

WORLD & NATION

Congregation issues ruling in form of concise statement

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — This is the text of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's response.

Reply to the "dubium" concerning the teaching contained in the apostolic letter "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis" ("On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone").

Dubium: Whether the teaching that the church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women, which is presented in the apostolic letter, "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis," to be held definitively, is to be understood as belonging to the deposit of the faith.

Responsum: In the affirmative.

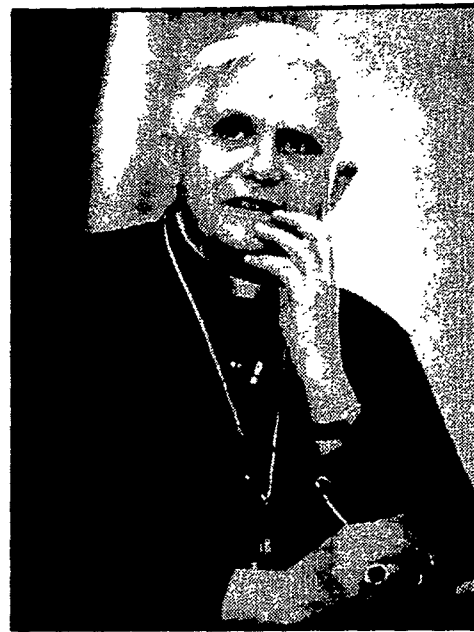
This teaching requires definitive assent, since, founded on the written word of God and from the beginning constantly preserved and applied in the tradition of the church, it has been set forth infallibly by the ordinary and universal magisterium (cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, "Lumen Gentium," 25, 2). Thus, in the present circumstances, the Roman pontiff, exercising his proper office of confirming the brethren (cf. Lk 22:32), has

handed on this same teaching by a formal declaration, explicitly stating what is to be held always, everywhere, and by all, as belonging to the deposit of the faith.

The sovereign pontiff John Paul II, at the audience granted to the undersigned cardinal prefect, approved this reply, adopted in the ordinary session of this congregation, and ordered it to be published.

Rome, from the offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, on the Feast of the Apostles St. Simon and Jude, Oct. 28, 1995.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, prefect.
Tarcisio Bertone, Archbishop Emeritus of Vercelli, secretary.



Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger

File photo

Declaration intended to resolve questions

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In declaring that the all-male priesthood belongs to the deposit of faith and has been "infallibly" taught, the Vatican is aiming to shut the door on debate about women's ordination and slide a theological bolt across it. The statement, published Nov. 18 by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is the strongest effort yet to end discussion of the issue.

The text took an already authoritative teaching by Pope John Paul II and presented it as even more final. It appeared only a year and a half after the pope delivered what he described as the church's "definitive" position on the matter.

Why, then, was the statement needed? One reason is that the teaching has continued to be openly questioned by many faithful and some theologians.

In recent weeks, for example, more than a million German Catholics signed a petition calling for women priests and

other changes in the church. Opinion polls elsewhere have shown that substantial percentages of Catholics support the idea of women priests.

In a much-publicized case in November, a 65-year-old woman said she was ordained a priest in the "underground church" when Czechoslovakia was under communism. The Vatican said the ordination would have been invalid; the woman said she would continue her battle for women's ordination.

Meanwhile, there have been increasing calls to explore the possibility of ordaining women as deacons. The Vatican considers this a separate issue that merits careful study, but in the minds of some it would be an opening toward ordaining women as priests.

Faced with all these questions and challenges, the Vatican could either ignore them or spotlight its message. It chose the spotlight.

In using terms like "deposit of faith" and "infallible," the Vatican was speaking as much to the average Catholic as to

Women priests

Continued from page 1

The "dubium" posed was: "Whether the teaching that the church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women, which is presented in the apostolic letter 'Ordinatio Sacerdotalis' to be held definitively, is to be understood as belonging to the deposit of faith."

The congregation answered, "In the affirmative." It then followed with an explanation that described the papal teaching as part of the deposit of faith set forth "infallibly."

Bishop Pilla asked Catholics "who have questioned this teaching in the past ... now prayerfully to allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with the wisdom and understanding that will enable you to accept it."

theologians.

"A lot of people have come to believe that until it is defined as infallible by a solemn act of the pope, a doctrine of the church can be subject to any type of interpretation," said Father Rino Fisichella, a professor of theology at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University, writing in the Italian Catholic newspaper *Avvenire*.

He said the critical reaction to the pope's 1994 apostolic letter, "On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone," was worrisome for that reason. With dissenting voices echoing loudly in the mass media, a climate of uncertainty was being kept alive, he said.

In contrast, the doctrinal congregation stressed that the all-male priesthood could never change. And by saying the teaching was founded in Christ's own words and actions it set up the natural consequence: No dissent is allowed.

According to Father Fisichella, that means refusing to accept this doctrine would bring one "outside the communion of the Catholic Church."



BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

By Father Lawrence G. Lovasik

THE BIBLE

CATHOLIC PICTURE BIBLE

Stories from the Old and New Testament. 110 pictures in color. Hard cover. \$8.00

THE LORD JESUS The life of Jesus with 140 pictures. \$6.00

THE STORY OF JESUS Large-format book with pictures in color. \$5.00

ST. JOSEPH'S FIRST CHILDREN'S BIBLE Highlights from the Bible with pictures in color. Hard cover. \$7.00

THE SAINTS

PICTURE BOOK OF SAINTS

114 popular saints' lives with pictures. \$7.00

THE CATECHISM

ST. JOSEPH NEW AMERICAN CATECHISM

Middle Edition. \$5.00

Primary Edition. \$4.00

First Communion. \$3.00

Confirmation. \$5.00

PRAYERBOOK

MY PICTURE PRAYERBOOK

Color pictures. 64 pages. Hardbound. \$7.00

ST. JOSEPH PICTURE BOOKS

32-PAGES EACH IN COLOR/ LARGE PRINT. \$2.00 EACH

GOD: My Life with God. God Loves Us All. My First Prayer Book. The Our Father and Hail Mary. Pray Always. Prayers for Everyday.

JESUS CHRIST: My Friend Jesus. My Day with Jesus. Feasts of Jesus. The Teaching of Jesus. Following Jesus. The Parables of Jesus. The Miracles of Jesus. Stations of the Cross. Promises of the Sacred Heart.

VIRGIN MARY: Mary, My Mother. The Rosary. Our Father and Hail Mary. Our Lady of Lourdes. Our Lady of Fatima.

ANGELS & SAINTS: The Angels. Good Saint Joseph. St. Peter the Apostle. St. Paul. The Apostles of Jesus. St. Francis of Assisi. St. Anthony of Padua. St. Patrick. St. Martin dePorres. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. St. Kateri Tekakwitha. Book of Saints—Parts 1,2,3,4,5,6 (Each part \$2.00)

THE CATECHISM: My First Catechism. I Believe in God. The Ten Commandments. The Seven Sacraments. The Eucharist. My First Missal. The Holy Spirit. The Works of Mercy. My First Picture Dictionary. Going to Confession. The Precepts of the Church. The Sacraments of the Church.

CASSETTE TAPES FOR CHILDREN

Two half-hour instructions are recorded on each cassette. Each series in a vinyl album container.

BIBLE STORIES, THE GOSPELS, CATECHISM STORIES (The Creed. Sacraments. Commandments)

Four Cassettes in each set. \$20.00/Set

Send orders & requests to:

(Add \$2.00 for postage)

Father Lawrence G. Lovasik

911 West 7th Avenue

Tarentum, PA 15064

WRITE FOR FREE INFORMATION ON OUR FULL-LINE OF BOOKS & CASSETTES

We go to the far corners of the world to find the finest oriental carpets. All you have to do is come to us.

THOS. R. PADDOCK
ORIENTAL RUG

EXCHANGE
Update New York's oriental rug Specialists!
Contemporary, traditional, new, used and antique selections.

342 EAST AVE., ROCHESTER (716) 325-3110
BUY • SELL • TRADE • APPRAISAL

Learning to give can be the greatest gift of all.

The Catholic Communication Campaign

Good values make great kids.

Rochester Children's Theatre presents

"The Velveteen Rabbit"

Saturdays, December 9th & 16th • 11 am* & 2 pm

Sundays, December 10th & 17th • 2 pm

General Admission Tickets - \$8.00

Come and enjoy the adventures of the toy rabbit as he tries to become real through the Power of Love.

This musical adaptation of the classic tale will bring both laughter and misty eyes.

A holiday treat for the whole family!

*11 a.m. performance will be interpreted for the hearing impaired.

Box Office: 586-2420 • Groups: 424-2979



Nazareth College
Arts Center

4245 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14618-3790



Did You Know?

When a death occurs out of town, many additional details arise that must be dealt with.

Upon notification of a death, the staff at Bartolomeo Funeral Home Inc., regardless of the distance will arrange for all necessary details in the most professional manner.

You can be confident that all of your concerns will be met with the same dignity and respect that have become our benchmark since 1922.

Presented by
Bartolomeo Funeral Home Inc.



1425 Lexington Avenue,
Rochester, NY 14606
conveniently located near 390

(716) 254-5400