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Press Release: Fourth Meeting of the 14th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops

The fourth meeting of the 14th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, chaired by the Holy Father Francis, was held from 7 to 8 May 2018.

The works began with an intervention by the Secretary General, His Eminence Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri. In his welcome address, the cardinal thanked His Holiness for his presence and outlined the journey undertaken in preparation for the 15th Ordinary General Assembly. In particular, the Secretary General focused on the preparation of the *Instrumentum laboris*, drafted in collaboration with a group of experts who gathered the material from five sources: the answers to the conclusive *Questionnaire* of the *Preparatory Document* by the competent bodies; the answers to the online *Questionnaire* addressed to young people; the proceedings of the International Seminary on the situation of young people, which took place in 2017; freely given observations from individuals and groups; and the *Final Document* of the pre-Synodal Meeting held from 19 to 24 March 2018. Cardinal Baldisseri referred to this event, noting the lively participation of young people from many parts of the world representing various ecclesial and extra-ecclesial contexts.

After the intervention of the Secretary General, the plan of the *Instrumentum laboris* was presented, the main theme of the meeting. The text inspired an interesting exchange of opinions, in the form of suggestions and observations which were inserted in the document, to provide the Synod Fathers an increasingly adequate tool for discussion in the meeting. The amended text was approved by all the participants.

The Members of the Ordinary Council discussed certain aspects and organizational criteria of the Synod of Bishops and the upcoming Ordinary General Assembly. The related report by His Excellency Msgr. Fabio Fabene, under-secretary of the Synod of Bishops, was followed by a fruitful exchange of opinions.

At the end, the Holy Father thanked the Council members and the participants for their contributions and for the spirit of fraternal communion in which the meeting took place.