Listening, nurturing and discerning together the Brother's vocation in the 21st century

As part of the process of listening and discernment that has been underway since late 2025, through the 'Institute's Survey', the **2026 Plenary Assembly** is bringing together the Brother Visitors, together with the Superior General and the General Council, at the Generalate in Rome from 20 to 26 September, to "listen, nurture and discern together the vocation of the Brother in the 21st century".

"This meeting is, precisely, an invitation to walk in a synodal manner, beginning with attentive listening to our reality and discerning what the good Lord inspires in us to understand, strengthen and enrich the vocation of the Brother today," said Br. Carlos Gómez, Vicar General, noting that "synodality does not simply consist of consulting more people or democratising religious institutions; its core concept is much deeper: **discerning together what the Spirit says and inspires in us**".

This involves — Brother Carlos continues — moving "from deciding to discerning, from informing to conversing, from passively obeying to seeking together, from authority that possesses answers to **authority that creates the conditions for a communal response to emerge**".

Four pillars of discernment

To this end, the Assembly's coordinating team has designed a participatory methodology that "seeks **to focus reflection on the profound meaning of the Brother's presence in today's world and the quality of his consecrated life",** with the aim of "reaching inspiring and appropriate consensus, translating discernment into concrete actions at District and global levels", centred on four fundamental pillars:

- *Formation and accompaniment*: supporting the process of listening to
- call of God.
- *Listening to reality:* fostering spaces for participation.

- *Renewing fraternity:* strengthening meaningful communities.
- *Pastoral ministry of vocation for Brothers:* returning to the essence of the charism.

Similarly, the Plenary Assembly addresses issues relating to **the safeguarding and care of life** which, according to the Vicar General of the Institute, "present us with very great challenges in terms of personal growth, the vitality of communities, transparency in our lives, and the credibility of our mission".

In this context, the Plenary Assembly "is a wonderful opportunity to envisage the future, always taking as our inspiration and guiding principle the educational service of the poor and the promotion of justice", adds Brother Carlos Gómez, noting that since the 46th General Chapter we have known that **the 'peripheries' are the theological and geographical places where we can best be 'leaven'**". Hence, "we cannot fail to emphasise that the 'Leavening Movement' is the primary means of revitalising our ministries and, in a radical way, our formation processes for the Brothers and collaborators committed to the mission, and to the accompaniment of children and young people, particularly those living on the peripheries", he concluded.

Brother Luis Gustavo Meléndez, a member of the Plenary Assembly Organising Team, shares the context of the 2026 Plenary Assembly in LaSalleOrg Short News.