

Pastoral Letter

17 October 2021

Launching of the 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops Diocesan Synodal Phase: FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION AND MISSION, XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS.

We, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei, are grateful to launch locally in every diocese, the XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, October 2023, with the theme, FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION & MISSION.

As stated in the preparatory document: "The purpose of the synod and therefore of this consultation is not to produce documents but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands."

In this vision of a Synodal Church, let us move forward as a Church of the People of God, constantly engaged in the dialogue of life, faith, culture, and with the poor in spirit. We move forward as a Church of Missionary Disciples, made up of clergy, religious and laity, baptized and sent in the one mission of Jesus Christ. As we move forward as a Church of Apostles, the successors of the apostles being the bishops in union with Pope Francis, together they exercise the primacy of

UNITY in DIVERSITY and CONTINUITY, together with the primacy of LOVE and TRUTH. This vision of a Synodal Church calls for a journey of personal conversion, and obedience to the direction of the Holy Spirit, through the Church. We do this by being faithful to the process that begins today in the local churches throughout the world leading to the Synod of Bishops in 2023.

May St. Joseph, the Guardian of the Universal Church, and Mother Mary, the Mother of the Church, intercede for us in our local churches of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

Sebastian Francis,

President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.