

# CATHOLIC BIBLICAL FEDERATION

## Affiliation of Members

The CATHOLIC BIBLICAL FEDERATION (CBF) is a *Catholic world fellowship of administratively distinct international and local organizations committed to biblical pastoral ministry*. The Federation is the official body of the Catholic Church for the promotion of the biblical apostolate.

The Federation's *raison d'être* can be found in the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* (DV). After its promulgation in 1965, Cardinal Bea was entrusted by the Pope with the task of studying the needs and possibilities of the Catholic Church in order to take concrete steps towards the realization of the recommendations in chapter VI of above Constitution. As a result of many contacts, the successor of Cardinal Bea in this undertaking, Cardinal Willebrands convened with delegates from 24 countries, and thus the creation of an international Catholic federation for the biblical apostolate was decided upon. On April 16, 1969, Pope Paul VI addressed the members of the Constitutive Assembly of the Federation and stressed the pastoral urgency of the tasks which the newly founded Federation had set for itself.

According to the Constitution (III.9.1), the purpose of the Federation is to *promote and develop the Biblical Pastoral Ministry in such a way as to allow the Word of God as present in Sacred Scripture to become a dynamic source of inspiration for all areas of the life and mission of the Church in today's world, following the lines set forth in the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation "Dei Verbum" and in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation "Verbum Domini", as well as in the documents of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, and in collaboration with the Bishops and the Bishops' Conferences.*

## Affiliation Process

As stated above, the Federation is an *international and local organizations* which in one way or the other are at the service of biblical-pastoral endeavours. Therefore, affiliation to the Federation is a *process of institutional order*. During this process the leading person(s) of the organization wishing to affiliate itself is (are) asked:

1. To make contact with the Federation through people or coordinating offices on the sub/regional or zonal level, or with the General Secretary of the Federation.
2. To become acquainted with the Federation, its work and goals. For this end, it is important to study the *Constitution* of the Federation and its documents and publications. Particularly the *Final Statements of its Plenary Assemblies in Bogotá (1990, Hong Kong (1996), Lebanon (2002) Tanzania (2008) and Nemi (2015)* are of special interest.
3. Once a clear picture has emerged of the underlying goals and objectives of the Federation's ministry, the duties and rights of its members, and if in agreement with these, a formal application for affiliation may be made together with the necessary *institutional backing*. This requires:
  - A letter addressed to the General Secretary of the Federation. In this letter the motivations for membership should be expounded. Furthermore, an explanation should be given of the type of biblical-pastoral ministry carried out by the organization applying for membership. It is important to show the *institutional consensus* behind the application (e.g., commission, vicariate, biblical-pastoral department, provincial council, board, etc.) and to add the signatures of the responsible persons (the bishop's in the case of a diocese, the provincial's/superior's when it concerns a religious congregation, at least two persons of the board, etc.). It would be appreciated if a copy of the minutes (or a document) of the meeting were (was) enclosed in which the decision was taken to ask for affiliation with the Catholic Biblical Federation.

- Receiving the written recommendation of the sub/regional or zonal coordinator.
  - Filling in the application form which will be sent to you by the General Secretariat after the documentation of the organization applying for membership has been studied.
  - The General Secretary then presents the application to the Executive Committee (EC) of the Federation. The members of the EC study the case and cast their vote. Once the EC has made its decision, the organization in question is informed of the result.
4. The Federation as such exists through and because of its members. Therefore, it is necessary to point out that the affiliated institutions should feel themselves to be integral parts of the Federation expressing this sense of membership by fulfilling both their *duties* and exercising their *rights*.
- We consider the *annual report* as an important piece of communication favoring mutual exchange and enrichment.
  - The necessity of paying an *annual membership fee* is at the same time a sign of affiliation with the Federation and an expression of Christian sharing. The membership fees are used in various ways for the promotion of the biblical-pastoral ministry; in some cases it is a partial contribution towards the running costs of the General Secretariat of the Federation and the sub/regional coordinators' offices.
  - Information on the amount of the annual membership fee to be remitted by the Federation members (cf. Constitution, IV, 13.1) will be given by the General Secretariat upon request. Since membership with the Federation is not *only* defined by the payment of this fee, we kindly ask you not to pay anything before having received the official letter that your organization has been accepted as associate member of the Federation.