

COMMUNIQUÉ of the Superiors-General of the "Ecclesia Dei" Communities [on Traditionis Custodes]

"The mercy of the Lord is upon all flesh." (Sirach 18, 13)



The signatory Institutes want, above all, to reiterate their love for the Church and their fidelity to the Holy Father. This filial love is tinged with great suffering today. We feel suspected, marginalized, banished. However, we do not recognize ourselves in the description given in the accompanying letter of the Motu Proprio Traditionis custodes, of July 16, 2021.

"If we say we have no sin ..." (I John 1, 8)

We do not see ourselves as the "true Church" in any way. On the contrary, we see in the Catholic Church our Mother in whom we find salvation and faith. We are loyally subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Pontiff and that of the diocesan bishops, as demonstrated by the good relations in the dioceses (and the functions of Presbyteral Councillor, Archivist, Chancellor, or Official which have been entrusted to our members), and the result of canonical or apostolic visits of recent years. We reaffirm our adherence to the magisterium (including that of Vatican II and what follows), according to the Catholic doctrine of the assent due to it (cf. in particular Lumen Gentium, n ° 25, and Catechism of the Catholic Church , n ° 891 and 892), as evidenced by the numerous studies and doctoral theses carried out by several of us over the past 33 years.

Have any mistakes been made? We are ready, as every Christian is, to ask forgiveness if some excess of language or mistrust of authority may have crept into any of our members. We are ready to convert if party spirit or pride has polluted our hearts.

"Fulfill your vows unto the Most High" (Psalm 49:14)

We beg for a humane, personal, trusting dialogue, far from ideologies or the coldness of administrative decrees. We would like to be able to meet a person who will be for us the face of the Motherhood of the Church. We would like to be able to tell him about the suffering, the tragedies, the sadness of so many lay faithful around the world, but also of priests, **men and women religious who gave their lives trusting on the word of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.**

They were promised that "all measures would be taken to guarantee the identity of their Institutes in the full communion of the Catholic Church"[1]. The first Institutes accepted with gratitude the canonical recognition offered by the Holy See in full attachment to the traditional pedagogies of the faith, particularly in the liturgical field (based on the Memorandum of Understanding of May 5, 1988, between Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Lefebvre). This **solemn commitment** was expressed in the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei* of July 2, 1988; then in a diversified manner for each Institute, in their decrees of erection and in their constitutions definitively approved. **The men and women religious and priests involved in our Institutes have made vows or made commitments according to this specification.**

It is in this way that, trusting in the word of the Supreme Pontiff, they gave their lives to Christ to serve the Church. These priests and men and women religious served the Church with dedication and abnegation. Can we deprive them today of what they are committed to? Can we deprive them of what the Church had promised them through the mouth of the Popes?

"Have patience with me!" (Mt 18:29)

Pope Francis, "encourage[s] the Church's pastors to listen to them with sensitivity and serenity, with a sincere desire to understand their plight and their point of view, in order to help them live better lives and to recognize their proper place in the Church." (*Amoris Laetitia*, 312). We are eager to entrust the tragedies we are living to a father's heart. We need listening and goodwill, not condemnation without prior dialogue.

The harsh judgment creates a feeling of injustice and produces resentment. Patience softens hearts. We need time.

Today we hear of disciplinary apostolic visits to our Institutes. We ask for fraternal meetings where we can explain who we are and the reasons for our attachment to certain liturgical forms. Above all, we want a truly human and merciful dialogue: "Have patience with me!"

"Circumdata varietate" (Ps 44:10)

On August 13, the Holy Father affirmed that in liturgical matters, "unity is not uniformity but the multifaceted harmony created by the Holy Spirit"[2]. We are eager to make our modest contribution to this harmonious and diverse unity, aware that, as Sacrosanctum Concilium teaches, "the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows" (SC, n° 10).

With confidence, we turn first to the bishops of France so that a true dialogue be opened and that a mediator be appointed who will be for us the human face of this dialogue. We must, "avoid judgements

which do not take into account the complexity of various situations ... It is a matter of reaching out to everyone, of needing to help each person find his or her proper way of participating in the ecclesial community and thus to experience being touched by an 'unmerited, unconditional and gratuitous' mercy." (Amoris Laetitia, n ° 296-297).

Done at Courtalain (France), August 31, 2021.

Fr. Andrzej Komorowski, Superior-General of the Fraternity of Saint Peter

Msgr. Gilles Wach, Prior General of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest

Fr. Luis Gabriel Barrero Zabaleta, Superior-General of the Institute of the Good Shepherd

Fr. Louis-Marie de Blignières, Superior-General of the Fraternity of Saint Vincent Ferrer

Fr. Gerald Goesche, General Provost of the Institute of Saint Philip Neri

Fr. Antonius Maria Mamsery, Superior-General of the Missionaries of the Holy Cross

Dom Louis-Marie de Geyer d'Orth, Father Abbot of the Abbey of Saint Magdalen of Le Barroux

Fr. Emmanuel-Marie Le Fébure du Bus, Father Abbot of the Canons of the Abbey of Lagrasse

Dom Marc Guillot, Father Abbot of the Abbey of Saint Mary of la Garde

Mother Placide Devillers, Mother Abbess of the Abbey of Our Lady of the Annunciation of Le Barroux

Mother Faustine Bouchard, Prioress of the Canonesses of Azille

Mother Madeleine-Marie, Superior of the Adorers of the Royal Heart of Jesus Sovereign Priest

[1] Informative Note of June 16, 1988, in *Documentation Catholique*, n° 1966, p. 739.

[2] Video Message of Pope Francis to the participants of the Congress on Religious Life.

dell'America Latina e dei Caraibi, convocato dalla CELA, 13-15 agosto 2021.[Source, in French: [Notre-Dame de Chrétienté/ Paris-Chartres Pilgrimage](#). Emphases added by Rorate]