

FABC Newsletter

No. 215

April - June 2026

Appointed: *HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL OSWALD GRACIAS*, Archbishop Emeritus of Bombay, as the Special Envoy of the Holy Father to the 12th Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) scheduled to take place in Jakarta from 20 to 26 July 2026.

IN THE CONFERENCES:

Appointed: Father John Baptist Nguyen Quoc Hung as Coadjutor Bishop of Quy Nhon (Qui Nhon), Vietnam; Father John Baptist Nguyen Quang Tuyen as Auxiliary Bishop of Thanh-Pho Ho Chi Minh (Hôchiminh Ville), Vietnam; Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle, pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for First Evangelization and the New Particular Churches, Cardinal Filipe Neri António Sebastião do Rosário Ferrão, archbishop of Goa and Damão, India, and Bishop Marcelino Antonio M. Maralit of San Pablo, Philippines, Chairman of the Office of Social Communications of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences as members of the Dicastery for Communication; Father Nick Argel Vaquilar as Bishop of Urdaneta, Philippines; Father Peter Suphot Roeksujarit as Bishop of Chiang Mai, Thailand; Father Vijaya Paul Reddy Duggimpudi as Bishop of Warangal, India; Bishop Louie Patalinghug Galbines as Bishop of Bacolod, Philippines; Father Anthony James Corcoran, S.J. Apostolic Administrator of Kyrgyzstan as Bishop Apostolic Administrator of Kyrgyzstan; Bishop Simon Kim Jong-Gang as Coadjutor Archbishop of Daegu {Taegu}, South Korea; Father Bernardino Ne Ne as Coadjutor Bishop of Taungngu, Myanmar; Bishop Elias Lumayog Ayuban Jr., C.M.F., Bishop of Cubao as Apostolic Administrator of Parañaque, Philippines; Father Anand David Xalxo as Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi, India; Bishop Anton Ranjith Pillainayagam as Bishop of Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Retired: Bishop Jacinto Agcaoili Jose as Bishop of Urdaneta, Philippines; Bishop Patricio Abella Buzon, S.D.B. as Bishop of Bacolod, Philippines; Bishop Jesse Eugenio Mercado as Bishop of Parañaque, Philippines; Bishop Justin Bernard Gnanapragasam as Bishop of Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Resigned: Father Gerardo Fortich Saco, Jr., as Bishop-Elect of Tagbilaran, Philippines.

Died: Archbishop Emeritus Prakash Mallavarapu (+77), Archbishop Emeritus of Visakhapatnam, India.

FABC DATEBOOK

- 20-26/27 July 2026, *The Twelfth FABC Plenary Assembly* will be held in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- 31 August - 4 September 2026, *Asia National Synodal Teams Meeting* at Baan Phu Waan Pastoral Training Centre, Sampran, Nakhonpathom, Thailand, organized by the FABC Commission for Synodality (CSyd).
- 29 November - 2 December 2026, *Discernment-Planning Meeting for FABC Offices* organized by the FABC Central Secretariat at the Camillian Pastoral Care Center, Bangkok, Thailand.
- 2-5 December 2026, *Evangelization & Indigenous Living Traditions*, at the Camillian Pastoral Care Center, Bangkok, Thailand, organized by the Offices of Evangelization (OE), Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (OEIA), and Theological Concerns (OTC).

FABC PAPERS NO. 196

The Synodal Assembly on the Mission of the Christian Family in Asia organized by the Office of Laity and Family and held in the Camillian Center 11-15 June 2026 addressed the themes of *Familiaris Consortio* and *Amoris Laetitia*, the Word of God and the Family and BECs. The Welcome and Orientation by Bishop Emmanuel Rozario, the talk on *Familiaris Consortio* and *Amoris Laetitia*, by Fr. Vimal Tirimanna, CSsR, the presentation on the Word of God and the Family by Cardinal Pablo David and the BECs in the *Bangkok Document* by Vimal Tirimanna, CSsR are presented in this paper.

FABC PAPERS NO. 197

Archbishop Felix Machado was invited to the International Consultation on Ecumenism in Asia: Emerging Ecclesial Landscapes and Ecumenical Paradigms, which was organized by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA). This was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the headquarters of the CCA, on 1-3 June 2026. This paper contains the presentation of Archbishop Machado: *Synod on Synodality and Ecumenism: Ecclesial Unity for Effective Witness in Asia*.

MEETING OF THE FABC OFFICES.

The Chairmen and Executive Secretaries of the FABC Offices and of the Committee on Synodality met online on June 8, 2026. In the discussion led by the Central Secretariat, the Officers shared with one another how they have been implementing the programs that they shared during their meeting with the Central Committee last February. Notable was the growing impetus to collaborate with one another in the spirit of synodality. This fosters sensible creativity, transparency, and accountability in view of animating the FABC Members for a more effective

mission in Asia. The Central Secretariat then updated the Officers regarding their roles in the XII Plenary Assembly that will be held in Jakarta next month.

SYNODAL ASSEMBLY ON THE MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN ASIA TODAY

The FABC-OLF *Synodal Assembly on the Mission of Christian Family in Asia Today* was held at the Camillian Pastoral Centre (Bangkok, Thailand) from 11 to 15 May 2026. The invitees were FABC Leadership, FABC OLF Chairman, Members, and Executive Secretary; Chairmen and Executive Secretaries of the episcopal conferences' offices on laity, family, life, youth, women, and BEC animation. The 45 participants were from 11 Conferences.

The general objective was to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying regarding the mission of the Christian family in the Church and in Asian societies today (cf. Rev 3:22). The first day, the theme was "Celebrating". The Assembly started with an Opening Eucharist presided by Cardinal Tarcisio Isao Kikuchi, SVD, Secretary General of FABC. On the first day, the FABC Member conferences gave reports in which they shared the following questions, and were later followed by conversation in the Spirit and group reports. 1. How was Pope Francis' *Amoris Laetitia* received in your conference/diocese? 2. How are you implementing the Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life? (lessons learned and success stories) 3. How are you making family life ministry more synodal? How are the commissions on laity, family, life, youth, women, BECs, elderly, et al. collaborating? It was truly an enriching moment to listen to each another and sense how the Holy Spirit is working and at the same time challenging us in our concrete reality regarding the Christian family in Asia today. On the second day, under the theme of "Discerning", in the morning, Fr. Vimal Tirimanna CSsR, gave two talks us on *Familiaris Consortio* and *Amoris Laetitia*: controversial issues and theological developments (first part) and pastoral prospects (second part) followed by an open forum. In the afternoon, Cardinal Pablo Virgilio David, Vice-President of FABC, shared two talks on *The Family and the Word of God*, also followed by open forum. Archbishop Francis Xavier Vira Arprondratana, Archbishop of Bangkok, came to preside over the Eucharist on the second day. The last day of the OLF Synodal Assembly was under the theme "Heeding the Holy Spirit". In the morning, there was a panel discussion on the *Bangkok Document's* agenda, with the following themes and speakers: -Family: Fr. Enrico Emmanuel Ayo (Philippines) -Youth: Fr. Nigel Barrett (India) -Women: Ms. Anna Teresa Amandus (Malaysia) -BECs: Fr Vimal Tirimanna, CSsR. (Sri Lanka). After their talks, there was a conversation in the Spirit on each of the above topics. In the afternoon, there were group reports, plenary conversations, and synthesis. The Synodal Assembly concluded with a Eucharist presided over by Bishop Emmanuel Rozario of Barishal, Bangladesh, and Chairman of the FABC's OLF. Encouraged by this Synodal Assembly, it is hoped that all may continue to support and learn from one another as we together journey forward in our respective ministries.

OTC: A SYNODAL THEOLOGIZING COMMUNITY

The FABC Office of Theological Concerns (OTC) met in Jakarta, Indonesia, 3-10 May 2026. The Bishops' Conference of Indonesia hosted them. The OTC is unique in that each Bishops' Conference sends one theologian to the OTC who has a 4-year term of service unless extended for another 4 years by their Bishops' Conference. They can call their way of theologizing in OTC as 'synodal'. Firstly, they witness to inclusivity as they hail from different countries, ensuring that voices, cultures, and wisdom from the different regions of Asia find space in this diverse community of theologians. This synodal style is most evident during the annual one-week meeting. Every day they pray together, share the Word of God, and celebrate Eucharist. Connecting deeply in discernment, they start by sharing their different contexts and the challenges they are facing, listening to God in the signs of the times. In this way, they hope they really are, as the Synod says, 'walking with humanity', with the joys and pains of our Asian peoples. They choose a topic to discuss before coming to a country, and a few of them and one local theologian write and present a paper to one another. Then an open discussion ensues. This year in Jakarta, the topic was Vatican II and Synodality. They chose one theological insight from a Vatican II document and studied how this was treated by the *Final Document* of the Synod. Estela Padilla did Local Church (*Lumen Gentium*), Archbishop Midyphil Billones, Ordained Ministry (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*), and Sr Rekha Chenattu, Revelation (*Dei Verbum*). Their newest project is to prepare a formation module, rather than the usual theological paper, to make Synodality better understood and practiced in leadership communities (clergy and lay, commissions, SCCs, and Pastoral Councils, etc.). For input and reflection, they added our Asian cultural values to the Synodal teachings on communion, participation, and mission. It has biblical reflections and a guide for Conversation in the Spirit to help people seek conversion that leads to commitment in living synodality in their local settings.

CONTINENTAL BODIES MEET WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD

Cardinal Mario Grech called for a meeting of the Presidents of the Continental Associations of Bishops' Conferences with the point person for implementation of the synod and the Secretary General. This was held at the offices of the General Secretariat for the Synod from 23 June to 25 June 2026. It concluded with the presence of Pope Leo XIV. Representing the FABC were Cardinal Filipe Neri Ferrao, Cardinal Pablo David, and Fr. William LaRousse.

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