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PRESS RELEASE

Annual Plenary Meeting 2024

Synodality Requires Deep Inner Transformation

“[Synodal] Transformation. . . is an internal process, an interior journey that shifts the meaning and purpose of our lives. It shifts the patterns and practices of our lives and the structures that support them,” said Sr. Julie Peters to the bishops of the Antilles Episcopal Conference 68th Annual Plenary Meeting in Nassau, Bahamas. Sr. Julie continued to say that this transformation requires the creation of a psychologically safe space where “we feel valued for who we really are – our unique self – so that we as well as others can thrive. . . hear and harness diverse perspectives. . .” This safe space must be created among the bishops, clergy, religious, and the People of God.

Through this experience, the bishops listened intently to Bishop Clyde Harvey speaking about the unfolding situation in the Grenadian Church. They expressed solidarity with the People of God of Grenada and its shepherd and offered continued support and prayer to bring healing and reconciliation.

In a spirit of synodality, the bishops discerned the urgency to address four pastoral issues in the regional Church: Evangelisation and Discipleship Formation, Catholic Education, Domestic Church, and vocation. These pastoral matters will require further consideration in dialogue with the People of God.

In solidarity with the Haitian Church, the bishops discussed Haiti's unstable socio-economic and political situation. They pledged to continue their prayerful and material support to the bishops and people of Haiti. To this end, each diocese of the AEC will organise a collection to assist the Church financially in its pastoral work in Haiti.

Concluding the meeting, the bishops unanimously agreed to shift the synod process to every level of the regional Church by calling a regional synod that would begin in the families, parishes, and dioceses and conclude with an AEC regional Synod. Taking the synodal experience of the Universal (Global) Church, the AEC Synod will be launched in the Jubilee year 2025. The bishops thank the many people who accompanied us with prayer during our meeting.