



5th International Patristic Conference
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin
October 7-9, 2025

Synodality in the Early Church

The issue of synodality has been part of the history of Christianity since apostolic times, when a meeting of the Apostles was held in Jerusalem around 50 AD to admit people of different origins into the Church. From the second century onwards, the custom of gathering bishops of different regions to exchange information and discuss important matters became widespread. After 313, when Emperor Constantine recognised Christianity as one of the legitimate religions of the Empire, ecumenical synods began to be held in addition to provincial synods.

The 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, which will be celebrated in 2025, is a good opportunity to look more closely at issues related to the idea of synodality and the practice of convening assemblies of bishops in the ancient Church. These topics will be the focus of the Fifth International Patristic Conference to be held at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin on 7-9 October 2025.

The main thematic areas that should be reflected in the contributions of the participants are as follows:

- The origins of early Christian councils and the rules for convening them;
- The spectrum of matters dealt with by the assemblies of bishops;
- The influence of the emperors on the organisation and conduct of councils;
- The role of the Bishop of Rome in relation to provincial and ecumenical councils;
- The activities of the synods in combating heresy;
- The importance of patristic argument in synodal discussion and in the formulation of doctrinal statements;
- Regional peculiarities of the various councils;
- The relationship between East and West in the ecumenical councils;
- The reception of synodal decrees in different parts of the Church;
- Prominent participants in the councils and their role in the synodal assemblies.

Furthermore, we aim to provide a contribution to the contemporary discussions on the synodality of the Churches.

Those wishing to present a paper at the forthcoming conference are invited to send the title of the proposed paper, together with an abstract of no more than 300 words and a brief CV, by February 15, 2025 to the following e-mail address: patristic@kul.lublin.pl