



CONGREGATION OF  
**JESUS MARY JOSEPH**



**SECOND  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHAPTER 2024**

**Direction Statement**

# MEANING OF COVER PAGE

## CROSS AND CHAPTER LOGO

### Cross Vertical Line:

"Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while."  
For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. - Mark 6:31

"Ascending to God - Going out to the people."  
- Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff, SJ (Spirit & Charism P.25)

### Cross Horizontal Line:

I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:  
"Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?"  
Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."

"With the Lord of the world and  
for the world of the Lord."  
- Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff, SJ

### Chapter Logo :

Calls us to live the Synodal Way - of living, leading and ministering through participation, communion, mission.



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**JESUS MARY JOSEPH**



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## MESSAGE OF THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHAPTER – 2024

The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph, one of the new branches of the Society of JMJ, has been on an amazing journey over the past six years, centered around the theme, "Encountering together an Emerging Future as Vessels of Hope", focussing on collective exploration, facing new possibilities, and embodying hope as it navigated through changes and challenges. It's intriguing to think about the specific experiences and transformations we, as sisters of the Congregation of JMJ have encountered along this path. Rev. Sr. Brigid Lawlor RGS, the religious assistant, played a pivotal role in guiding the first Congregational Chapter, by providing direction, fostering unity, and ensuring that the Congregation stays aligned with its core values and mission. Her guidance was instrumental in helping the Congregation move forward facing the challenges and opportunities we encountered on our journey.

At the close of the six years, with a deep sense of satisfaction and contentment, an apt theme was chosen for its second Congregational Chapter, "Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity", in tune with the present context of the Church and the world. The Congregation of JMJ pledges to form part of the synodal Church which can make communion real and inclusive by remaining closer to the poor, women, children, differently abled, and all other marginalized people. God of the Bible is a synodal God through and through, continuously journeying with his people and compassionately listening to their cries. Intimate knowledge, passionate love, and arduous following of this synodal God is the life mission of every Christian. The Synodal spirituality invites us to embrace the whole of humanity as children of God.



**Synodality** : Synodality refers to a participatory and collaborative style of decision-making and governance within the Church. It emphasizes the involvement of the entire community of believers in discerning the will of God and addressing issues facing the Church and society. Synodality seeks to foster dialogue, consultation, and consensus-building among bishops, clergy, religious, and the laity. It's a way of expressing communion and shared responsibility among the members of the Church. It's about walking together, listening to diverse voices, and discerning the path forward as one body. Let's embark on this journey as a Congregation with open hearts and minds, embracing the richness that comes from sharing our experiences and wisdom. Together, let's explore how synodality can deepen our relationships, strengthen our communities, and guide us toward a future filled with unity and peace.

In the Bible, the concept of synodality, or the idea of communal discernment and decision-making within the Church community, is reflected in several passages:

Acts 15:1-29 describes how early Christian leaders gathered in Jerusalem to discuss and discern important matters concerning the Church, particularly the inclusion of Gentile believers. Through dialogue and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they reached a decision together, demonstrating the importance of communal discernment in addressing significant issues.

1 Cor 12: 12-27 speaks of the interconnectedness and diversity within the Body of Christ. Each member has a unique role and perspective to contribute, and all are essential for the well-being of the whole. Synodality aligns with this concept by valuing the input and participation of every member in the discernment process.

Eph 4: 11-16 emphasizes the importance of unity and maturity within the Church. It highlights the roles of various individuals within the community, all working together for the common good and growth of the Church.

These biblical passages underscore the value of synodality and the shared mission of the Church guided by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

***Synodal Solidarity:*** Synodal solidarity builds on the idea of synodality but places particular emphasis on the interconnectedness and support among different parts of the Church, as well as with wider society. It highlights the idea that all members of the Church are in solidarity with one another, supporting and accompanying each other in faith and life. Synodal solidarity emphasizes unity, mutual support, and collective action in addressing challenges and promoting justice and peace.

In essence, while synodality focuses on the participatory and collaborative nature of decision-making within the Church, synodal solidarity emphasizes unity and mutual support among its members and with the broader community. Both concepts reflect key aspects of the Church's mission to embody the love and teachings of Christ in the world.

### **Towards Universal Fraternity**

Synodal solidarity can be a powerful tool in fostering universal fraternity by promoting dialogue, collaboration, and mutual understanding among diverse individuals and communities by:

***Inclusive Dialogue:*** Synodal solidarity encourages inclusive dialogue where individuals from different backgrounds, cultures, and

perspectives come together to share their experiences and insights. By actively listening to each other and valuing diverse viewpoints, people can build bridges of understanding and empathy, laying the foundation for universal fraternity.

***Shared Decision Making:*** Through synodal processes, communities can engage in shared decision-making, where decisions are reached collectively, taking into account the needs and aspirations of all members. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and belonging among participants, promoting solidarity and cooperation towards common goals.

***Promotion of Justice and Equity:*** Synodal solidarity emphasizes the importance of justice and equity, ensuring that the voices of marginalized and vulnerable groups are heard and respected. By addressing issues of inequality and advocating for social justice, synodal communities contribute to building a more inclusive and fraternal society where everyone can thrive.

***Collaborative Action:*** Synodal solidarity extends beyond dialogue to collaborative action, where communities work together to address shared challenges and promote the common good. By pooling resources, expertise, and efforts, individuals and groups can achieve a more significant and lasting impact, strengthening bonds of solidarity and fraternity.

***Witness to Universal Love:*** Ultimately, synodal solidarity bears witness to the universal love that transcends boundaries and unites all people as members of one human family. By embodying values such as compassion, empathy, and respect for human dignity, synodal communities inspire others to embrace fraternity as a guiding principle in their interactions and relationships.

By harnessing the principles of synodal solidarity, individuals and communities can contribute to the realization of universal fraternity, creating a world where solidarity, mutual respect, and cooperation prevail.

## **CONCLUSION**

We realize that we are not alone in the synodal process. Under the power of the Spirit, we, the sisters of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph journey together with all people of goodwill, belonging to different churches, believers of other religions, and with the entire creation for the common good. We hope and dream of promoting a participatory mission where we listen, discern, and walk together with the poor and the marginalized.

Strengthening communities and fostering a sense of belonging is essential for promoting solidarity and fraternity. Over the next six years, initiatives focused on community building, social cohesion, and grassroots organizing can help cultivate a culture of solidarity at the local, province, and Congregational levels. By focusing on these areas and integrating the theme, “Synodal Solidarity toward Universal Fraternity” into future initiatives and policies, we can work towards building a more connected, compassionate, and just world over the next six years and beyond.



Bangalore, India - May 13 - 29, 2024

Theme :

**Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity**

## **DIRECTION STATEMENT**

The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph, guided by the Spirit of God and echoing the theme of the second Congregational Chapter “*Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity*” desires to respond to the evolving challenges of the world for the next six years and beyond in tune with the charism of our Founder, the spirituality of the Congregation and the call of the universal Church.

This Chapter calls each member of the Congregation to a renewed missionary zeal and apostolic dynamism, to journey together with Christ and with the whole of humanity, igniting our passion for mission.

### **CONGREGATIONAL COMMITMENTS**

Conscious of the urgent need for a radical change, we the members of the Congregation as one body commit to:

- Embrace the dispositions of **synodal spirituality** (deep listening, contemplation and discernment), in order to live the newness called for, by the synodal way<sup>1</sup> of living, leading and ministering.
- Revitalize initial and ongoing formation, emphasizing **contextualized** and **holistic formation** and fostering the Spirituality, Charism and the non-negotiable values<sup>2</sup> of our Congregation.

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1 Synodal way – Participation, Communion, Mission.

- Nurture “**Eucharistic hope**”<sup>3</sup> as the cornerstone of our communities and mission to become agents of care, mercy and compassion.
- Make courageous evangelical choices to leave ‘**our nests**’ and in solidarity go to the margins and peripheries, through preferential option for young people, families in need, migrants, transgenders and trafficked persons, in collaboration and networking with others for greater apostolic impact.
- Identify **lay collaborators and empower them** to be partners in our mission.
- Facilitate **personal and communal responsibility for our common home**, protecting and renewing God’s creation.
- Cultivate **synodal leadership at all levels of the governance** that promotes the spiritual and apostolic vitality of the Congregation, and the spirit of stewardship in the management of finance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Spirituality:** Deepen personal spiritual transformation through the faithful practice of spiritual exercises - personal prayer, contemplation, the examination of consciousness - and continue to offer regular courses on JMJ and Synodal Spirituality.
2. **Formation:** Intensify the practice of spiritual mentorship in initial and ongoing formation. Continue inter province collaboration in formation houses and train the sisters for formation.

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2 JMJ Non-negotiable values – refer to the book on ‘Roots of JMJ’.

3 Eucharistic hope – Give oneself fully like Christ.

3. **Community Life:** Foster formative and intercultural communities, with regular evaluation of community life and mission, through Conversation in the Spirit.
4. **Mission:**
  - Formulate a strategic plan for implementing lay collaboration in all our ministries and make sisters available for frontier missions.
  - Encourage interprovince and inter congregational collaboration and networking.
5. **Care for our Common Home:** Create eco-consciousness leading to eco-friendly lifestyle and social responsibility while working diligently towards achievable '*Laudato Si*' and Sustainable Development Goals.
6. **Leadership and Governance:** Open avenues and opportunities that prepare potential leaders who will facilitate synodal/ discerning leadership.
7. **Finance Management:**
  - Enhance an effective monitoring system for financial integrity at all levels of governance.
  - Strengthen resource mobilization for sustainable development of our frontier mission.
  - Procure a property in the Netherlands with a specific ministry to stay connected with our historical roots, and to sustain the objectives of the Holy Family Foundation.
  - Establish a mission office cum spirituality centre for the Congregation in India.

## **OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS**

These recommendations are the outcome of the discernment of the chapter body on proposals received from the members of the Congregation.

### **FORMATION**

1. The council members of the Congregation, Provinces, and the Region in charge of the formation form a Vocation Promotion Commission (VPC) at the Congregational level.
2. The provincial and regional councils will organise inter-province batch-wise renewal programs once in five years.
3. The parents and siblings may attend the temporary profession of the Novices from the year 2024.
4. Provinces will receive same number of sisters they promoted to the pre-novitiate after the temporary profession from the year 2024.

### **GOVERNANCE**

1. The General Council will explore the possibilities to initiate the process of sainthood of our Founder Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ.
2. The Regional Superior of Ghana will have two councillors, while continue to serve in their ministry.

### **AUTHORIZATION**

The Second Congregational Chapter entrusts these Congregational commitments and recommendations to the Congregational leadership, for effective implementation and periodic evaluation.

**Date : 29.05.2024**



**Rev. Fr. MATHIAS WOLFF SJ**  
the Founder of the  
Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

*Change me into Thyself dear Lord  
that I may live in Thee  
and for Thee alone.*

*May my happiness on earth  
Consist in fulfilling thy Holy will.*







Delegates of the Second Congregational Chapter 2024



**JESUS MARY JOSEPH,**  
*our Holy Patrons, Pray for Us!*