

Australian Cardijn Institute - Media Release - Contribution to the Synod First Assembly



Over 120 current and former local, national and international leaders of various lay apostolate movements and groups from 33 countries – many from the Global South – have added their names to a Contribution to the First Assembly of the Synod on Synodality.

According to Australian Cardijn Institute secretary, Stefan Gigacz, the statement aims to draw Synod participants' attention to several issues:

a) The need for a clear focus on the promotion of the lay apostolate of lay people as envisaged particularly in *Lumen Gentium* §31, *Gaudium et Spes* §43 and more generally in *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

b) The need for better representation among participants in the First Assembly of the Synod of international Catholic (lay) movements and networks.

Such movements were extensively represented in the later Sessions of Vatican II and also at the Synod on the Laity in 1987. Indeed, many of these movements were pioneers in the promotion of the laity and indeed of what we would now characterise as a synodal way of working.

c) The need for a fresh look at the provisions of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* §26, which clearly called for more representative and participative structures involving grassroots lay movements and organisations from local to global level.

He noted that the statement addressed a series of longstanding concerns dating back to the Second Vatican Council.

“During the Council, the lay apostolate movements also known as Specialised Catholic Action movements successfully advocated for representative Church structures that would involve the lay movements at parish, diocesan, national and international level. The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* adopted these proposals in its §26.

“But to the great disappointment of Cardijn and the leaders of the lay movements, these reforms were not implemented when the first Vatican Council of the Laity was established in 1967. Today, the current Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life is still not a representative body.”

“This is surely an issue that needs to be addressed by the Synod on Synodality;” he added.

Signatories to the statement include Emeritus Bishop of Darwin, Eugene Hurley, Rienzie Rupasinghe, a member of the first Pontifical Council of the Laity (PCL) in 1967, Patricia Jones, another former member of the PCL. Joceline Minerve, former Minister of Social Welfare in Mauritius, is another prominent signatory as is former Pax Romana ICMICA president, Kevin Ahern.

Current international YCW leaders, Clémence Otekpo (ICYCW) and Basma Louis (IYCW), are also among the signatories as are former IYCW presidents Rienzie Rupasinghe, Juanito Penequito (Philippines), Felix Ollarves (Venezuela), Moses Cloete (South Africa), Geethani Peries (Sri Lanka), Ludovicus Mardiyono (Indonesia) and Sarah Prenger (Germany).

Groups and movements that have endorsed the statement include Cardijn Community International, Australian Cardijn Institute, Cardijn Community Australia, Cardijn Community Zambia, International Young Christian Workers, Cardijn Associates USA, Woori Theology Institute, Seoul, Korea, Asian Lay Leaders Network, the Splendour Project and other signatories.

The statement is dated 1 October 2023, Feast of St Therese of Lisieux, patron of the Young Christian Workers and Specialised Catholic Action.

READ MORE

[Contribution to the First Assembly of the Synod on Synodality 2023](#)

[Movement proposal for a representative Council of the Laity at the Holy See 1964](#)

<https://synodality.josephcardijn.com/cardijns-critique-1967/>

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