



CIRCULAR (008 series 2017)

...*Simon Ioannis, diligis me plus his?.. tu scis quia amo te (John 21: 15)*

(Pastoral Statement concerning the Archdiocese'
stand on the issue of SSPX)

To my brother priests, religious and all catholic faithful of the Archdiocese of Palo!

Peace!

It has reach to our knowledge that a certain group of "priests" are doing "mission" among our Catholic faithful. They have been going around the Archdiocese bringing with them the image of our Lady of Fatima and distributing scapulars and other devotionals. These belong to our religiosity and spirituality. While there is nothing wrong with these devotions, these, however, caused confusion among our faithful. Some have been inquiring as to the authenticity and legality of these priests.

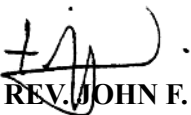
It is also our understanding that this group is the so-called Society of St. Pious X aka SSPX. This is a group that did not submit to the reforms of the Liturgy during the last ecumenical council (Vatican II). The Church, as a mother, has done various ways in order to reach out to this group with the hope of embracing them back to full communion. The Catholic Church, in fact, recognizes the validity of the sacraments celebrated by this group. The Apostolic Letter "Misericordia et Misera" # 12 elucidates the validity of the sacrament of confession celebrated by them. *"For the Jubilee Year I had also granted that those faithful who; for various reasons, attend churches officiated by the priests of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pits X, can validly and licitly receive the sacramental absolution of their sins. For the pastoral benefit of those faithful, and trusting in the good will of their priests to strive with God's help for the recovery of full communion in the Catholic Church. I have personally decided to extend this faculty beyond the Jubilee Year, until further provsions are mode, lest anyone ever be deprived of the sacramental sign of reconciliation through the Church's pardon" (Met #12).* This is a very positive manifestation of genuine recognition and expression of mutual trust. The Church continues to find ways to dialogue with them with the hope of giving them a definitive canonical status being in full communion with the Church. Let us use the language of dialogue and understanding.

Greater benefits can be achieved when we take the way of optimism for, in this manner, we can understand better the matter in question. *"Let's all pray that this complicated, decades-old canonical problem be resolved as soon as possible. Once Rome can regularize the status of the SSPX clergy within the Church, they presumably will all be able to celebrate Mass and the sacraments for the Catholic faithful, and without raising any of the troubling legal questions that unfortunately still exist today"* (cf. Canon Law and SSPX 2011/10/05).

Let it be known then, by all, that this group is still not in full communion with the Catholic Church. *As long as the Society does not have a canonical status in the Church, its ministers do not exercise legitimate ministries in the Church... ... Until the doctrinal questions are clarified, the Society has no canonical status in the Church, its ministers do not legitimately exercise any ministry in the Church"* (cf. Pope Renedict XVI letter to Bishops 03/10/2009). I admonish both the priests and the faithful to be extra cautious in dealing with them so as not to further the animosity currently existent. While we acknowledge that there are a lot of commonalities between this group and Catholic faith, at the same time we also confess without reservation that we cannot and should not participate, in their celebrations of whatever nature, I consider it your primary duty, my dear priests, to explain to your faithful the nature and depth of the severance that occurred between this group and the Catholic Church. It is also our sublime duty to continue praying that the desire for unity may be granted in time.

With the assurance of my blessings for all who work in the vineyard of the Lord, I remain

In Jesus and Mary,


MOST REV. JOHN F. DU, D.D.
Archbishop of Palo
March 5, 2017
First Sunday of Lent

