

Religious Institutes Must Align Rules to New Law

Vatican City (NC) — When the rules of a religious community are in conflict with the new Code of Canon Law, the new code prevails, the Vatican's Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes said in a decree issued Feb. 2.

In another decree the congregation said that members of religious communities who have completed the novitiate training period must take temporary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience rather than make promises to follow the three evangelical counsels. Religious are still

required to eventually profess perpetual vows.

The two decrees reinforce the code which was promulgated Nov. 27, 1983.

The decree pointing to the superiority of canon law over religious constitutions stated that "laws contrary to canon law lose their value."

It authorizes leaders of religious communities to draft new laws "which appear to be necessary for filling the gap" between canon law and laws of their communities. These new laws, the decree added, become effective at once and

"keep their value until the next general chapter."

A general chapter is a meeting of members of a religious community to develop rules for the community. Currently, many religious communities are in the process of updating their constitutions to bring them in line with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and the new Code of Canon Law.

The second decree, which calls for members of religious communities to profess temporary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience at the end of the novitiate, puts an end to a practice which developed following the Second Vatican Council when some women Religious chose to make promises of poverty, chastity and obedience rather than temporary vows.

The practice developed when some women Religious argued that the words "temporary" and "vow" were mutually exclusive.

Those who have finished the novitiate, said the decree, "shall commit themselves from now on to observing the three evangelical counsels with a public temporary vow, other bonds of other kinds being excluded."

Text of Decree On Canon Law, Religious Life

Vatican City (NC) — Here is an NC News Service translation of the Italian text released Feb. 2 by the Vatican of the decree on religious life and canon law published by the Vatican's Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes. It was signed by the congregation's prefect, Cardinal Eduardo Pironio, and its secretary, Archbishop Augustin Mayer.

From attentive examination of what is contained in the Code of Canon Law, it has emerged that laws and norms contrary to the code may be found in the constitutions and additional codes of religious institutes and societies of the apostolic life, and it is possible that certain other things which must be done by virtue of the same Code of Canon Law have not been provided for and sanctioned in the aforementioned constitutions and additional codes.

So, in order that proper steps may be taken, and may be taken solicitously with all care in such an important question, the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, has considered it fitting to decree as follows:

1. Since, according to Canon 6,1 of the Code of Canon Law, institutes' laws contrary to the canon law lose their value, let the supreme moderator indicate and expound this to the institute, collegially together with his council. Intervention (presence) of all councillors is necessary in this deliberation.

2. This Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes authorizes the supreme moderator of the

institute jointly with his council, with intervention on the part of all, to proceed collegially to formulation of norms relative to those matters which are attributed to every institute by the Code of Canon Law and which appear to be necessary for filling the gap in the law proper to the institute itself.

3. The things sanctioned by the supreme moderator of the institute together with his council shall go into force at once, and shall keep their value until the next general chapter, to which pertains the task of regulating those things according to law. According to Canon 587, 2 and Canon 595, 1, those norms having to be inserted in the constitutions shall be submitted for the approval of the competent authority, concession, however, being maintained of the faculty to put the things deliberated by the above mentioned chapter into practice, even before approval by the Holy See or the bishop, always on condition that they are not contrary to universal law.

4. With reference to convents of nuns, the supreme authority of the order, if one exists, or otherwise a person delegated for the purpose by the Holy See, is charged with what is here laid down.

This decree, approved by the supreme pontiff on Jan. 31, 1984, shall have vigor and effect beginning from the same day of its publication in the Vatican City daily newspaper L'Osservatore Romano — any prescription or anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Gospel Review Scheduled

Adult Education courses at Cardinal Mooney will feature Leading Ideas in the Gospel of Luke, presented by Sister Anne Marie Fehrenbvach, SSJ. The Spring sessions are: Structure and Composition of Luke's Gospel, 7:30-9 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 29; Salvation and Discipleship in Lucan Theology, 7:30-9 p.m., Wednesday, March 7; Conversion and Repentance in Lucan Theology, 7:30-9 p.m., Wednesday, March 14; Jesus' Journey Toward Jerusalem in Luke's Gospel, 7:30-9 p.m., Wednesday, March 21; Jesus is Our Hope in Luke's Gospel, 7:30-9 p.m., Wednesday, March 28. Fee is \$10.

Pope, Lutherans Meet

Vatican City — Pope John Paul II Jan. 23 met Bishop Josiah Kibira, president of the World Lutheran Federation, and the Rev. Carl Mau, the federation's secretary general, the Vatican announced.

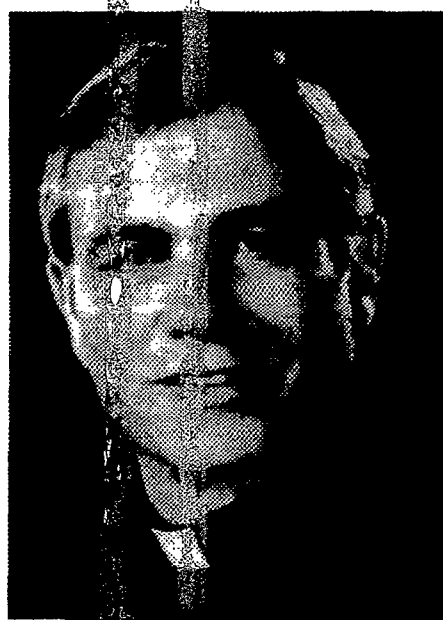
The Vatican gave no details of the private audience, but an official of the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity said Mr. Kibira thanked the pope for promoting the ecumenical dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans.

Bishop Kibira, head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, ends his seven-year term as president of the Lutheran federation in July, and the Vatican visit was a chance to meet the pope before then, said Msgr. Aloys Klein, an official of the unity secretariat.

He said Bishop Kibira spoke to Pope John Paul about the ongoing ecumenical efforts between the two churches, and especially thanked the pope for his participation in the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther.

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On Human Dignity

Vatican City (NC) — Here is the Vatican text of Pope John Paul II's remarks in English at his weekly general audience Jan. 25.

Dear brothers and sisters, I welcome the English-speaking visitors who are present at the audience today. In the love of Christ, our redeemer, I greet you all.

The dignity of the human person is fully understood in the light of the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, becoming one with us in all things except sin. By his cross and resurrection, he redeemed us from sin and revealed the unique and irrepeatable value of every human person.

A sign of our human dignity is the freedom which we enjoy, the capability of knowing the truth and of putting it into practice. If we open ourselves to Christ we shall come to know the truth, and we shall realize the fullness of our human dignity. With the help of his grace we can live the truth in love.

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