



SUMMARIZING

Worksheet for the Entities and the Presidents/Secretaries of the Conferences

WHAT IS A SYNTHESIS?

A synthesis is not a summary. A summary presents an “extract” or a “compendium” of the shared content, reporting only its principal elements in an essential way. A synthesis, on the other hand, already involves an initial elaboration of the content, identifying the meaning of convergences and the main distinctive features of what has been shared. It seeks to highlight what is most important, necessary, useful, and beautiful (cf. EG, 35).

PROCESS OF COLLECTING THE SYNTHESIS REPORTS

The following guidelines are intended to guide the synthesis work that will be carried out both by the facilitators in the groups of friars (Offices, Secretariats, Local Chapters) and by the Presidents/Secretaries of the Conferences. The facilitators of the Entities (PROVINCES/CUSTODIES) will collect the synthesis reports resulting from the shared discernment of the various bodies within their Entities (Offices, Secretariats, Local Chapters) and will, in turn, prepare a synthesis of them. Thus, the **Presidents/Secretaries of the Conferences** will receive the synthesis work prepared by what we have called the Conference facilitators, who in turn will have received information from their counterparts in each Entity. **The President and the Secretary of the Conference will then prepare a further synthesis.** This work will contribute to the preparation of the *Instrumentum laboris* and will be the expression of this first phase of listening and discernment in preparation for the General Chapter of 2027, constituting an important point of reference for the work of the capitulars.

THE WORKSHEETS/CARDS AND THE FACILITATORS

The discernment process will be accompanied by several worksheets designed to facilitate spiritual conversation within the provincial/custodial Offices and Secretariats and within the Local Chapters.

It is important that the discernment be carried out with the assistance of a facilitator; that is, that this friar first studies the worksheets and the discernment dynamics proposed in them. It will be useful to provide the group facilitators with clear guidelines for preparing the group syntheses, possibly by sharing this same worksheet or a similar version. In particular, it will be important to help them live their service as **guardians of the method** (respecting the timing, the steps, and the suggested procedures), guardians of the persons (ensuring that all participants feel heard and able to contribute something meaningful), and **guardians of the synthesis** (that is, preparing a synthesis that faithfully reflects what has emerged).

The facilitators for each Conference of the Order are:

- President
- Secretary
- Secretary for Formation and Studies
- Secretary for Mission and Evangelization
- Animator for Justice and Peace (JPIC)
- Communications Office Representative

PROCEDURE FOR PREPARING THE SYNTHESIS

1. FIRST READING

Both for the persons responsible for the Entities and for the Conference facilitators, during a first reading of the texts it will be important to carry out a process of **editing by removing** two types of content from the text:

- a) content that clearly appears to be the intervention of the person who took the notes, such as phrases describing what happened in the group (*we met at...; it was not possible to complete the synthesis work*) or descriptions of the facilitator's perception of the work carried out (*the atmosphere of dialogue was good...; it was beautiful to experience spiritual conversation*);
- b) whatever is not relevant to what was requested in the worksheets or is clearly insignificant for the purposes of capitular discernment.

2. SECOND READING

During a second reading of the texts, the **most significant passages of the synthesis material should be identified.**

The relevance of the material can be recognized through two characteristics: a) **Redundancy:** the content is repeated, although in different words, in several synthesis contributions and is therefore recurrent; b) **Originality:** the content **is attractive (beautiful), prophetic, has a particular evangelical or charismatic flavor and is therefore considered valuable and worthy of being preserved.**

3. DRAFTING THE SYNTHESIS: ORGANIZATION AND STYLE

Once the fundamental elements of the synthesis material have been identified, it will be important to organize this material and carry out an analytical process **aimed at identifying between three and five principal “semantic areas,” as well as determining the related elements useful for drafting the synthesis.**

At the level of the Entities, the synthesis reports must not exceed two pages for each worksheet; therefore, the total will be ten pages, since there are five worksheets. This means that the President and Secretary of each Conference, at the end of the process carried out in each Entity, will receive a maximum of ten pages from each Entity that makes up their Conference. For example, if a Conference is composed of six Entities, a total of sixty pages will be received. A rigorous synthesis process will then have to be carried out on those sixty pages so that a maximum of ten pages per Conference is sent to the Commission responsible for preparing the *Instrumentum laboris*.

In drafting the synthesis, it is recommended to use forms of expression similar to those found in the material received and, as far as possible, to reproduce the original significant passages. The **style** should maintain a narrative character and communicate what emerges from the core themes of the synthesis material. It is preferable not to rely exclusively on bullet-point lists.

DEADLINES

The deadlines for sending the Conference synthesis reports to the Secretariat of the General Chapter are as follows:

- The Presidents and Secretaries of each Conference must send the final synthesis document to the Commission preparing the *Instrumentum laboris* by 29 November 2026, the Feast of All Franciscan Saints.

In order to achieve this objective, we propose the following schedule:

1. At the level of the Entities Reception, study, dissemination, and work on the worksheets with the respective teams by those responsible for Formation and Studies, Mission and Evangelization, Communications and JPIC, together with the Provincial Ministers, from **July until 10 October 2026**.

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2. At the level of the Conferences Between **10 and 25 October 2026**, the Conference facilitators convene their counterparts (Secretaries for Formation and Studies; Mission and Evangelization; friars working in Communications; JPIC; and Youth and Vocational Ministry animators) for an in-person or online meeting in which they can share the material received from the Entities and proceed with the synthesis.

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3. On 1 November 2026 The President and Secretary of the Conference receive the material from the facilitators of each Conference area.

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4. Conference Synthesis (1–29 November 2026) The President and Secretary of the Conference organize all the material, ensuring a uniform style and creating a single file containing the synthesis of each worksheet (maximum 10 pages) to be sent to the Secretariat of the General Chapter.

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5. General Secretariat of the General Chapter (29 November 2026)

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6. Instrumentum laboris

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7. General Chapter 5–29 May 2027 at the Shrine of Nui Cui, Vietnam, with arrivals foreseen between 3 and 4 May and departure from the Shrine House on 30 May 2027.

NOTE

The work on the worksheets for the Local Chapters does not exclude the possibility that each friar of the Order may personally submit suggestions and proposals concerning either the General Statutes of the OFM or other aspects of Franciscan life by sending a letter directly to the Secretariat of the General Chapter: **capgensec@ofm.org**

