peter's tomb to the synodal classroom. It impacted the Via Crucis of the martyrs of the Amazon, in addition to the massive presence of the international media.

2. All participants have expressed an acute awareness of the dramatic situation of destruction affecting the Amazon. This means the disappearance of the region and its inhabitants, especially indigenous peoples. The Amazon rainforest is a "biological heart" for the increasingly threatened land. It is in an unbridled race to death. It requires radical changes with great urgency, a new direction that can save it. It is scientifically proven that the disappearance of the Amazonian biome will have a catastrophic impact for the whole planet!

3. The synodal process of the People of God in the preparatory stage involved the whole Church in the region: the Bishops, missionaries and missionaries, members of Churches of other Christian confessions, lay men and women, and many representatives of the indigenous peoples, regarding the consultation document that inspired the *Instrumentum Laboris*. It stresses the importance of listening to the voice of the Amazon, moved by the greater breath of the Holy Spirit in the cry of the wounded land and its inhabitants. The active participation of more than 87,000 people, which came from different cities and cultures, as well as numerous groups from other ecclesial sectors, was registered, as well as the contributions of academics and civil society organizations in specific core issues.

4. The celebration of the Synod highlighted the integration of the voice of Amazon with the voice and opinion of the participating pastors. It was a new listening experience to discern the voice of the Spirit that leads the Church to new paths of presence, evangelization and intercultural dialogue in Amazonia. The call for the Church to be an ally of the Amazon region, raised in the preparatory process, was strongly affirmed. The celebration ends with great joy and the hope of embracing and practicing the new paradigm of integral ecology, the care of the "common home," and the defense of the Amazon.

## CHAPTER I

### THE AMAZON: FROM LISTENING TO INTEGRAL CONVERSION

"Then he showed me a river of water of life, shining like crystal, that comes out of the throne of God and the Lamb "(Rev. 22:1).

5. "Christ points to the Amazon" (Paul VI, attributed). He frees everyone from sin and grants the dignity of the Sons of God. Listening to the Amazon, in the spirit of the disciple and in the light of the Word of God and Tradition, impels us to a profound conversion of our schemes and structures to Christ and his Gospel.

The voice and song of the Amazon as a message of life

6. In the Amazon, life is inserted, linked, and integrated to the region that, as a vital and nourishing physical space, is the possibility, sustenance and limit of life. The Amazon, also called the Pan-Amazon region [*Panamazonía*], is an extensive territory with an estimated population of 33,600,000 inhabitants, of which between 2 and 2.5 million are indigenous. This space, made up of the Amazon River basin and all its tributaries, covers 9 countries: Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana. The Amazonian region is essential for the distribution of rainfall in the regions of South America and contributes to large air movements around the planet. At present, it is the second most vulnerable area in the world in relation to climate change due to the direct action of man.

7. The water and land of this region nourish and sustain nature, life and cultures of hundreds of indigenous communities, peasants, people of African descent, mestizos, settlers, river dwellers, and inhabitants of urban areas. Water, the source of life, has a rich symbolic meaning. In the Amazonian region, the water cycle is the connecting axis. It connects ecosystems, cultures and regional development.

8. In the Amazon region, there is a multiethnic and multicultural reality. The different peoples knew how to adapt to the region. Within each culture, they have built and rebuilt their worldview, their signs and their meanings, and the vision of their future. In indigenous cultures and peoples, ancient practices and mythical explanations coexist with modern technologies and challenges. The faces that inhabit Amazonia are quite varied. In addition to the original peoples, there is a great racial blending born of encounter and disagreements among the different peoples.

9. The search of Amazonian indigenous peoples for life in abundance is materialized in what they call "good living" [*buen vivir*], and which is fully realized in the Beatitudes. It is about living in harmony with oneself, with nature, with human beings, and with the Supreme Being, since there is an intercommunion throughout the entire cosmos, where there is nothing that excludes or is excluded, and where we can establish a plan of a full life for everyone. Such an understanding of life is characterized by the connectivity and harmony of relationships between

water, territory and nature, community life and culture, God and the various spiritual forces. For them, "good living" [*buen vivir*] is to understand the centrality of the transcendent relational character of human beings and of creation, and requires "good doing." This integral way is expressed in its own way of organizing on the part of the family and the community, embracing a responsible use of all the goods of creation. Indigenous peoples aspire to achieve better living conditions, especially in health and education, to enjoy sustainable development led and determined by themselves, one that maintains harmony with their traditional ways of life, dialoguing between the wisdom and technology of their ancestors and that which they have newly acquired.

#### The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor

10. But the Amazon today is a wounded and deformed beauty, a place of pain and violence. The attacks on nature have negative consequences for the life of peoples. This unique socio-environmental crisis was reflected in the pre-synodal hearings that pointed out the following threats to life: appropriation and privatization of natural assets, such as water itself; legal logging concessions and the entry of illegal loggers; predatory hunting and fishing; non-sustainable mega-projects (hydroelectric, forest concessions, massive logging, single-crop farming, roads, waterways, railways, and mining and oil projects); pollution caused by the extractive industry and city dumps and, above all, climate change. They are real threats that have serious social consequences associated with them: diseases derived from pollution, drug trafficking, illegal armed groups, alcoholism, violence against women, sexual exploitation, trafficking and trafficking in persons, the sale of organs, sex tourism, the loss of the original culture and identity (language, spiritual practices, and customs), the criminalization and murder of leaders and defenders of the territory. Behind all this are the economic and political interests of the dominant sectors, with the complicity of some rulers and some indigenous authorities. The victims are the most vulnerable sectors: children, youth, women and sister mother earth.

11. The scientific community, for its part, warns of the risks of deforestation, which to date is close to almost 17% of the total Amazon forest, and that threatens the survival of the entire ecosystem, endangering biodiversity and changing the life cycle of water for the survival of the tropical forest. In addition, the Amazon also plays a critical role as a buffer against climate change and provides invaluable and fundamental life support systems related to air, water, soils, forests, and biomass. At the same time, experts remember that, using advanced science and technologies for an innovative bio-economy of standing forests and flowing rivers, it is possible to help save the tropical forest, protect Amazonian ecosystems and indigenous and traditional peoples, and at the same time provide sustainable economic activities.

12. One phenomenon to address is migration. In the Amazonian region, three simultaneous migration processes are occurring. First, the cases of mobility of indigenous groups in territories in which they traditionally circulate, separated by national and international borders. Secondly, the forced displacement of indigenous, peasant and river-dwelling peoples expelled from their territories, and whose final destination is usually the poorest and worst urbanized areas of the cities. Third, interregional forced migration and the phenomenon of refugees, who are forced to leave their countries (among others, Venezuela, Haiti, Cuba) and must cross Amazonia as a migratory corridor.

13. The displacement of indigenous groups expelled from their territories or attracted by the false sheen of urban culture, represents a unique set of migratory movements in Amazonia. The cases in which the mobility of these groups occurs in territories of traditional indigenous circulation, separated by national and international borders, requires cross-border pastoral care

capable of understanding the right to free movement of these peoples. Human mobility in the Amazon reveals the face of Jesus Christ impoverished and hungry (cf. Mt. 25:35), expelled and homeless (cf. Lk. 3:1-3), and also in the feminization of migration that makes thousands of women vulnerable to human trafficking, one of the worst forms of violence against women and one of the most perverse violations of human rights. Trafficking in people linked to migration requires permanent pastoral work in networks.

14. The life of Amazonian communities not yet affected by the influence of Western civilization is reflected in the beliefs and rituals about the actions of the spirits of divinity, named in innumerable ways, with and in the territory, with and in relationship with nature (LS 16, 91, 117, 138, 240). Let us recognize that for thousands of years they have taken care of their land, their water and their forests, and have managed to preserve them until today so that humanity can benefit from the enjoyment of the free gifts of God's creation. The new paths of evangelization must be constructed in dialogue with this fundamental knowledge in which they manifest seeds of the Word.

#### The Church in the Amazon Region

15. The Church, in its process of listening to the cry of the region and the cry of the people, has to remember its past. Evangelization in Latin America was a gift of Providence that calls everyone to salvation in Christ. Despite the military, political and cultural colonization, and beyond the greed and ambition of the colonizers, there were many missionaries who gave their lives to transmit the Gospel. The missionary sense not only inspired the formation of Christian communities, but also legislation such as the Laws of the Indies, which protected the dignity of the indigenous people against the abuses of their peoples and territories. Such abuses caused injuries in the communities and overshadowed the message of the Good News. Frequently the announcement of Christ was made in collusion with the powers that exploited the resources and oppressed the peoples. At the present time, the Church has the historic opportunity to differentiate itself from the new colonizing powers by listening to the Amazonian peoples to be able to exercise their prophetic activity with transparency. In addition, the socio-environmental crisis opens up new opportunities to present Christ in all his liberating and humanizing potential.

16. One of the most glorious pages of the Amazon has been written by the martyrs. The participation of the followers of Jesus in his passion, death, and glorious resurrection has accompanied the life of the Church to this day, especially in the moments and places in which she, because of the Gospel of Jesus, lives in the midst of a sharp contradiction, as happens today with those who fight courageously in favor of an integral ecology in the Amazon. This Synod recognizes with admiration those who fight, with great risk of their own lives, to defend the existence of this territory.

#### Calls for a comprehensive conversion

17. Listening to the clamor of the land and the cry of the poor and the people of the Amazon with whom we walk calls us to a true integral conversion, with a simple and sober life, all fueled by a mystical spirituality in the style of Saint Francis of Assisi, an example of integral conversion lived with Christian happiness and joy (cf. LS 20-12). A prayerful reading of the Word of God will help us understand more deeply and discover the groans of the Spirit, and will encourage us in the commitment to care for the "common home."

18. As a Church of missionary disciples, we beg the grace of that conversion which "implies letting out all the consequences of the encounter with Jesus Christ in relations with the world

around them" (LS 217); a personal and community conversion that commits us to harmoniously relate to the creative work of God, which is the "common home"; a conversion that promotes the creation of structures in harmony with the care of creation; a pastoral conversion based on synodality, which recognizes the interaction of all of creation; a conversion that leads us to be an outgoing Church that enters the heart of all Amazonian peoples.

19. Thus, it will be possible to carry out the only conversion to the living Gospel, which is Jesus Christ, in interconnected dimensions to promote an outreach to the existential, social and geographical peripheries of the Amazon. These dimensions are: pastoral, cultural, ecological, and synodal, which are developed in the next four chapters.

## CHAPTER II

### NEW PATHS TO INTEGRAL CONVERSION

"..unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (Jn. 3:5)

20. An outgoing missionary Church calls us to a pastoral conversion. For the Amazon region this movement means also "navigating" our rivers, our lakes, and among our people. Water unites and separates us in Amazonia. Our pastoral conversion will be Samarian, in dialogue, and accompanying people with real faces of indigenous, peasants, descendants of Africans, migrants, young people, and city residents. All of this will require a spirituality of listening and proclamation. This is how we will proceed and navigate in this chapter.

#### The outgoing missionary Church

21. The Church is missionary by its nature and has its origin the "fount of God's love." The missionary dynamism that springs from God's love radiates, expands, overflows, and is diffused throughout the Universe. "We are inserted by baptism into the dynamic of love by the encounter with Jesus that gives a new horizon to life" (DAp 12). This overflow impels the Church towards a pastoral conversion and transforms us into living communities that work as teams and networks in the service of evangelization. Understood this way, mission is not something optional, a Church activity among others, but its very nature. The Church is mission! "Missionary action is the paradigm of all work in the Church" (EG 15). Being a missionary disciple is something more than completing tasks and making things. It is found in the order of being. "Jesus tells us, His disciples, that our mission in the world must not be static, but is itinerant. A Christian is itinerant." (Francis, Angelus, 30/06/2019).

#### a. A Samaritan, merciful, supportive Church

22. We want to be an Amazonian, Samaritan Church, embodied in the way in which the Son of God became incarnate: "He took our infirmities, and bore our diseases" (Mt 8,17b). He who became poor to enrich us with his poverty (2 Cor 8.9), through his Spirit, exhorts the missionary disciples of today to reach out to everyone, especially the original peoples, the poor, those excluded from the society, and others. We also want a Magdalene Church, which feels loved and reconciled, that announces with joy and conviction Christ crucified and risen. A Marian Church that brings forth children in the faith and educates them with love and patience, while also learning from the wealth of the people. We want to be a servant Church: kerygmatic, educating, inculcated in the midst of the towns we serve.

b. The Church in ecumenical, interreligious, and cultural dialogue

23. The multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious reality of Amazonia demands an attitude of open dialogue, recognizing the multiplicity of interlocutors: indigenous, river-dwellers, peasants and afro-descendants, other Christian churches and religious denominations, organizations in civil society, popular social movements, government: in sum, all people of good will who seek to defend life, the integrity of creation, peace, and common good.

24. In the Amazon, "relations between Catholics and pentecostals, charismatics, and evangelicals are not easy. The sudden appearance of new communities, linked to the personality of certain preachers, contrasts strongly with the principles and ecclesiastical principles of historic Churches and may hide the danger of being dragged along by emotional waves of the moment or of closing off the experience of the faith in protected and tranquil environments. The fact that not a few Catholics feel attracted by these communities is a cause of friction, but can become on our part a reason for self-examination and pastoral renewal" (Pope Francis, 28.9.2019). Ecumenical, interreligious, and intercultural dialogues must be taken up as an irrevocable way towards evangelization in the Amazon (cf. DAp 227). The Amazon is an amalgam of creeds, the majority of which are Christian. In view of this reality, effective means of communication open up to us: "Expressing good sentiments is not enough. Effective gestures that penetrate spirits and shake up consciences are necessary, pushing each person towards internal conversion, which is the basis of all progress on the road of ecumenism" (Benedict XVI, Message to the cardinals at the Sistine Chapel, 20/04/2005). The centrality of the Word of God in the life of our communities is a factor for union and dialogue. In the context of the Word, there are many actions that can be taken in common: translations of the Bible to local languages, joint editions, dissemination and distribution of the Bible, meetings of theologians, and meetings between male and female Catholic theologians and theologians of other confessions.

25. In Amazonia, interreligious dialogue takes place especially with indigenous religions and religions of Afro-descendants. These traditions deserve to be known, understood in their own expressions and in their relationship with the forest and mother earth. Together with them, Christians, based on their faith in the Word of God, engage in dialogue, sharing their lives, their worries, their struggles, their experiences of God, to deepen each other's faith and act together in defense of the "common home." Therefore, the churches of Amazonia should develop initiatives of encounter, study, and dialogue with the followers of these religions. Sincere and respectful dialogue is the bridge towards the construction of "good living" [*buen vivir*]. In the exchange of gifts, the Spirit leads more and more towards truth and good (cf. EG 250).

A missionary Church that serves and accompanies the Amazonian peoples

26. This Synod wants to be a strong call to all the baptized of Amazonia to be missionary disciples. The sending of the mission is inherent in baptism and is for all the baptized. Through it, we all receive the same dignity of being sons and daughters of God, and none can be excluded from the mission of Jesus to his disciples. "Go all over the world and proclaim the Good News to all creation" (Mk 16,15). Hence, we believe it is necessary to give a greater missionary stress to native vocations; Amazonia must also be evangelized by Amazonians.

a. A Church with an indigenous, peasant and Afro-descendant face

27. It is urgent to give indigenous pastoral care its specific place in the Church. We start from diverse realities and diverse cultures to define, elaborate and adopt pastoral actions, which

allow us to develop an evangelizing proposal among the indigenous communities, placing ourselves within the framework of an indigenous pastoral care and land. The pastoral care of indigenous peoples has its own characteristics. Colonizations motivated by extractivism throughout history, with the different migratory currents, put them in a situation of high vulnerability. In this context, as a Church, it is still necessary to create or maintain a preferential option for indigenous peoples, by virtue of which diocesan indigenous pastoral organizations must be established and consolidated with a renewed missionary action that listens, dialogues, is embodied and has a permanent presence. The preferential option for indigenous peoples, with their cultures, identities and stories, requires us to aspire to an indigenous Church with our own priests and ministers always united and in total communion with the Catholic Church.

28. In recognizing the importance of the attention that the Church is called to give in the Amazon to the phenomenon of urbanization and the problems and perspectives related to it, a reference to the rural world as a whole and to rural pastoral care in particular is necessary. From the pastoral point of view, the Church must respond to the phenomenon of the depopulation of the countryside, with all the consequences that result from it (loss of identity, prevailing secularism, exploitation of rural work, family disintegration, etc.).

b. A Church with a migrant face

29. Given its increase and volume, the phenomenon of migration has now become an unprecedented political, social, and ecclesial challenge (cf. DA, 517, a). Given that, many ecclesial communities have received migrants with great generosity, remembering that: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt. 25:35). The forced displacement of indigenous, peasant, Afro-descendant, and riverine families, expelled from their territories due to pressure on them or asphyxiation in the absence of opportunities, requires pastoral work on the periphery of urban centers. For this, it will be necessary to create missionary teams for their accompaniment, coordinating the conditions of reception with the parishes and other ecclesial and extra-ecclesial institutions, offering inculturated liturgies and in the languages of the migrants; promoting spaces of cultural exchanges, favoring the integration in the community and in the city and motivating them to activism in this work.

c. A Church with a young face

30. Among the various faces of Pan-Amazonian realities, that of young people present throughout the region stands out. They are young with faces and indigenous identities, Afro-descendants, river-dwellers, extractivists, migrants, refugees, among others. Young residents of rural and urban areas, who daily dream and seek better living conditions, with a deep desire to have a better life. Young students, workers and with an important presence and participation in various social and ecclesial spaces. Among the Amazonian youth, sad realities such as: poverty, violence, diseases, child prostitution, sexual exploitation, drug use and trafficking, early pregnancy, unemployment, depression, human-trafficking, new forms of slavery, organ trafficking, difficulties in accessing education, health and social assistance. Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been a significant increase in suicide among young people, as well as the growth of the young people in prison and crimes between and against young people, especially Afro-descendants and those on the margins. They, living in the huge region of the Amazon, have the same dreams and desires as other young people in this world: to be taken into consideration, respected, to have opportunities for study, work, for a future of hope. But they are experiencing an intense crisis of values, or a transition to other modes of conceiving reality, where ethical elements are changing, even for young indigenous people. The Church's

job is to accompany them to deal with any situation that destroys their identity or damages their self-esteem.

31. Young people are also especially present in the migratory contexts of the region. Special attention is needed towards the reality of young people in urban centers. More and more cities are receiving all the ethnic groups, peoples, and problems of the Amazon. The rural Amazon is becoming depopulated. Cities face huge problems of juvenile delinquency, lack of work, ethnic struggles and social injustices. Here, in particular, the Church is called to be a prophetic presence among young people, offering them adequate accompaniment and appropriate education.

32. In communion with the reality for Amazonian youth, the Church proclaims the Good News of Jesus to young people, discernment, and vocational accompaniment, the place of appreciation for local culture and identity, youth leadership, the promotion of the rights of youth, the strengthening of creative, innovative and differentiated spaces of evangelization through a renewed and bold youth ministry. A pastoral care that is always in process, centered on Jesus Christ and his project, dialogical and integral, committed to all existing youth realities in the region. Indigenous young people have enormous potential and actively participate in their communities and organizations, contributing as leaders and activists in defense of rights, especially regarding territory, health, and education. On the other hand, they are the main victims of insecurity over indigenous lands and the absence of specific and quality public policies. The spread of alcohol and drugs often reaches indigenous communities, seriously damaging young people and preventing them from living in freedom to build their dreams and actively participate in the community.

33. The prominence of young people appears clearly in the documents of the Synod on Young People (160, 46) in the papal exhortation *Christus Vivit* (170) and in the *Encyclical Laudato Si* (209). Young people want to be protagonists and the Amazonian Church wants to recognize their space. She wants to be a listening partner recognizing young people as a theological place, as "prophets of hope," committed to dialogue, ecologically sensitive and attentive to the "common home." A Church that welcomes and walks with young people, especially in the peripheries. Faced with this, three emergencies arise: promoting new forms of evangelization through social media (Francis, *Christus Vivit* 86); helping the young indigenous to achieve a healthy interculturality; helping them to cope with the crisis of anti-values that destroys their self-esteem and makes them lose their identity.

d. A Church that travels down new paths in the urban pastorate

34. The strong tendency of humanity to concentrate in cities, migrating from the smallest to the largest, also occurs in the Amazon. The accelerated growth of the Amazonian metropolis is accompanied by the creation of urban peripheries. At the same time, lifestyles, forms of coexistence, languages and values configured by the metropolis are transmitted and are increasingly being implemented both in indigenous communities and in the rest of the rural world. The family in the city is a place of synthesis between traditional and modern culture. However, families often suffer from poverty, poor housing, lack of work, increased consumption of drugs and alcohol, discrimination and child suicide. In addition, in family life there is a lack of dialogue between generations: traditions and language are lost. Families also face new health problems, which require adequate education in maternity. The current rapid changes affect the Amazonian family. Thus, we find new family structures: single-parent families under the responsibility of women, an increase in separated families, consensual unions and reunited families, a decrease in institutional marriages. The city is an explosion of life because "God lives

in the city" (DAp 514). In it there are anxieties and searches for the meaning of life, conflicts, but also solidarity, fraternity, desire for goodness, truth and justice"(cf. EG 71-75). Evangelizing the city or urban culture means "to achieve and, so to speak, modify, by force of the Gospel, criteria of judgment, values that matter, centers of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of human life, which are presented in contrast to the Word of God and the plan of salvation "(EN 19).

35. The rights of all people in the city should be defended. The right to the city that is demanded can be defined as the equitable enjoyment of cities within the principles of sustainability, democracy, and social justice. However, it will also be necessary to influence public policies and promote initiatives that improve the quality of life in the rural world, thus preventing its uncontrolled displacement.

36. The grassroots ecclesial communities have been and are a gift from God to the local Churches of the Amazon. However, it is necessary to recognize that, over time, some ecclesial communities have settled, weakened, or even disappeared. But the vast majority continue to persevere and they are the pastoral foundation of many parishes. Today the great dangers of ecclesial communities come mainly from secularism, individualism, lack of social dimension, and lack of missionary activity. Therefore, it is necessary that pastors encourage in each and every one of the faithful a missionary discipleship. The ecclesial community must be present in the public policy participation spaces where actions are articulated to revitalize culture, coexistence, leisure and celebration. We must fight so that the "slums" [favelas] and "shanty towns" [villas miserias] have fundamental basic rights secured: water, energy, housing, and the promotion of integral ecological citizenship, and also that there be instituted a ministry of welcoming in the urban communities of the Amazon for fraternal solidarity with migrants, refugees, homeless people and people who have abandoned rural areas.

37. Special attention should be paid to the reality of indigenous people in urban centers because they are the most exposed to the enormous problems of juvenile delinquency, lack of work, ethnic struggles, and social injustices. It is one of the biggest challenges of today: more and more cities are the destinations for all ethnic groups and peoples of the Amazon. An indigenous pastoral ministry of the city that meets this specific reality will have to be articulated.

#### E. A spirituality of listening and announcement

38. Pastoral action is based on a spirituality that is based on listening to the Word of God and the cry of His people, so as to then be able to announce the good news with a prophetic spirit. We recognize that the Church that hears the call of the Spirit in the cry of the Amazon can make its own the joys and hopes, the sorrows and anxieties of all, but especially of the poorest (cf. GS 1), who are favorite daughters and sons of God. We discover that the mighty waters of the Spirit, similar to those of the Amazon River, which periodically overflow, lead us to that overabundant life that God offers us to share in the proclamation [anuncio].

#### New paths for pastoral conversion

39. Traveling missionary teams in the Amazon are weaving and making community along the way, helping to strengthen ecclesial synodality. They can bring together several charisms, institutions and congregations, lay men and women, religious men and women, priests. Gather together to go where one cannot go alone. The travels of missionaries who leave their headquarters and spend time visiting one community at a time and celebrating sacraments give rise to what is called the "pastorate of visitation." It is a type of pastoral method that responds to

the current conditions and possibilities of our churches. Thanks to these methods, and by the action of the Holy Spirit, these communities have also developed a rich ministeriality that is a reason for thanksgiving.

40. We propose an itinerant network that would bring together the different efforts of the teams that accompany and energize the life and faith of the communities in the Amazon. The paths of political influence for the transformation of reality must be discerned by pastors and laity. With a view towards moving from pastoral visits to a more permanent presence, congregations and / or provinces of religious of the world, who are not yet involved in missions, are invited to establish at least one missionary front in any of the Amazonian countries.

### CHAPTER III

#### NEW WAYS OF CULTURAL CONVERSION

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1,14)

41. Latin America has immense biodiversity and great cultural diversity. The Amazon is a land of forests and water within it, of moors and wetlands, savannas and mountain ranges, but above all a land of countless villages, many of them thousands of years old, ancestral inhabitants of the region, peoples of ancient perfume that continue to aromatize the continent against all despair. Our conversion must also be cultural, incline us towards the other, to learn from the other. Be present, respect and recognize their values, live and practice inculturation and interculturality in our proclamation of the Good News. Expressing and living the faith in the Amazon is always a challenge. It is embodied not only in pastoral care but in concrete actions for others: in health care, education, in solidarity and support for the most vulnerable. We would like to share all of this in this section.

##### The face of the Church in the peoples of the Amazon

42. In the territories of the Amazon there is a multicultural reality that requires a vision that is all inclusive and uses expressions that allow identifying and linking all groups and reflect identities that are recognized, respected and promoted both in the Church and society, which must find in the Amazonian peoples a valid interlocutor for dialogue and meeting. *Puebla* [Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate] speaks of the faces that inhabit Latin America and notes that, in the original peoples, there is a mixing [*mestizaje*] that has increased and continues to increase with the encounters and disagreements between the different cultures that are part of the continent. This face, which also belongs to the Amazonian Church, is a face embodied in its region, which evangelizes and opens paths for people to feel accompanied in different processes of evangelical life. Also, there is a renewed missionary sense on the part of the members of the same peoples in carrying out the prophetic and Samaritan mission of the Church that must be strengthened with openness to dialogue with other cultures. It is only a missionary Church that is inserted and inculturated that will raise up the particular indigenous churches, with Amazonian faces and hearts, rooted in the cultures and traditions of the people, united in the same faith in Christ and diverse in their way of living, expressing and celebrating it.

##### a. The cultural values of the Amazonian peoples

43. In the people of the Amazon, we find teachings about life. The original peoples and those who came later and forged their identity in coexistence, provide cultural values in which we

discover the seeds of the Word. In the jungle, it is not only plants that are intertwined and link one species to another: people also interrelate with each other in a network of alliances that benefits everyone. The forest lives by means of inter-relationships and interdependencies that occur in all areas of life. Thanks to this, the fragile balance of the Amazon was maintained for centuries.

44. The thinking of indigenous peoples offers an integrated view of reality, which is capable of understanding the multiple connections between everything that is created. This contrasts with the dominant current of Western thought that tends to fragment in order to understand reality, but fails to re-articulate the set of relations between the various fields of knowledge. The traditional management of what nature offers them has been done in the way we call sustainable management today. We also find other values in the native peoples such as reciprocity, solidarity, a sense of community, equality, family, social organization and a sense of service.

b. A Church that is present and allied with the peoples of the region

45. Greed for land is at the root of the conflicts that lead to ethnocide, as well as murder and criminalization of social movements and their leaders. The demarcation and protection of land is an obligation of the national states and their respective governments. However, many of the indigenous territories are devoid of protection, and those already demarcated are being invaded by extractive initiatives such as mining and forest extraction, by large infrastructure projects, by illicit crops and by large estates that promote monoculture and extensive livestock.

46. In this way, the Church undertakes to be an ally of the Amazonian peoples to denounce the attacks on the life of indigenous communities, the projects that affect the environment, the lack of demarcation of their territories, as well as the economic model of predatory and ecocidal development. The presence of the Church among indigenous and traditional communities requires the awareness that the defense of the land has no other purpose than the defense of life.

47. The life of indigenous, mestizo, river dwellers, peasants, Afro-Brazilian [*quiombola*] and / or afro-descendants, and traditional communities, is threatened by destruction, environmental exploitation, and systematic violation of their territorial rights. It is necessary to defend their rights to self-determination, the demarcation of territories and prior, free and informed consultation. These peoples have "social, cultural and economic conditions that distinguish them from other sectors of the national community, and which are governed totally or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special legislation" (Conv. 169 ILO, art. 1, 1a). For the Church, the defense of life, community, land, and the rights of indigenous peoples is an evangelical principle, in defense of human dignity: "I have come so that men may have life and have it in abundance" (Jn. 10:10b).

48. The Church promotes the integral salvation of the human person, valuing the culture of indigenous peoples, speaking of their vital needs, accompanying movements in their struggles for their rights. Our pastoral service constitutes a service for the full life of the indigenous peoples, which moves us to announce the Good News of the Kingdom of God and to denounce the situations of sin, structures of death, violence and injustices, promoting intercultural, interreligious, and ecumenical dialogue (cf. DAp 95).

49. A specific chapter specifies Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation (PIAV) or Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI). In the Amazon there are about 130 towns or

segments of villages, which do not maintain systematic or permanent contacts with the surrounding society. Abuses and systematic violations of the past caused their migration to more inaccessible places, seeking protection, seeking to preserve their autonomy and choosing to limit or avoid their relations with third parties. Today they continue to have their lives threatened by the invasion of their territories from various fronts and their diminished demographics, being exposed to ethnic cleansing and disappearance. In his meeting with the Indigenous Peoples of January 2018 in Puerto Maldonado, Pope Francis reminds us: "They are the most vulnerable among the vulnerable ... Continue to defend these most vulnerable brothers. Their presence reminds us that we cannot dispose of common goods at the rate of an avid consumption."(Fr. PM). An option for the defense of the PIAV / PIACI does not exempt local Churches from pastoral responsibility over them.

50. This responsibility must be manifested in specific actions for the defense of their rights, rendered concrete in effective actions, so that governments will take up the defense of their rights through the legal and inviolable protection of the territories they occupy in a traditional manner, including adopting precautionary measures in regions where their presence is not officially confirmed due to insufficient evidence, and establishing mechanisms for bilateral cooperation between governments when these groups occupy cross-border spaces. At all times, respect for their self-determination and their free decisions for the type of relationships they want to establish with other groups must be guaranteed. For this, it will be necessary that all of the people of God, and especially the neighboring populations of the PIAV / PIACI territories, be sensitized to respect these peoples and the importance of inviolability of their territories. As St. John Paul II said in Cuiabá, in 1991 "The Church, dear Indian brothers and sisters, has always been and will remain at your side to defend the dignity of human beings, their right to have a peaceful and proper life, respecting the values of their traditions, customs and cultures".

#### Paths for an inculturated Church

51. With the incarnation, Christ left behind his prerogative as God and became man in a particular culture to identify with all mankind. Inculturation is the incarnation of the Gospel in indigenous cultures ("what is not assumed is not redeemed" St. Irenaeus, cf. Puebla 400) and at the same time it is the introduction of these cultures into the life of the Church. In this process, the peoples are protagonists, accompanied by their agents and pastors.

a. The experience of faith expressed in popular piety and inculturated catechesis

52. Popular piety constitutes an important medium that links many peoples of the Amazon with their spiritual experiences, their cultural roots and their community integration. They are manifestations with which the people express their faith, through images, symbols, traditions, rites, and other sacramentals. Pilgrimages, processions, and festivities should be valued, accompanied, promoted, and sometimes purified, as they are privileged moments of evangelization that should lead to the encounter with Christ. Marian devotions are deeply rooted in Amazonia and throughout Latin America.

53. The non-clericalization of brotherhoods, confraternities, and groups linked to popular piety is characteristic. The laity assume a role that they hardly achieve in other ecclesial areas, with the participation of brothers and sisters who perform services and direct prayers, blessings, traditional sacred songs, encouraging novenas, organize processions, promote patron feasts,

etc. It is necessary to "give an appropriate catechesis and accompany the faith already present in popular religiosity. A concrete way may be to offer a process of Christian initiation ... that leads us to become more and more like Jesus Christ, causing the progressive appropriation of their attitudes"(DAP 300).

b. The mystery of faith reflected in an inculturated theology

54. Indian theology, theology with an Amazonian face, and popular piety are already a wealth of the indigenous world, its culture, and spirituality. The missionary and pastoral agent, when he carries the word of the Gospel of Jesus, identifies with the culture and the encounter from which the testimony, the service, the announcement, and learning of the languages takes place. The indigenous world with its myths, narrative, rites, songs, dance, and spiritual expressions enriches intercultural encounters. Puebla already recognizes that «cultures are not empty territories, lacking authentic values. The evangelization of the Church is not a process of destruction, but of consolidation and strengthening of these values; a contribution to the growth of the "seeds of the Word" »(DP 401, cf. GS 57) present in cultures.

Paths for an intercultural Church

a. Respect for cultures and the rights of peoples

55. We are all invited to approach Amazonian peoples as an equal to an equal, respecting their history, their cultures, their style of "good living" [*buen vivir*] (PF 06.10.19). Colonialism is the imposition of certain ways of living of some peoples over others, economically, culturally, or religiously. We reject an evangelization of a colonialist style. Announcing the Good News of Jesus implies recognizing the seeds of the Word already present in cultures. The evangelization that we propose today for Amazon is the inculturated proclamation that generates processes of interculturality: processes that promote the life of the Church with an identity and an Amazonian face.

b. The promotion of intercultural dialogue in a global world

56. In the evangelizing task of the Church, which should not be confused with proselytism, we must include clear processes of inculturation of our missionary methods and schemes. Specifically, it is proposed that the Church's research and pastoral centers, allied with the indigenous peoples, should study, compile, and systematize the traditions of the Amazonian ethnic groups to favor an educational program based on their identity and culture to help in promoting and defending their rights, preserving and disseminating their value to the Latin American cultural scene.

57. Educational actions are today challenged by the need for inculturation. It is a challenge to look for methodologies and content appropriate to the people in which to exercise the ministry of teaching. For this, knowledge of their languages, beliefs and aspirations, needs and hopes is important; as well as the collective construction of educational processes that have both the form and the content, the cultural identity of the Amazonian communities, while insisting on the formation of integral ecology as a transversal axis.

c. The challenges for health, education and communication

58. The Church assumes as an important task the promotion of preventive health education and the offer of health care in places where government aid does not reach. It is necessary to favor

integration initiatives that benefit the health of the Amazon. It is also important to promote the socialization of ancestral knowledge in the field of traditional medicine typical of each culture.

59. Among the complexities of the Amazonian region, we highlight the fragility of education, especially among indigenous peoples. Although education is a human right, educational quality is poor and school dropout is very frequent, especially among girls. Education evangelizes, promotes social transformation, and empowers people with a healthy sense of criticism. "A good school education at an early age plants seeds that can produce effects throughout life" (LS 213). It is our task to promote an education for solidarity, which springs from the awareness of a common origin and a future shared by all (cf. LS 202). Governments must be required to implement a public, intercultural and bilingual education.

60. The world, increasingly globalized and complex, has developed an unprecedented information network. However, such instantaneous information flow does not lead to better communication or connection between peoples. In the Amazon, we want to promote a communicative culture that favors dialogue, the culture of encounter, and the care of the "common home". Motivated by an integral ecology, we wish to strengthen the communication spaces that already exist in the region, in order to urgently promote a comprehensive ecological conversion. For this, it is necessary to collaborate with the training of native agents of communication, especially indigenous ones. They are not only privileged interlocutors for evangelization and human development in the region, but also help us spread the culture of "good living" [*buen vivir*] and care for creation.

61. In order to develop the various connections within the entirety of Amazonia and improve its communications, the Church wants to create a Pan-Amazonian ecclesial communication network, which comprises the various means used by private churches and other ecclesial organizations. Its contribution may resonate and aid in the ecological conversion of the Church and the planet. REPAM may assist in advising and supporting the training processes, monitoring and strengthening of communications in the Pan-Amazonian region.

#### New ways for cultural conversion

62. In this sense, we propose the creation of a network for bilingual education for Amazon (similar to Fe y Alegría) that offers educational proposals that respond to the needs of the communities, respecting, valuing, and integrating cultural and linguistic identity among them.

63. We want to sustain, support and favor the educational experiences of intercultural bilingual education that already exist in the ecclesiastical jurisdictions of the Amazon, and involve Catholic universities so that they may work in and become committed to, networks.

64. We will look for new forms of conventional and non-conventional education, such as distance education, according to the needs of places, times and people.

## CHAPTER IV

### NEW PATHS OF ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION

"I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (Jn 10.10)

65. Our planet is a gift from God, but we also know that we live in the urgency of acting in the face of an unprecedented socio-environmental crisis. We need an ecological conversion to respond appropriately. Therefore, as the Amazonian Church, in the face of the growing aggression against our biome threatened by its disappearance with tremendous consequences for our planet, we put ourselves on a path inspired by the proposal of integral ecology. We recognize the wounds caused by human beings in our region; we want to learn from our brothers and sisters of the original peoples, through a knowledgeable dialogue, the challenge of providing new answers in the search for models of fair and solidary development. We want to take care of our "common home" in Amazonia and propose new paths for it.

Towards an integral ecology from the encyclical Laudato si'

a. Threats against the Amazonian biome and its peoples

66. God has given us the earth as a gift and as a duty, to take care of it and to answer for it; We are not its owners. Integral ecology is based on the fact that "everything is closely related" (LS 16). That is why ecology and social justice are intrinsically linked (cf. LS 137). With integral ecology a new paradigm of justice emerges, because "a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach, which must integrate justice into discussions about the environment, to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (LS 49). Integral ecology, therefore, connects the exercise of the care of nature with that of justice for the most impoverished and disadvantaged people on earth, which are God's preferred option in revealed history.

67. It is urgent to face the unlimited exploitation of the "common home" and its inhabitants. One of the main causes of destruction in Amazonia is predatory extractivism that stems from the logic of greed, typical of the dominant technocratic paradigm (LS 101). Faced with the pressing situation of the planet and Amazonia, integral ecology is not just one more way that the Church can choose for the future in this territory, it is the only possible way, because there is no other viable path to save the region. The depredation of the territory is accompanied by the shedding of innocent blood and the criminalization of the defenders of the Amazon.

68. The Church is part of an international solidarity that must favor and recognize the central role of the Amazonian biome for the balance of the planet's climate; encourages the international community to provide new economic resources for its protection and the promotion of a fair and supportive development model, with the prominence and direct participation of local communities and native peoples in all phases from the approach to the implementation, also strengthening the tools already developed by the framework convention on climate change.

69. It is scandalous that leaders and even communities are criminalized, simply for claiming their rights. In all Amazonian countries there are laws that recognize human rights, especially those of indigenous peoples. In recent years, the (Amazonian) region has undergone complex transformations, where the human rights of the communities have been impacted by norms, public policies and practices focused mainly on expanding the extractive frontiers of natural resources and on the development of megaprojects and of infrastructure, which exert pressure on indigenous ancestral territories. This is accompanied, according to the same report, of a serious situation of impunity in the region regarding human rights violations and barriers to obtaining justice (IACHR / OAS Report, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Panamazonía. 5 and 188. Sept . 2019).

70. For Christians, interest and concern for the promotion and respect of human rights, both individual and collective, is not optional. The human being is created in the image and likeness of the Creator God, and his dignity is inviolable. That is why the defense and promotion of human rights is not merely a political duty or a social task, but also and above all a requirement of faith. We may not be able to modify immediately the prevailing destructive and extractive development model, but we do have the need to know and make clear: where are we? On whose side are we? Next to whom are we? What perspective do we assume? How do we transmit the political and ethical dimension of our word of faith and life? For this reason: a) we denounce the violation of human rights and extractive destruction; b) we take up and support the divestment campaigns of extractive companies related to the socio-ecological damage of the Amazon, starting with the ecclesial institutions themselves and also in alliance with other churches; c) we call for a radical energy transition and the search for alternatives: "Civilization requires energy, but the use of energy should not destroy civilization!" (Pope Francis, Address to participants in the conference "Energy transition and care of the common home," June 9, 2018). We propose to develop training programs on the care of the "common home", which should be designed for pastoral agents and other faithful, open to the whole community, in "an effort to raise awareness of the population" (LS 214).

b. The challenge of new fair, supportive and sustainable development models

71. We note that human intervention has lost its "friendly" character, to assume a voracious and predatory attitude that tends to squeeze reality until the exhaustion of all available natural resources. "The technocratic paradigm tends to exercise its dominance over the economy and politics" (LS 109). To counteract this, which seriously damages life, it is necessary to seek alternative economic models, more sustainable, friendly to nature, with a solid "spiritual basis." Therefore, together with the Amazonian peoples, we request that governments stop considering the Amazon as an inexhaustible pantry (cf. Fr PM). We would like them to develop investment policies that have as a condition for any intervention, the fulfillment of high social and environmental standards and the fundamental principle of the preservation of Amazonia. For this, it is necessary that they have the participation of organized Indigenous Peoples, other Amazonian communities and the different scientific institutions that are already proposing models of exploitation of the standing forest. The new paradigm of sustainable development must be socially inclusive, combining scientific and traditional knowledge to empower traditional and indigenous communities, mostly women, and make these technologies serve the welfare and protection of forests.

72. It is then a question of discussing the real value that any economic or extractive activity possesses, that is, the value that it brings and returns to the land and society considering the wealth it extracts from them and their socio-ecological consequences. Many extractive activities, such as large-scale mining, particularly illegal mining, substantially diminish the value of Amazonian life. In effect, they take the lives of the peoples and the commons of the land, concentrating economic and political power in the hands of a few. Worse, many of these destructive projects are carried out in the name of progress, and are supported - or allowed - by local, national and foreign governments.

73. Together with the Amazonian peoples (cf. LS 183) and their horizon of 'good living' [*buen vivir*], call us to an individual and community ecological conversion that safeguards an integral ecology and a development model where commercial criteria are not above environmental and human rights. We want to sustain a culture of peace and respect - not violence and abuse - and an economy centered on the person who also takes care of nature. Therefore, we propose to generate alternatives of integral ecological development from the worldviews that are

constructed with the communities, rescuing the ancestral wisdom. We support projects that propose a solidarity and sustainable economy, circular and ecological, both locally and internationally, at the level of research and in the field of action, in the formal and informal sectors. Along these lines, it would be useful to sustain and promote experiences of bio-production cooperatives, sustainable forest reserves, and consumption. The future of the Amazon is in the hands of all of us, but it depends mainly on the immediate abandonment of the current model that destroys the forest, does not bring well-being, and endangers this immense natural treasure and its guardians.

The Church that takes care of the "common home" in the Amazon

a. The socio-environmental dimension of evangelization

74. It is up to all of us to be guardians of the work of God. The protagonists of the care, protection, and defense of the rights of peoples and the rights of nature in this region are the Amazonian communities themselves. They are the agents of their own destiny, of their own mission. In this scenario, the role of the Church is that of an ally. They have clearly expressed that they want the Church to accompany them, to walk alongside them, and not impose a particular way of being, a specific mode of development that has little to do with their cultures, traditions, and spiritualities. They know how to take care of Amazonia, how to love and protect it; what they need is for the Church to support them.

75. The function of the Church is to strengthen that capacity for support and participation. Thus we promote a formation that takes into account the quality of ethical and spiritual life of people from an integral vision. The Church must attend primarily to communities affected by socio-environmental damage. Continuing with the Latin American ecclesial tradition, where figures such as St. José de Anchieta, Bartolomé de las Casas, the Paraguayan martyrs killed in Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) Roque González, St. Alfonso Rodríguez and St. Juan del Castillo, among others, taught us that the defense of the original peoples of this continent is intrinsically linked to the faith in Jesus Christ and his good news. Today we must form pastoral agents and ordained ministers with socio-environmental sensitivity. We want a Church that navigates inland and makes its way through Amazonia, promoting a lifestyle in harmony with the region, and at the same time with the "good living" [*buen vivir*] of those who live there.

76. The Church recognizes the wisdom of the Amazonian peoples about biodiversity, a traditional wisdom that is a living process and always underway. The theft of this knowledge is biopiracy, a form of violence against these populations. The Church must help preserve and maintain that knowledge and innovations and practices of the populations, respecting the sovereignty of the countries, and their laws that regulate access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. To the extent possible, it should help these populations to ensure the distribution of the benefits arising from the use of that knowledge, innovations, and practices in a model of sustainable and inclusive development.

77. The development of energy policies that drastically reduce the emission of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other gases related to climate change is urgently needed. The new clean energies will help promote health. All companies must establish supply chain monitoring systems to ensure that the products they buy, create or sell is produced in a socially and environmentally sustainable manner. In addition, "access to safe and potable water is a basic, fundamental and universal human right, because it determines the survival of people, and therefore is a condition for the exercise of other human rights." (LS 30). Such a right is recognized by the United

Nations (2010). We need to work together so that the fundamental right of access to clean water is respected in the territory.

78. The Church opts for the defense of life, of the land and of the original Amazonian cultures. This would imply, accompanying the Amazonian peoples in the registration, systematization and dissemination of data and information about their territories and their legal status. We wish to prioritize effectiveness and accompaniment to achieve the demarcation of land, especially that of the PIACI (Spanish-speaking America) or PIAV (Portuguese-speaking America). We encourage states to comply with their constitutional obligations on these matters, including the right of access to water.

79. The Social Doctrine of the Church, which has long dealt with the ecological issue, is today enriched with a more comprehensive look that encompasses the relationship between the Amazonian peoples and their territories, always in dialogue with their ancestral knowledge and wisdom. For example, recognizing the way in which indigenous peoples relate and protect their territories as an indispensable reference for our conversion to an integral ecology. In this light we want to create ministries for the care of the “common home” in Amazonia, whose function is to take care of the region and the waters together with the indigenous communities, and a welcoming [acogida] ministry for those who are displaced to the cities from their regions [of origin].

b. Poor church, with and for the poor at the vulnerable peripheries

80. We reaffirm our commitment to defend life in its entirety from conception to death, and the dignity of all people. The Church has been and is close to the indigenous communities to safeguard the right to have their own and tranquil life, respecting the values of their traditions, customs and cultures, the preservation of rivers and forests, which are sacred spaces, source of Life and wisdom. We support the efforts of so many who bravely defend life in all its forms and stages. Our pastoral service constitutes a service to the full life of the indigenous peoples that forces us to proclaim Jesus Christ and the Good News of the Kingdom of God, to curb the situations of sin, the structures of death, violence and internal injustices and external and promote intercultural, interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

New paths for integral ecological promotion

a. Prophetic interpellation and message of hope to the whole Church and the whole world

81. The defense of the life of the Amazon and its peoples requires a deep personal, social, and structural conversion. The Church is included in this call to unlearn, learn and relearn, in order to overcome any tendency towards colonial models that have caused damage in the past. In that sense it is important that we be aware of the strength of neo-colonialism that is present in our daily decisions and the predominant development model that is expressed in the growing model of monoculture agriculture, our modes of transport and the imaginary well-being based on consumption that we live in society and that has direct and indirect implications in Amazonia. Given this, a global horizon, while still listening to the voices of sister churches, we want to embrace a spirituality of integral ecology in order to promote the care of creation. To achieve this we must be a community of missionary disciples who are much more participatory and inclusive.

82. We propose to define ecological sin as an action or omission against God, against others, the community and the environment. It is a sin against future generations and manifests itself in

acts and habits of pollution and destruction of the harmony of the environment, transgressions against the principles of interdependence and the breaking of solidarity networks among creatures (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 340-344) and against the virtue of justice. We also propose to create special ministries for the care of the “common home” and the promotion of integral ecology at the parish level and in each ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which have as functions, among others, the care of the land and waters, as well as the promotion of the encyclical *Laudato si’*. to assume the pastoral, educational and advocacy program of the Encyclical *Laudato si’* in its chapters V and VI at all levels and structures of the Church.

83. As a way to repair the ecological debt that countries have with Amazonia, we propose the creation of a global fund to cover part of the budgets of the communities present in Amazonia that promote their integral and self-sustainable development and thus also protect them from the predatory lust, on the part of national and multinational companies, of seeking to extract its natural resources.

84. We propose to adopt responsible habits that respect and value the peoples of Amazonia, their traditions and wisdom, protecting the land and changing our culture of excessive consumption, the production of solid waste, stimulating reuse and recycling. We must reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and the use of plastics, changing our eating habits (excess consumption of meat and fish / shellfish) with more sober lifestyles. We must actively engage in tree planting, seeking sustainable alternatives in agriculture, energy and mobility that respect the rights of nature and the people. We must promote education in integral ecology at all levels, and promote new economic models and initiatives that promote a sustainable quality of life.

#### b. An Amazonian Socio-Pastoral Observatory

85. We must create a pastoral socio-environmental observatory, strengthening the struggle in the defense of life, [and] to make a diagnosis of the territory and its socio-environmental conflicts in each local and regional Church, in order to take a position, make decisions and defend the rights of the most vulnerable. The Observatory would work in partnership with CELAM, CLAR, Caritas, REPAM, national Episcopates, local Churches, Catholic universities, IACHR, and other non-ecclesial actors on the continent and representatives of indigenous peoples. We also ask that an Amazon office be created in the Dicastery for the Integral Human Development Service to be related to this Observatory and the other local Amazonian institutions.

### CHAPTER V

#### NEW ROADS OF SYNODAL CONVERSION

“Me in them, and You in Me, so that they may be perfected in unity” (Jn 17:23)

86. In order to walk together, the Church needs a Synodal conversion, a synodality of the People of God under the guidance of the Spirit in the Amazon. With this horizon of communion and participation we seek the new ecclesial paths, above all, in the ministeriality and sacramentality of the Church with an Amazonian face. Consecrated life, the laity and among them women, are the old and always new protagonists who call us to this conversion.

#### Missionary Synod in the Amazon Church

##### a. The missionary synodality of the entire People of God under the guidance of the Spirit

87. "Synod" is an ancient word revered by Tradition; it indicates the path that members of God's people travel together; He refers to the Lord Jesus, who presents Himself as "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6), and the fact that Christians, His followers, were called "the disciples of the way" (Acts 9:2); to be synods is to follow together "the way of the Lord" (Acts 18.25). Synodality is the way of being of the early Church (cf. Acts 15) and must be ours. "The body parts are many, but the body is one; however many the parts are, they all form a single body. So also Christ" (1 Cor 12:12). Synodality also characterizes the Church of Vatican II, understood as the People of God, in equality and common dignity in the face of the diversity of ministries, charisms and services. It "indicates the specific way of living and acting (modus vivendi et operandi) of the Church of the People of God, which manifests and realizes in a concrete way her being 'communion,' in walking together, in meeting in assembly and in the active participation of all its members in its evangelizing action" (...), that is, in the "co-responsibility and participation of all the people of God in the life and mission of the Church" (CTI, *Synodality* ... n. 6-7).

88. To walk together, the Church today needs a conversion to the synodal experience. It is necessary to strengthen a culture of dialogue, reciprocal listening, spiritual discernment, consensus and communion to find spaces and modes of joint decision-making and respond to pastoral challenges. This will foster joint responsibility in the life of the Church in a spirit of service. It is urgent to walk, propose and assume the responsibilities to overcome clericalism and arbitrary impositions. Synodality is a constitutive dimension of the Church. It is not possible to be a Church without acknowledging an effective exercise of the *sensus fidei* of the entire People of God.

b. Spirituality of synodal communion under the guidance of the Spirit

89. The Church lives from communion with the Body of Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The so-called "Apostolic Council of Jerusalem" (cf. Acts 15; Gal 2:1-10) is a synodal event in which the Apostolic Church, at a decisive moment in its path, lives its vocation in the light of the presence of the Risen Lord in view of the mission. This event became the paradigmatic figure of the Synods of the Church and its synodal vocation. The decision taken by the Apostles, with the company of the entire community of Jerusalem, was the work of the Holy Spirit's action that guides the way of the Church assuring fidelity to the Gospel of Jesus: "We have decided, the Holy Spirit and us" (Acts 15:28). The entire assembly received the decision and made it its own (Acts 15:22); then the community of Antioch did the same (Acts 15:30-31). To be truly "synodal" is to advance in harmony under the impulse of the life-giving Spirit.

90. The Church in the Amazon is called to walk in the exercise of discernment, which is the center of the synod processes and events. It is about determining and traveling as a Church, through the theological interpretation of the signs of the times, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the way forward in the service of God's design. Community discernment allows us to discover a call that God makes heard in each particular historical situation. This Assembly is a moment of grace to exercise reciprocal listening, sincere dialogue and community discernment for the common good of the People of God in the Amazon Region, and then, at the stage of decision-making, to continue walking under the impulse of the Holy Spirit in small communities, parishes, dioceses, vicariates, "prelatures", and throughout the region.

c. Towards a synodal style of living and working in the Amazon region

91. With evangelical boldness, we want to implement new paths for the life of the Church and its service to an integral ecology in the Amazon. Synodality marks a style of living communion and participation in local churches that is characterized by respect for the dignity and equality of all baptized men and women, the complementarity of charisms and ministries, the pleasure of meeting in assemblies to discern together the voice of the Spirit. This Synod gives us the opportunity to reflect on how to structure the local churches in each region and country, and to advance in a synodal conversion that points out common paths in evangelization. The logic of the incarnation teaches that God, in Christ, is linked to human beings who live in the "cultures of the peoples" (AG 9) and that the Church, People of God inserted among the peoples, has the beauty of a pluri-form face because it takes root in many diverse cultures (EG 116). This is done in the life and mission of the local churches based in each "great socio-cultural region" (AG 22).

92. A Church with an Amazonian face needs its communities to be impregnated with a synodal spirit, backed by organizational structures according to this dynamic, as authentic institutions of communion. The forms of the exercise of synodality are varied; they must be decentralized at their various levels (diocesan, regional, national, universal), and respectful and attentive to local processes, without weakening the link with the other sister Churches and with the universal Church. The forms of organization for the exercise of synodality can be varied; they establish a synchrony between communion and participation, between the co-responsibility and the ministeriality of all, paying special attention to the effective participation of the laity in discernment and taking of decisions, promoting the participation of women.

#### New paths for ecclesial ministry

##### a. Ministerial Church and New Ministries

93. The renewal of the Second Vatican Council places the laity within the People of God, in a Church that is entirely all ministerial, which in the sacrament of baptism is the basis of the identity and mission of every Christian. "The laity are faithful that by baptism were incorporated into Christ, constituted in the People of God and, in their own way, made participants in the priestly, prophetic and regal world of Christ, by which they exercise their role in the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world" (LG 31). From this triple relationship, with Christ, the Church and the world, is born the vocation and mission of the laity. The Church in Amazonia, in view of a just and supportive society in the care of the "common home", wants to make the laity privileged actors. Its action has been and is vital, whether in the coordination of ecclesial communities, in the exercise of ministries, as well as in its prophetic commitment in an inclusive world for all, who has in its martyrs a testimony that challenges us.

94. As an expression of the co-responsibility of all those baptized in the Church and of the exercise of the *sensus fidei* of the entire People of God, there arose assemblies and pastoral councils in all ecclesial fields, as well as the coordination teams of the different pastoral services and ministries entrusted to the laity. We recognize the need to strengthen and expand the spaces for the participation of the laity, whether in consultation or in decision making, in the life and mission of the Church.

95. Although the mission in the world is the task of every baptized person, the Second Vatican Council highlighted the mission of the laity: "the hope of a New Earth, far from attenuating, must first boost the request for the improvement of this land" (GS 39). It is urgent for the Amazonian Church to promote and confer ministries upon men and women in an equitable manner. The fabric of the local church, also in Amazonia, is guaranteed by the small missionary ecclesial communities that cultivate the faith, listen to the Word and celebrate together in proximity to the

life of the people. It is the Church of baptized men and women that we must consolidate by promoting ministeriality and, above all, the awareness of baptismal dignity.

96. In addition, the Bishop may trust, for a specific period of time, in the absence of priests in the communities, the exercise of pastoral care of the same to a person not vested in the priestly character, who is a member of the community. Favoritism should be avoided and therefore it will be a rotating position. The Bishop may constitute this ministry on behalf of the Christian community with an official mandate through a ritual act so that the person responsible for the community is also recognized at the civil and local levels. The priest always remains, with the power and faculty of the pastor, as the responsible party for the community.

b. Consecrated life

97. The Gospel text - "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to announce to the poor the Good News" (Lk. 4:18) - expresses a conviction that animates the mission of consecrated life in Amazonia, sent to proclaim the Good News in close accompaniment of the indigenous peoples, of the most vulnerable and remote of them, by means of a dialogue and announcement that enable a deep knowledge of spirituality. A consecrated life with intercongregational and interinstitutional experiences can remain in communities, where nobody wants to be and with whom nobody wants to be, learning and respecting indigenous culture and languages to reach the hearts of the people.

98. Missions, while contributing to building and consolidating the Church, strengthen and renew consecrated life and call upon it with more force to resume the purest of its original inspiration. In this way, their testimony will be prophetic and a source of new religious vocations. We propose betting on a consecrated life with an Amazonian identity, strengthening indigenous vocations. We support the insertion and movement of the consecrated among the most impoverished and excluded. Formative processes must include the approach from interculturality, inculturation and dialogues between Amazonian spiritualities and worldviews.

c. The presence and the time of women

99. The Church in the Amazon wants to "expand the spaces for a more incisive female presence in the Church" (EG 103). "Let us not reduce the commitment of women in the Church, but promote their active participation in the ecclesial community. If the Church loses women in its total and real dimension, the Church is exposed to sterility" (Pope Francis, Meeting with the Brazilian Episcopate, Rio de Janeiro, July 27, 2013).

100. The Magisterium of the Church since the Second Vatican Council has highlighted the leading place that women occupy within it: "The time is coming, the time has come for women's vocation to be fully fulfilled, the time when the woman acquires in the world an influence, a weight, a power was never reached until now. That is why, at this moment when humanity is passing through such a profound change, women full of the spirit of the Gospel can help so much to ensure that humanity does not decline" (Paul VI, 1965; AAS 58, 1966, 13-14).

101. The wisdom of ancestral peoples affirms that Mother Earth has a female face. In the indigenous and western world, the woman is the one who works in multiple facets, in teaching children, and in the transmission of faith and the Gospel. They are a witness and responsible presence in human development. Therefore, it is requested that women's voices be heard, that they be consulted and participate in decision-making and, thus, can contribute with their sensitivity to ecclesial synodality. We value "the role of women, recognizing their fundamental

role in the formation and continuity of cultures, in spirituality, in communities and families. It is necessary that they more strongly assume their leadership within the Church, and that they recognize and promote it by strengthening their participation in the pastoral councils of parishes and dioceses, or even in areas of government.

102. Given the reality suffered by women as victims of physical, moral and religious violence, including femicide, the Church is positioned in defense of their rights and recognizes them as protagonists and guardians of creation and the "common home". We recognize the ministeriality that Jesus reserved for women. The formation of women must be promoted in studies of biblical theology, systematic theology, canon law, valuing their presence in organizations and leadership within and outside the ecclesial environment. We want to strengthen family ties, especially among migrant women. We assure their place in the leadership and training spaces. We ask for a review the *Motu Proprio de St. Pablo VI, Minister quedam*, so that properly trained and prepared women may also receive the ministries of the Lectorate and the Acolyte, among others to be developed. In the new contexts of evangelization and pastoral work in the Amazon, where the majority of Catholic communities are led by women, we ask that there be instituted and recognized a ministry of "the woman leader of the community," in the service of the changing demands of evangelization and care for communities.

103. In the various consultations carried out in the Amazon region, the fundamental role of religious and lay women and their communities in the Church of the Amazon region was recognized and emphasized, given the multiple services that they offer. For this reason the topic was also very present in the Synod. Already in 2016, Pope Francis had created a "Study Commission on the Women's Diaconate," which, as a Commission, arrived at a partial conclusion regarding the nature of the diaconate of women in the first centuries of the Church and its implications for today. Therefore, we would like to share our experiences and reflections with the Commission and wait for its results.

#### d. Permanent diaconate

104. For the Amazonian Church, the promotion, formation and support of permanent deacons is urgent, because of the importance of this ministry in the community, particularly for the ecclesial service that many communities require, especially indigenous peoples. The specific pastoral needs of the Amazonian Christian communities lead us to a broader understanding of the diaconate, a service that has existed since the beginning of the Church, and restored as an autonomous and permanent degree by the Second Vatican Council (LG 29, AG 16, OE 17). The diaconate today must also promote integral ecology, human development, social pastoral work, service to those in situations of vulnerability and poverty, configuring it to Christ the Servant, becoming a merciful, Samaritan, solidary and diaconal Church.

105. Priests must bear in mind that the deacon is at the service of the community by designation and under the authority of the bishop, and that they have the obligation to support permanent deacons and to act in communion with them. The maintaining of permanent deacons must be kept in mind. This includes the vocation process according to admission criteria. The motivations of the candidate must be directed to the service and mission of the permanent diaconate in the Church and in the world today. The formative process alternates between academic study and pastoral practice, accompanied by a formation team and the parish community, with contents and itineraries adapted to each local reality. It is desirable that the wife and children participate in the formation process.

106. The course of studies (curriculum) for the formation of the permanent diaconate, in addition to compulsory subjects, must include topics that favor ecumenical, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, the history of the Church in the Amazon, affection and sexuality, the indigenous worldview, integral ecology and other cross-sectional issues that are typical of diaconal ministry. The team of trainers will consist of ordained ministers and competent lay people who are in line with the approved permanent diaconate directory in each country. We want to encourage, support, and personally accompany, the vocational process and the formation of future permanent deacons in the riverside and indigenous communities, with the participation of parish priests, religious and religious. Finally, that there be a follow-up program for continuing formation (spirituality, theological formation, pastoral affairs, updates of church documents, etc.), under the guidance of the bishop.

e. Training courses for inculturation

107. "I will give you shepherds according to my heart" (Jer 3,15). This promise, being divine, is valid for all times and contexts. Therefore, it is also valid for the Amazon. Intended to configure the priest to Christ, the formation for the ordained ministry must be a community school of fraternity, experiential, spiritual, pastoral and doctrinal, in contact with the reality of the people, in harmony with the local culture and religiosity, close to the poor. We need to prepare good shepherds who live the Good News of the Kingdom, know the canonical laws, who are compassionate, as similar to Jesus as possible, whose practice is to do the will of the Father, fed by the Eucharist and Holy Scripture. That is, a more biblical formation in the sense of an assimilation to Jesus as shown in the Gospels: close to people, able to listen, heal, and comfort patiently, not seeking to request but to manifest the tenderness of their Father's heart.

108. In order to offer future presbyters of churches in the Amazon a formation with an Amazonian face, inserted and adapted to reality, contextualized and capable of responding to the numerous pastoral and missionary challenges, we propose an online training plan on the challenges of the local churches and the reality of the Amazon. It must include, in its academic contents, disciplines that address integral ecology, eco-theology, creation theology, Indian theologies, ecological spirituality, the history of the Church in Amazonia, Amazonian cultural anthropology, etc. The training centers for the presbyteral and consecrated life must be inserted, preferably, in the Amazonian reality, in order to favor contact with Amazonian young people in formation within their reality, while preparing them for their future mission, thus guaranteeing that the formation process does not distance itself from the vital content of people and their culture, as well as offering other non-Amazonian youth the opportunity to be part of their formation in the Amazon, thus promoting missionary vocations.

f. The Eucharist source and summit of synodal communion

109. According to the Second Vatican Council, participation in the Eucharist is the source and summit of all Christian life; it is a symbol of that unity with the Mystical Body. It is the center and culmination of the whole life of the Christian community. The Eucharist contains all the spiritual good of the Church; It is the source and culmination of all evangelization. Let us echo the phrase of St. John Paul II: "The Church lives from the Eucharist" (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 1). The Instruction of the Congregation for Divine Worship *Redemptoris sacramentum* (2004) insists that the faithful enjoy the right to have the Eucharistic celebration as established in the liturgical books and norms. But it seems strange to speak of the right to celebrate a Eucharist as prescribed, not to mention the most fundamental right of access to the Eucharist for all: "In the Eucharist the fullness has already been realized, and it is the vital center of the universe, the

center full of love and inexhaustible life. Together with the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos thanks God. Indeed, the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love "(LS 236).

110. The community has a right to celebration, which derives from the essence of the Eucharist and its place in the economy of salvation. The sacramental life is the integration of the various dimensions of human life in the Paschal Mystery, which strengthens us. That is why living communities truly cry out for the celebration of the Eucharist. It is undoubtedly the point of arrival (source and summit) of the community; but it is, at the same time, a starting point: of encounter, of reconciliation, of learning and catechesis, of community growth.

111. Many of the ecclesial communities of the Amazon territory have enormous difficulties in receiving the Eucharist. Sometimes not only months pass, but even several years before a priest can return to a community to celebrate the Eucharist, offer the sacrament of reconciliation or anoint the sick of the community. We appreciate the celibate person as a gift of God (*Sacerdotalis Caelibatus*, 1) insofar as this gift permits the missionary disciple, ordained to the priesthood, to dedicate himself completely to the service of the Holy People of God. It stimulates pastoral charity and we pray that there will be many vocations that live out the celibate priesthood. We know that this discipline "is not demanded by the nature itself of the priesthood ... although there are many reasons for which it is convenient for the same" (PO 16). In his encyclical on priestly celibacy Saint Paul VI maintained this law and gave the theological, spiritual, and pastoral reasons upon which it is based. In 1992, the post synodal exhortation of Saint John Paul II on priestly formation confirmed this tradition in the Latin Church (PDV 29). Considering that legitimate diversity does not damage the communion and unity of the Church, but that it rather makes it manifest and serves it (LG 13; OE 6), which gives testimony to the plurality of existing rites and disciplines, we propose to establish criteria and dispositions on the part of the competent authority, in the framework of *Lumen Gentium* 26, to ordain as priests men who are apt for it and who are recognized by the community, who are fruitful permanent deacons and who receive an adequate formation for the priesthood, even if they have a legitimately constituted and stable family, to sustain the life of the Christian community, through the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments in the most remote zones of the Amazon region. With regard to this, some wished that the topic be addressed in a universal way.

#### New paths for ecclesial synodality

##### a. Regional Synodal Structures in the Amazonian Church

112. The majority of the Dioceses, Prelatures and Vicariates of Amazonia have large territories, few ordained ministers and a shortage of financial resources, and going through difficulties in sustaining the mission. The "Amazonian cost" has a serious impact on evangelization. Given this reality, it is necessary that there be a rethinking of the way in which local churches are organized, to reconsider communion structures at provincial, regional, national levels and, with respect to the Pan-Amazon region. Therefore, the articulation of synodal spaces and creation of solidarity support networks is necessary. It is urgent to overcome the borders that geography imposes and construct bridges that unite. The Aparecida document already insisted that local Churches create forms of interdiocesan associations in each country or between countries of a region, and that fosters greater cooperation among the sister churches (cf. DAp 182). With a view towards a Church that is present, shows solidarity, and is Samaritan, we propose: to redraw the vast geographic areas of the dioceses, vicariates and "prelatures" ["prelazias"], to

create an Amazonian fund to sustain evangelization, and to raise awareness and to encourage international Catholic cooperation agencies to provide support, beyond social projects, to activities of evangelization.

113. In 2015, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops by St. Paul VI, Pope Francis gave an invitation to renew the synodal communion at the different levels of the Church's life: local, regional and universal. The Church is developing a renewed understanding of synodality at the regional level. Supported by tradition, the International Theological Commission states: "The regional level in the exercise of synodality is that which occurs in regrouping of particular Churches present in the same region: a province - as was the case in the first centuries of the Church- or a country, a continent or part of it" (Document "Synodality in the life and mission of the Church", Vatican, 2018, 85). The exercise of synodality at this level reinforces spiritual and institutional ties, favors the exchange of gifts and helps to project common pastoral criteria. The joint work in the social pastoral of the dioceses located along the borders of the countries must be strengthened to face common problems that overwhelm local dioceses, such as the exploitation of people and territory, drug trafficking, corruption, human trafficking, etc. The problem of migration needs to be tackled in a coordinated manner by the border churches.

b. Universities and new Amazonian synod structures

114. We propose that an Amazon Catholic University be established based on interdisciplinary research (including field studies), inculcation and intercultural dialogue; that inculcated theology includes joint formation for lay ministries and formation of priests, based primarily on Sacred Scripture. Research, education and extension activities should include environmental study programs (theoretical knowledge combined with the wisdom of the people living in the Amazonian region) and ethnic studies (description of the different languages, etc.). Teacher training, teaching and production of teaching material must respect the customs and traditions of indigenous peoples, developing inculcated teaching material and carrying out extension activities in different countries and regions. We ask Catholic universities in Latin America to help create the Amazon Catholic University and accompany its development.

c. Post-Synodal Regional Ecclesial Organization for the Amazon region

115. We propose to create an episcopal organism that promotes synodality among the churches of the region, that helps to delineate the Amazonian face of this Church and that continues the task of finding new paths for the evangelizing mission, especially incorporating the proposal of integral ecology, thus strengthening the physiognomy of the Amazon Church. It would be a permanent and representative episcopal organism that promotes synodality in the Amazon region, articulated with CELAM, with its own structure, in a simple organization and also articulated with REPAM. In this way it can be the effective channel to take up, from the territory of the Latin American and Caribbean Church, many of the proposals that emerged in this Synod. It would be the link that articulates ecclesial and socio-environmental networks and initiatives at the continental and international level.

d. A rite for native peoples

116. The Second Vatican Council opened spaces for liturgical pluralism "for legitimate variations and adaptations for various groups and peoples" (SC 38). In this sense, the liturgy must respond to culture so that it is the source and summit of the Christian life (cf. SC 10) and so that

it feels bound to the sufferings and joys of the people. We must give a truly Catholic response to the request of the Amazonian communities to adapt the liturgy by valuing the worldview, traditions, symbols and original rites that include transcendent, community and ecological dimensions.

117. In the Catholic Church there are 23 different Rites, a clear sign of a tradition that since the first centuries has tried to inculcate the contents of the faith and its celebration through a language as coherent as possible with the mystery to be expressed. All these traditions have their origin based on the mission of the Church: "Churches of the same geographical and cultural field have come to celebrate the mystery of Christ with particular expressions, culturally characterized: in the tradition of the "deposit of faith," in liturgical symbolism, in the organization of fraternal communion, in the theological understanding of mysteries and in the various forms of holiness "(CCC 1202; see also CCC 1200-1206).

118. It is necessary that the Church, in its tireless evangelizing work, operate so that the process of inculcation of the faith, expressed in the most coherent ways, so that it can also be celebrated and lived according to the languages of the Amazonian peoples. It is urgent to form translation and writing committees of biblical and liturgical texts in the languages of the various regions, with the necessary resources, preserving the matter of the sacraments and adapting them to the form, without losing sight of what is essential. In this sense it is necessary to encourage music and singing, all of which is accepted and encouraged by the liturgy.

119. The new organism of the Church in Amazonia must establish a competent commission to study and discuss, according to usages and customs of the ancestral peoples, the elaboration of an Amazonian rite, which expresses the liturgical, theological, disciplinary and spiritual heritage of the Amazon, with special reference to what *Lumen Gentium* affirms for the Eastern Churches (cf. LG 23). This would add to the rites already present in the Church, enriching the work of evangelization, the ability to express faith in one's own culture and the sense of decentralization and collegiality that can be expressed by the Catholicity of the Church. There could also be study and proposals regarding how to enrich ecclesial rites with the way in which these peoples take care of their territory and relate to their waters.

## CONCLUSION

120. We conclude under the protection of Mary, Mother of the Amazon, venerated with various advocations throughout the region. Through her intercession, we ask that this Synod be a concrete expression of synodality, so that the full life that Jesus came to bring to the world (cf. Jn 10:10) reaches all, especially the poor, and contributes to the care of the "common home." May Mary, Mother of the Amazon, accompany our walk. To Saint Joseph, faithful guardian of Mary and her son Jesus, we consecrate our ecclesial presence in the Amazon, a Church with an Amazonian face and a missionary outreach.