



Rules of Procedure of the Synodal Path

Adopted by Resolution of the Synodal Assembly on 31 January 2020

I. SYNODAL ASSEMBLY

§ 1 Tasks of the Synodal Assembly

The bodies of the Synodal Path shall be bound by the decisions of the Synodal Assembly (cf. Art. 3 para. 2 SaSW).

§ 2 Convocation and venue of the Synodal Assembly

(1) The Synodal Committee shall issue written invitations to the meetings of the Synodal Assembly with a notice period of four weeks to:

- a. The members of the Synodal Assembly (cf. Art. 3 para. 1 SaSW),
- b. The observers and guests of the Synodal Assembly (cf. Art. 4 para. 1-3 SaSW),
- c. The members of the Synodal Forums, who are not at the same time members of the Synodal Assembly, if a submission of their Synodal Forum is to be dealt with (cf. Art. 8 para. 5 SaSW),
- d. The Spiritual Companions (one male, one female) of the Synodal Path (cf. Art. 5 SaSW),
- e. The Secretaries of the Synodal Path (cf. Art. 9 para. 2 SaSW).

The agenda presented by the Extended Synodal Committee shall be attached to the invitation (cf. Art. 7 para. 4 SaSW).

At the same time, representatives of the media are invited (cf. Art. 4 para. 5 SaSW).

(2) Frankfurt/Main is the venue of the Synodal Assembly.

§ 3 Chair of the meetings of the Synodal Assembly

- (1) The Synodal Assembly shall adopt the agenda at the beginning of the meetings.
- (2) The presidents of the Synodal Path shall preside over the Synodal Assembly. (cf. Art. 6 para. 2 SaSW). They shall open and close the meetings.
- (3) The Synodal Committee shall determine the chair of the meeting. The chair must be composed of equal numbers of men and women.
- (4) The chair of the meeting, in particular, shall be responsible for:
 - a. Voting on the agenda at the beginning of the meeting of the Synodal Assembly,
 - b. Establishment of the quorum at the beginning of the meeting of the Synodal Assembly (§ 6 para. 1 GoSW),
 - c. Opening of the deliberations and voting on each item on the agenda,
 - d. Granting and withdrawing the right to speak, taking into account the time available for deliberation (cf. Art. 4 para. 4 SaSW).
- (5) The chair of the meeting shall ensure that the Spiritual Companions are given sufficient opportunities for spiritual impulses and spiritual reflection on the work of the Synodal Assembly (cf. Art. 5 SaSW).
- (6) The chair of the meeting shall give observers and guests the opportunity to make statements to the Synodal Assembly.

§ 4 Deliberations in the Synodal Assembly

- (1) As a rule, members of the Synodal Assembly shall be given an opportunity to speak in the order in which they have submitted their requests to speak in writing. Requests to speak may be arranged according to key words. Likewise, members of the Synodal Forums who are not members of the Synodal Assembly shall be given leave to speak in the deliberations on proposals of their Synodal Forum (cf. Art. 8 para. 5 SaSW).
- (2) Interposed questions may be allowed with the permission of the speaker. The presidents of the Synodal Path and, in the case of deliberation of a submission of a Synodal Forum, the respective chairpersons of the Synodal Forums shall be given the right to speak out of turn.
- (3) As a rule, the speaking time in the deliberations in the Synodal Assembly shall be three minutes. The chair of the meeting or, upon request, the Synodal Assembly may modify the limitation of speaking time.
- (4) The list of speakers shall be interrupted by a motion on the Rules of Procedure, which shall be indicated to the chair of the meeting by a double show of hands. This motion shall be dealt with immediately. After it has been dealt with, the deliberations shall be resumed, taking into account the established list of speakers.
 - a. Motions on the Rules of Procedure may only deal with the course of the current deliberations.
 - b. If there is no opposition to a motion relating to the Rules of Procedure, the motion shall be adopted. Otherwise, after hearing an objection, a vote shall be taken immediately.

- c. If the Synodal Assembly has decided to close its deliberations, those members of the Synodal Assembly who have proposed an amendment and have not yet spoken on their motion shall, on request, be given the floor before the vote on the matter, provided there is a request to reject that motion.

§ 5 Motions in the Synodal Assembly

- (1) Amendments to the submissions of the Synodal Forums and the Synodal Committee or motions on the Rules of Procedure with regard to the corresponding item of deliberation may only be submitted until the end of the deliberation in the second and, if applicable, third reading.
- (2) Motions must be submitted in writing, must be explained and must contain proposals for wording. Sentence 1 does not apply to motions on the Rules of Procedure.
- (3) Only the following shall be considered as motions on the Rules of Procedure:
 - a. Motions to amend the agenda,
 - b. Motions to close the deliberations and to take an immediate vote,
 - c. Motions to close the speaking list,
 - d. Motions for resubmission or further reading at the next Synodal Assembly,
 - e. Motions for adjournment of the meeting,
 - f. Motions to move to the next item on the agenda,
 - g. Motions to adjourn the vote,
 - h. Motions to hold a third reading,
 - i. Motions to establish the absence of a quorum,
 - j. Motions for interpretation of the Rules of Procedure,
 - k. Motions for non-referral,
 - l. Motions for separate votes of the female members present and
 - m. Motions for a roll call vote on substantive motions.
- (4) Only the members of the Synodal Assembly are entitled to submit motions.

§ 6 Voting and decision-making in the Synodal Assembly

- (1) At the beginning of each meeting, the chair of the meeting shall establish the quorum. The Synodal Assembly shall be deemed to have a quorum as long as the absence of a quorum is not expressly established upon request.
- (2) Unless otherwise provided for in the statutes and these Rules of Procedure, voting and decision-making in the Synodal Assembly shall be by a simple majority of the members of the Synodal Assembly present.
- (3) If, in accordance with § 5 (3) l, a request is made for a separate vote of the female members of the Synodal Assembly present, the majority of the female members of the Synodal

Assembly present necessary for the respective resolution shall be required for the adoption of the resolution.

- (4) With regard to a possible third reading of a motion, the provisions of Art. 10 para. 4 SaSW on the second reading shall apply accordingly.
- (5) The Synodal Committee may appoint a motion committee with a minimum of three and a maximum of five members for each proposal to be discussed in the Synodal Assembly. This committee shall examine the amendments to a proposal which are to be adopted before the vote on a proposal, and may make recommendations for a resolution.
- (6) On request, a vote on substantive motions may be taken by roll call, notwithstanding a possible request for a ballot (Art. 11 para. 4 sentence 2 SaSW).
- (7) If the result of the vote is unclear, the vote shall be repeated.

II. SYNODAL COMMITTEE

§ 7 Tasks of the Synodal Committee

- (1) The Synodal Committee, together with the Extended Synodal Committee, shall be responsible for the proper preparation and implementation of the meetings of the Synodal Assembly. It shall perform all tasks which are not assigned to other bodies of the Synodal Path according to the Statutes or the Rules of Procedure of the Synodal Path. The Presidents shall speak on behalf of the Synodal Path.
- (2) Irrespective of § 2 paragraph 2 GoSW, the Synodal Committee shall set the dates of the meetings of the Synodal Assembly and the place of the meeting and shall propose the agenda to the Extended Synodal Committee. It shall decide on the implementation of a live stream during the meetings of the Synodal Assembly, without prejudice to the protection of personal rights.
- (3) The Synodal Committee shall, within the framework of the follow-up of the meetings of the Synodal Assembly, in particular take care of the development of the Synodal Path and its location in the mission of the Church (evangelization). This also includes the accompaniment of (inter-)diocesan events as well as appropriate communication with the Apostolic See.
- (4) If there is any ambiguity as to the interpretation of a provision of the Rules of Procedure,
 - a. between meetings of the Synodal Assembly, the Synodal Committee, insofar as it concerns the handling of a Synodal Forum, in consultation with its two chairpersons, and after consulting the Interpretation Commission, shall decide on the further course of action. The Synodal Assembly shall be informed about the decision.
 - b. during meetings of the Synodal Assembly, the Synodal Assembly shall decide on the interpretation after consulting the Interpretation Commission.

The Interpretation Commission, whose three members are elected by the Synodal Assembly for the duration of the Synodal Path, examines the disputed facts and makes a recommendation for decision to the Synodal Committee or the Synodal Assembly.

- (5) The Synodal Committee shall draw up a list for the personnel composition of each Synodal Forum (cf. Art. 8 para. 3 SaSW). It shall provide five seats for members of the Synodal Assembly, who shall be elected by the Synodal Assembly to the list before it is voted on as a whole (in cumulo). Those members of the Synodal Assembly who have not yet been designated for a Synodal Forum may express interest in this.
- (6) The Synodal Committee shall convene the Synodal Assembly again three years after its last meeting to evaluate the implementation of the results of the Synodal Path (cf. Art. 13 SaSW).

§ 8 Meetings of the Synodal Committee

- (1) The meetings of the Synodal Committee shall be convened and chaired by the presidents with two weeks' notice and with a proposed agenda. The Synodal Committee shall meet at least twice a year, primarily after the meetings of the Synodal Assembly.
- (2) The Synodal Committee shall constitute a quorum if at least three members are present.

III. EXTENDED SYNODAL COMMITTEE

§ 9 Tasks of the Extended Synodal Committee

The Extended Synodal Committee shall ensure that the amendments received in writing are reviewed prior to the second and, if necessary, third reading of a Synodal Forum proposal in the Synodal Assembly.

§ 10 Direction and convening of the Extended Synodal Committee

- (1) The presidents chair the Extended Synodal Committee.
- (2) The meetings of the Extended Synodal Committee shall be convened and chaired by the presidents of the Synodal Path with two weeks' notice and with a proposed agenda.
- (3) The Extended Synodal Committee shall meet at least twice a year before the beginning of the Synodal Assembly, the meeting dates being based on the deadlines for the dispatch of documents.
- (4) The Extended Synodal Committee has a quorum if at least seven members are present.

IV. SYNODAL FORUMS

§ 11 Chairing of the Synodal Forums

- (1) For the election of the two chairpersons (cf. Art. 8 para. 4 SaSW) a simple majority of the members present at the respective Synodal Forum is required.
- (2) The chairpersons shall chair the meetings of the Synodal Forum. They may delegate the moderation to another person. The chairpersons shall invite the members to the meetings of the Synodal Forum with a notice period of two weeks in writing, including a proposal for the agenda.

(3) The meetings of the Synodal Forums shall not be open to the public.

§ 12 Tasks of the Synodal Forums

- (1) The respective chairpersons of the Synodal Forums shall transmit the submissions for the Synodal Assembly in writing to the Secretariat of the Synodal Path up to six weeks (in the case of the first reading) or ten weeks (in the case of each subsequent reading) before the Synodal Assembly takes place.
- (2) In the Synodal Assembly, the chairpersons of the Synodal Forums or members of the Synodal Forum commissioned by them shall introduce the deliberations on the proposal. The explanatory note shall report on the voting patterns in the Synodal Forum on the respective proposal as well as on the incorporation of the amendments after the first and, if applicable, second reading.

§ 13 Adoption of a resolution in the Synodal Forums

Proposals for the Synodal Assembly require an absolute majority of the members of the Synodal Forum.

V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 14 Dispatch of documents

- (1) Documents for the meetings of the Synodal Assembly shall be sent in digital form, or by post if explicitly requested. This shall be the responsibility of the Secretariat of the Synodal Path.
- (2) The dispatch of the invitation, draft agenda for the Synodal Assembly and submissions not made by a Synodal Forum shall be made no later than four weeks before the beginning of the Synodal Assembly.
- (3) The agenda as well as the submissions of the Synodal Forums for the Synodal Assembly shall be published on the Synodal Path website (www.synodalerweg.de).

Submissions not made by a Synodal Forum may be published in agreement with the Synodal Committee.

§ 15 Publications

The Presidents of the Synodal Path exclusively communicate the decisions of the Synodal Assembly as well as, if necessary, the publication of special votes on the decisions of the Synodal Assembly (cf. Art. 12 para. 1 SaSW).

§ 16 Taking minutes

- (1) Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of the synodal bodies. The minutes shall be kept by the Secretariat.

- (2) The minutes shall be signed by the presidents or the respective chairpersons of the synodal bodies and the keeper of the minutes.
- (3) The minutes shall be sent to the members of the respective synodal bodies and to the Secretariat of the Synodal Path no later than four weeks after the meeting.

§ 17 Precedence of the Statutes of the Synodal Path

The Rules of Procedure of the Synodal Path shall regulate the details of the procedure (cf. Art. 14 SaSW). In the event of conflicting provisions, the Statutes of the Synodal Path shall take precedence over these Rules of Procedure.