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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu proprio on the Pontifical Commission “*Ecclesia Dei*”

For more than thirty years the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, instituted by the Motu proprio *Ecclesia Dei adflicta* of 2 July 1988, has performed with sincere care and praiseworthy attention to task of collaborating with the bishops and the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, in facilitating the full ecclesial communion of the priests, seminarians, religious communities or individuals, linked to the Fraternity founded by Msgr. Marcel Lefebvre, who wished to remain united to the Successor of Peter in the Catholic Church, conserving their own spiritual and liturgical traditions.¹

In such a way, it has been able to exercise its own authority and competence on behalf of the Holy See over the aforementioned society and associations, until otherwise provided.²

Subsequently, by the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum*, of 7 July 2007, the Pontifical Commission extended the authority of the Holy See over those Institutes and Religious Communities which had adhered to the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite and had assumed the previous traditions of religious life, overseeing the observance and application of the established provisions.³

Two years later, my Venerable Predecessor Benedict XVI, with the Motu proprio *Ecclesiae unitatem* of 2 July 2009, reorganized the structure of the Pontifical Commission, for the purpose of rendering it more suitable to the new situation created by the remission of the excommunication of the four bishops consecrated without papal mandate. Moreover, considering that, after such an act of grace, the matters dealt with by the same Pontifical Commission were primarily doctrinal, he connected it more organically to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, while retaining its initial aims, but modifying its structure.⁴

Now, since the FERIA Quarta of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of 15 November 2017 has formulated the request that the dialogue between the Holy See and the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X be conducted directly by the aforementioned Congregation, since the issues under consideration are of a doctrinal nature, a request to which I gave my approval *in Audientia* to the prefect on the following 24 November and which was received by the Plenary Session of the same Congregation held from 23 to 26 January 2018, I have reached, after extensive reflection, the following Decision.

Considering that today the conditions which led Saint Pope John Paul II to institute the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* have changed;

observing that the Institutes and the religious communities which habitually celebrate in extraordinary form have today found their own stability of number and of life;

acknowledging that the aims and issues dealt with by the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* are of a predominantly doctrinal order;

wishing that these aims be increasingly evident to the conscience of the ecclesial communities,

with the present Apostolic Letter 'Motu proprio data',

I establish that:

1. The Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, instituted on 2 July 1988 with the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei adflicta*, be suppressed.
2. The tasks of the Commission in question are assigned fully to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, within which a specific *Section* will be instituted, committed to continuing the work of supervision, promotion and protection so far carried out by the suppressed Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*.
3. The budget of the Pontifical Commission will be part of the ordinary accounting of the aforementioned Congregation.

Furthermore, I establish that the present Motu proprio, to be observed notwithstanding anything to the contrary, even if it should merit particular mention, be promulgated by publication in the newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* issued on 19 January 2019, entering into force immediately, and that subsequently it be inserted into the official Commentary of the Holy See, the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 17 January, Sixth Year of my Pontificate.

Francis

1Cf. Joannes Paulus PP. II, Litterae Apostolicae 'Motu proprio datae', *Ecclesia Dei adflicta*, 2 Iulii 1988, AAS, LXXX (1988), 12 (15 Nov. 1988), 1495-1498, 6a.

2 Cf. *Rescriptum ex Audientia Sanctissimi*, 18 Oct. 1988, AAS, LXXXII (1990), 5 (3 Maii 1990), 533-534, 6.

3 Cf. Benedictus PP. XVI, Litterae Apostolicae 'Motu proprio datae', *Summorum Pontificum*, 7 Iulii 2007, AAS, XCIX (2007), 9 (7 Sept. 2007), 777-781, 12.

4 Cf. Benedictus PP. XVI, Litterae Apostolicae 'Motu proprio datae', *Ecclesiae unitatem*, 2 Iulii 2009, AAS, CI (2009), 8 (7 Aug. 2009), 710-711, 5.
