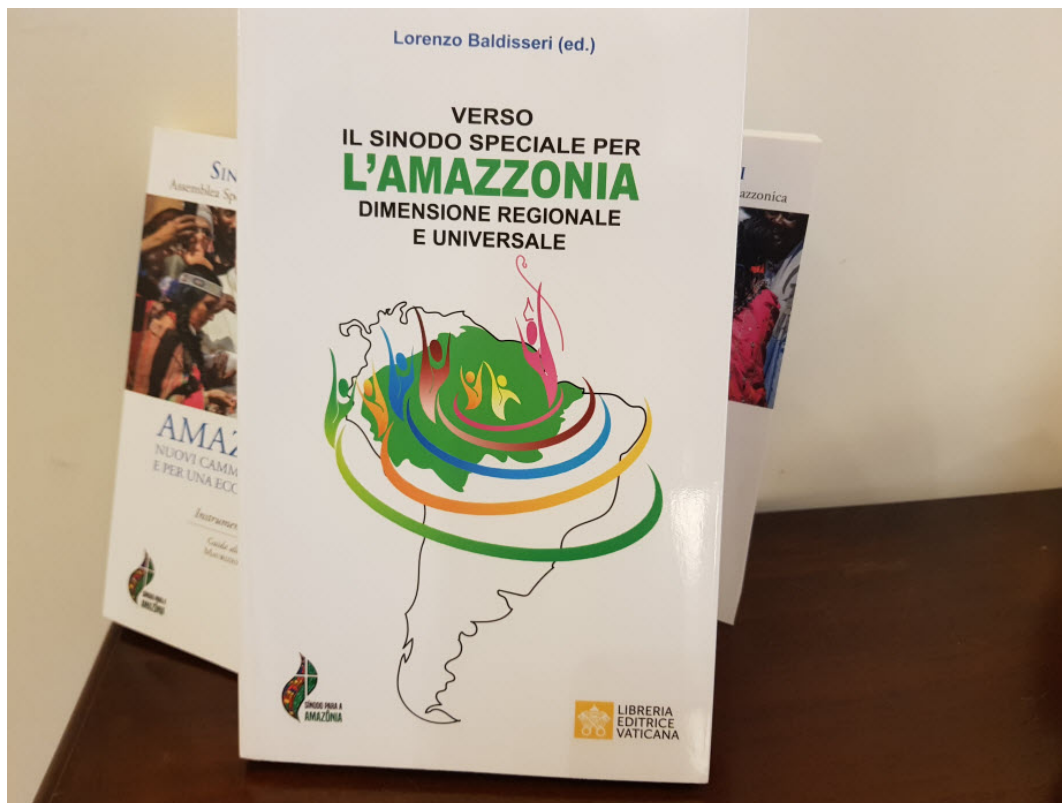


Proceedings of the Seminar “Toward the Special Synod for the Amazon: Regional and Universal Dimensions.”



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Presentation

The recent reform of the norms of the Synod as found in Pope Francis' recent Apostolic Constitution, *Episcopalis Communio*, help us to understand that Synods are not an event but rather a process, a journey. One sees this reality in the etymology of the word Synod, syn-hodos, walking together.

This notion of walking together is true for the Special Synod on the Amazon Region announced during the Sunday Angelus 15 October 2017 in St Peter's Square. In this synodal process one touches upon the precious contribution that all the people of God make in this work of discernment as the Synod Fathers are called together in October 2019. This Synod gathers together bishops, consecrated religious, theologians and experts, pastoral workers and social workers, men and women who have at heart the interests of the Amazonian region.

This Conference held at *Maria Santissima Bambina* (25-27 February Vatican City) is a serious study during this time after the Synod.

The title of this conference indicates the objectives of the General Secretariat for the Synod of Bishops, “Towards the Special Synod for the Amazon: Regional and Universal Dimensions.”

One knows well the various and complex questions which the Special Synod must confront. These questions are inseparable from the environmental situation and the life of the Church, they are closely

connected as the Holy Father clearly affirms in his encyclical *Laudato Si*, illustrated by the concept of 'integral ecology.'

Those questions, which appear to be germane to the Amazon region, also have a wider significance and importance for the whole world. At the same time, it is clear that the people of that region alone cannot resolve the problems of the Amazon. Rather, the whole Church is called to offer a contribution.

It is for this reason that this Seminar has studied the regional and universal dimensions, giving primacy to those from the Amazonian region, since from experience they understand best the situation. From there one is able to listen to different voices which complement each other as different perspectives emerge giving our reflections a universal perspective.

The hope of this seminar is to make more widely accessible the fruits of this study through the publication of these events. From this, one can see how many wish to work for the good of the church in the Amazon, towards and beyond the Special Synod.

Lorenzo Cardinal Baldisseri

General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops

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