

CELAM announces new Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon Region



The Presidents of the Bishops' Conference of Latin America (CELAM) and of the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) announce the creation of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon Region, aimed at promoting synodality in the Amazon.

The news of the creation of the Ecclesial Conference for the Amazon Region comes in a statement released on 29 June – the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul – and signed by Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte, President of CELAM, and by Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, President of REPAM.

Hope for *kairos*

The statement explains that the decision to form the Ecclesial Conference was made during an Assembly which took place virtually from 26-29 June 2020.

"This Assembly... is part of this hopeful *kairos* that carries forward the synodal journey to open new paths for the Church and for an integral ecology in the Amazon region", write the bishops.

In the statement, the bishops underline Pope Francis's closeness to the whole process of the creation of this new ecclesial entity: "This feast of our Church is also a gesture of thanksgiving for the service of the Holy Father, so we consider the birth of this Ecclesial Conference as a gesture of hope together with the Magisterium of Pope Francis, who has closely accompanied this whole process".

Unity and synodality

"The composition of the Assembly reflects the Church's unity in its diversity as well as its call to an ever greater synodality", reads the statement. The Bishops add that unity is also expressed "by the precious presence and permanent accompaniment of important representatives of the Holy See, who experience a direct relationship and strong closeness to the Synod of Bishops of the Amazon Region and to the mission of the Church in this territory".

Members of the Assembly with the right to vote unanimously agreed on the name, the "Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon Region"; as well as its identity, composition and statutes.

President and Vice-President

The communiqué also announces "the election of Cardinal Claudio Hummes, OFM, (Brazil) as President of the new Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon Region, and of Bishop David Martínez de Aguirre, OP, (Peru), as its vice-president".

A response to the cries

Finally, the Bishops explain that the birth of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon Region is intended as a response to the multiple threats facing Latin America, such as the coronavirus pandemic and the realities of violence, exclusion and death against the biome and the peoples who inhabit it.

It is for this reason that, "the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon Region desires to be good news and a timely response to the cries of the poor and of our sister, Mother Earth, as well as an effective channel to take up, from the territory, many of the proposals that emerged from the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon Region, held in October 2019, being also a link that encourages other ecclesial and socio-environmental networks and initiatives at the continental and international level".

Source: Vatican News