



Three of the Canadian participants at the Synod during the opening Mass: from left to right, Bishop R

(Ottawa – CCCB)... Since Sunday, more than 250 Bishops from around the world are gathered with Pope Benedict XVI to reflect on ***The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church***. Six Canadian Bishops are among them: namely Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Archbishop of Quebec City; Most Reverend Terrence Prendergast, S.J., Archbishop of Ottawa; Most Reverend Lawrence Huculak, O.S.B.M., Eparchial Archbishop of Winnipeg and Metropolitan of Catholic Ukrainians in Canada; Most Reverend Ronald P. Fabbro, C.S.B., Bishop of London; Most Reverend Raymond St-Gelais, Bishop of Nicolet; and Most Reverend Luc Bouchard, Bishop of Saint Paul.

Cardinal Ouellet was personally named to the Synod by the Holy Father, who also appointed him as General Relator. Archbishop Huculak was appointed as one of the members of the Oriental Churches. The four other Canadian participants were chosen by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops during its 2006 Plenary Assembly, and their nominations were later ratified by the Pope.

This is the 12th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of the Bishops; the first was convened by Pope Paul VI after the Second Vatican Council. The Synod of Bishops is a consultative assembly which informs and advises the Pope on particular questions. A few months after the conclusion of the Synod, the Pope generally issues an Apostolic Exhortation which invites the Church to give special attention or follow-up to various points.

A number of Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations continue to have an important impact on the life of the Church. One has only to think of the Exhortations following the respective Synod on evangelization in 1974, the family in 1980, the vocation and mission of the laity in 1987 or, more recently, the Church in America in 1997 and the Eucharist in 2005. Each of these Exhortations laid a foundation that inspired initiatives which continue to help the Church grow in faith and love.

The Synod will end on Wednesday, 22 October 2008.