Vatican



Pope Francis leads opening prayer during a meeting of cardinals in the synod hall at the Vatican in 2014. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

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To the list of members of the Synod of Bishops elected by national bishops' conferences, Pope Francis added cardinals from 14 countries, bishops from another 10 nations, as well as 10 priests who be full voting members of the gathering.

The pope's appointees to the synod were announced Sept. 15 and included Canadian Cardinal Gerald LaCroix of Quebec and U.S. Cardinals Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, and Blase Cupich of Chicago.

The synod will meet Oct. 3-28 at the Vatican to focus on "young people, faith and vocational discernment."

Francis also named as full voting members of the synod Blessed Sacrament Fr. Robert Stark, director of the Office of Social Ministry of the Diocese of Honolulu, and Canadian Jesuit Fr. Michael Czerny, undersecretary of the Vatican Section for Migrants and Refugees.

Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, and U.S. Cardinal Kevin Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, will be synod members by virtue of their Vatican posts.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops had elected as their delegates to the synod: Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, conference president; Archbishop Jose Gomez of Los Angeles, conference vice president; Bishop Frank Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut; and Auxiliary Bishop Robert Barron of Los Angeles.

They also elected Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia, but he is listed by the Vatican as an automatic member since he is part of the synod's permanent council.

The bishops of the Maronite Catholic Church elected Bishop Abdallah Elias Zaidan of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles to be a synod member. And the bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church elected Bishop Bryan Bayda of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops elected: Archbishop Luc Cyr of Sherbrooke, Quebec; Montreal Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Dowd; Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, Quebec; and Bishop Stephen Jensen of Prince George, British Colombia.

The Union of Superiors General elected 10 synod members — eight priests and two religious brothers — including U.S. Brother Robert Schieler, superior general of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, and Canadian Fr. Michael Brehl, superior general of the Redemptorists.

The synod rules do not foresee voting membership for women.

Francis also named dozens of "collaborators" and "observers" to the synod, including 30 women and several young adults. They participate in the synod discussions, but do not have a vote on the final proposals given to the pope.

The U.S. participants include: Jonathan Lewis, assistant secretary for pastoral ministry and social concerns in the Washington archdiocese; Fr. Robert Panke, rector of St. John Paul II Seminary in Washington; Sr. Briana Santiago, a member of the Apostles of the Interior Life, who participated in the pre-synod young adult forum in March; Yadira Vieyra, a researcher and immigration assistant in Chicago; and Sr. Sally Hodgdon, superior general of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery.

Two young people affiliated with Canada's Salt and Light Television also were named observers. They are Emilie Callan, who was a delegate to the pre-synod meeting; and Julian Paparella, a theology student.

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