



# The Holy See

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## II

**SECRETARIAT OF STATE** Art. 39 — The Secretariat of State provides close assistance to the Supreme Pontiff in the exercise of his supreme office. Art. 40 — The Secretariat is presided over by the cardinal secretary of state. It is composed of two sections, the First being the *Section for General Affairs*, under the direct control of the substitute, with the help of the assessor; the Second being the *Section for Relations with States*, under the direction of its own secretary, with the help of the undersecretary. Attached to this latter section is a council of cardinals and some bishops. **First Section** Art. 41 — § 1. It is the task of the First Section in a special way to expedite the business concerning the daily service of the Supreme Pontiff; to deal with those matters which arise outside the ordinary competence of the dicasteries of the Roman Curia and of the other institutes of the Apostolic See; to foster relations with those dicasteries and coordinate their work, without prejudice to their autonomy; to supervise the office and work of the legates of the Holy See, especially as concerns the particular Churches. This section deals with everything concerning the ambassadors of States to the Holy See. § 2. In consultation with other competent dicasteries, this section takes care of matters concerning the presence and activity of the Holy See in international organizations, without prejudice to art. 46. It does the same concerning Catholic international organizations. Art. 42 — It is also the task of the First Section: 1. to draw up and dispatch apostolic constitutions, decretal letters, apostolic letters, epistles, and other documents entrusted to it by the Supreme Pontiff; 2. to prepare the appropriate documents concerning appointments to be made or approved by the Supreme Pontiff in the Roman Curia and in the other institutes depending on the Holy See; 3. to guard the leaden seal and the Fisherman's ring. Art. 43 — It is likewise within the competence of this Section: 1. to prepare for publication the acts and public documents of the Holy See in the periodical entitled *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*; 2. through its special office commonly known as the *Press Office*, to publish official announcements of acts of the Supreme Pontiff or of the activities of the Holy See; 3. in consultation with the Second Section, to oversee the newspaper called *L'Osservatore romano*, the Vatican Radio Station, and the Vatican Television Centre. Art. 44 — Through the *Central Statistical Office*, it collects, organizes,

and publishes all data, set down according to statistical standards, concerning the life of the whole Church throughout the world.**Second Section**Art. 45 — The Section for Relations with States has the special task of dealing with heads of government.Art. 46 — The Section for Relations with States has within its competence:1. to foster relations, especially those of a diplomatic nature, with States and other subjects of public international law, and to deal with matters of common interest, promoting the good of the Church and of civil society by means of concordats and other agreements of this kind, if the case arises, while respecting the considered opinions of the groupings of bishops that may be affected;2. in consultation with the competent dicasteries of the Roman Curia, to represent the Holy See at international organizations and meetings concerning questions of a public nature;3. within the scope of its competence, to deal with what pertains to the papal legates.Art. 47 — § 1. In special circumstances and by mandate of the Supreme Pontiff, and in consultation with the competent dicasteries of the Roman Curia, this Section sees to the provision of particular Churches and the constitution of and changes to these Churches and their groupings.§ 2. In other cases, especially where a concordat is in force, and without prejudice to art. 78, this Section has competence to transact business with civil governments. III

**CONGREGATIONS****Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith**Art. 48 — The proper duty of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is to promote and safeguard the doctrine on faith and morals in the whole Catholic world; so it has competence in things that touch this matter in any way.Art. 49 — Fulfilling its duty of promoting doctrine, the Congregation fosters studies so that the understanding of the faith may grow and a response in the light of the faith may be given to new questions arising from the progress of the sciences or human culture.Art. 50 — It helps the bishops, individually or in groups, in carrying out their office as authentic teachers and doctors of the faith, an office that carries with it the duty of promoting and guarding the integrity of that faith.Art. 51 — To safeguard the truth of faith and the integrity of morals, the Congregation takes care lest faith or morals suffer harm through errors that have been spread in any way whatever.Wherefore:1. it has the duty of requiring that books and other writings touching faith or morals, being published by the Christian faithful, be subjected to prior examination by the competent authority;2. it examines carefully writings and opinions that seem to be contrary or dangerous to true faith, and, if it is established that they are opposed to the teaching of the Church, reproves them in due time, having given authors full opportunity to explain their minds, and having forewarned the Ordinary concerned; it brings suitable remedies to bear, if this be opportune.3. finally, it takes good care lest errors or dangerous doctrines, which may have been spread among the Christian people, do not go without apt rebuttal.Art. 52 — The Congregation examines offences against the faith and more serious ones both in behaviour or in the celebration of the sacraments which have been reported to it and, if need be, proceeds to the declaration or imposition of canonical sanctions in accordance with the norms of common or proper law.Art. 53 — It is to examine whatever concerns the privilege of the faith, both in law and in fact.Art. 54 — Documents being published by other dicasteries of the Roman Curia, insofar as they touch on the doctrine of faith or morals, are to be subjected to its prior judgement.Art. 55 — Established within the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith are the Pontifical Biblical Commission and the International Theological Commission, which act according to their own approved norms and are presided over by the cardinal prefect of this Congregation.**Congregation for the Oriental Churches**Art. 56 — The Congregation for the Oriental Churches considers those matters, whether concerning persons or things, affecting the Catholic Oriental Churches.Art. 57 — § 1. The patriarchs and major archbishops of the Oriental Churches, and the president of the Council for Promoting Christian Unity, are *ipso iure* members of this Congregation.§ 2. The consultors and officials are to be selected in such a way as to reflect as far as possible the diversity of rites.Art. 58 — § 1. The competence of this Congregation extends to all matters which are proper to the Oriental Churches and which are to be referred to the Apostolic See, whether concerning the structure and organization of the Churches, the exercise of the

office of teaching, sanctifying and governing, or the status, rights, and obligations of persons. It also handles everything that has to be done concerning quinquennial reports and the *ad limina* visits in accordance with arts. 31-32. § 2. This however does not infringe on the proper and exclusive competence of the Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith and for the Causes of Saints, of the Apostolic Penitentiary, the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura or the Tribunal of the Roman Rota, as well as of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments for what pertains to dispensation from a marriage *ratum et non consummatum*. In matters which also affect the faithful of the Latin Church, the Congregation will proceed, if the matter is sufficiently important, in consultation with the dicastery that has competence in the same matter for the faithful of the Latin Church.

Art. 59 — The Congregation pays careful attention to communities of Oriental Christian faithful living within the territories of the Latin Church, and attends to their spiritual needs by providing visitators and even a hierarchy of their own, so far as possible and where numbers and circumstances demand it, in consultation with the Congregation competent for the establishment of particular Churches in that region.

Art. 60 — In regions where Oriental rites have been preponderant from ancient times, apostolic and missionary activity depends solely on this Congregation, even if it is carried out by missionaries of the Latin Church.

Art. 61 — The Congregation collaborates with the Council for Promoting Christian Unity in matters which concern relations with non-Catholic Oriental Churches and with the Council for Inter-religious Dialogue in matters within the scope of this Council.

**Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments**

Art. 62 — The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments does whatever pertains to the Apostolic See concerning the regulation and promotion of the sacred liturgy, primarily of the sacraments, without prejudice to the competence of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Art. 63 — It fosters and safeguards the regulation of the administration of the sacraments, especially regarding their valid and licit celebration. It grants favours and dispensations not contained in the faculties of diocesan bishops in this matter.

Art. 64 — § 1. By effective and suitable means, the Congregation promotes liturgical pastoral activity, especially regarding the celebration of the Eucharist; it gives support to the diocesan bishops so that the Christian faithful may share more and more actively in the sacred liturgy. § 2. It sees to the drawing up and revision of liturgical texts. It reviews particular calendars and proper texts for the Mass and the Divine Office for particular Churches and institutes which enjoy that right. § 3. It grants the *recognitio* to translations of liturgical books and their adaptations that have been lawfully prepared by conferences of bishops.

Art. 65 — The Congregation fosters commissions or institutes for promoting the liturgical apostolate or sacred music, song or art, and it maintains relations with them. In accordance with the law, it erects associations which have an international character or approves or grants the *recognitio* to their statutes. Finally, it contributes to the progress of liturgical life by encouraging meetings from various regions.

Art. 66 — The Congregation provides attentive supervision to ensure that liturgical norms are accurately observed, and that abuses are avoided and eliminated where they are found to exist.

Art. 67 — This Congregation examines the fact of non-consummation in a marriage and the existence of a just cause for granting a dispensation. It receives all the acts together with the *votum* of the bishop and the remarks of the defender of the bond, weighs them according to its own special procedure, and, if the case warrants it, submits a petition to the Supreme Pontiff requesting the dispensation.

Art. 68 — It is also competent to examine, in accordance with the law, cases concerning the nullity of sacred ordination.

Art. 69 — This Congregation has competence concerning the cult of sacred relics, the confirmation of heavenly patrons and the granting of the title of minor basilica.

Art. 70 — The Congregation gives assistance to bishops so that, in addition to liturgical worship, the prayers and pious exercises of the Christian people, in full harmony with the norms of the Church, may be fostered and held in high esteem.

**Congregation for the Causes of Saints**

Art. 71 — The Congregation for the Causes of Saints deals with everything which, according to the established way, leads to the canonization of the servants of God.

Art. 72 — § 1. With special norms and timely advice, it assists diocesan bishops,

who have competence to instruct the cause. § 2. It considers causes that have already been instructed, inquiring whether everything has been carried out in accordance with the law. It thoroughly examines the causes that have thus been reviewed, in order to judge whether everything required is present for a favorable recommendation to be submitted to the Supreme Pontiff, according to the previously established classification of causes.

**Art. 73** — The Congregation also is competent to examine what is necessary for the granting of the title of doctor to saints, after having received the recommendation of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith concerning outstanding teaching.

**Art. 74** — Moreover, it has competence to decide everything concerning the authentication of holy relics and their preservation.

**Congregation for Bishops**

**Art. 75** — The Congregation for Bishops examines what pertains to the establishment and provision of particular Churches and to the exercise of the episcopal office in the Latin Church, without prejudice to the competence of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

**Art. 76** — This Congregation deals with everything concerning the constitution, division, union, suppression, and other changes of particular Churches and of their groupings. It also erects military ordinariates for the pastoral care of the armed forces.

**Art. 77** — It deals with everything concerning the appointment of bishops, even titular ones, and generally with the provision of particular Churches.

**Art. 78** — Whenever it is a matter of dealing with civil governments, either in establishing or modifying particular Churches and their groupings or in the provision of these Churches, this Congregation must proceed only after consultation with the Section for Relations with States of the Secretariat of State.

**Art. 79** — Furthermore, the Congregation applies itself to matters relating to the correct exercise of the pastoral function of the bishops, by offering them every kind of assistance. For it is part of its duty to initiate general apostolic visitations where needed, in agreement with the dicasteries concerned and, in the same manner, to evaluate their results and to propose to the Supreme Pontiff the appropriate actions to be taken.

**Art. 80** — This Congregation has competence over everything involving the Holy See in the matter of personal prelatures.

**Art. 81** — For the particular Churches assigned to its care, the Congregation takes care of everything with respect to the *ad limina* visits; so it studies the quinquennial reports, submitted in accordance with art. 32. It is available to the bishops who come to Rome, especially to see that suitable arrangements are made for the meeting with the Supreme Pontiff and for other meetings and pilgrimages. When the visit is completed, it communicates in writing to the diocesan bishops the conclusions concerning their dioceses.

**Art. 82** — The Congregation deals with matters pertaining to the celebration of particular councils as well as the erection of conferences of bishops and the *recognitio* of their statutes. It receives the acts of these bodies and, in consultation with the dicasteries concerned, it examines the decrees which require the *recognitio* of the Apostolic See.

**Pontifical Commission for Latin America**

**Art. 83** — § 1. The function of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America is to be available to the particular Churches in Latin America, by counsel and by action, taking a keen interest in the questions that affect the life and progress of those Churches; and especially to help the Churches themselves in the solution of those questions, or to be helpful to those dicasteries of the Curia that are involved by reason of their competence.

§ 2. It is also to foster relations between the national and international ecclesiastical institutes that work for the regions of Latin America and the dicasteries of the Roman Curia.

**Art. 84** — § 1. The president of the Commission is the prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, assisted by a bishop as vice-president. They have as counselors some bishops either from the Roman Curia or selected from the Churches of Latin America.

§ 2. The members of the Commission are selected either from the dicasteries of the Roman Curia or from the *Consejo episcopal latinoamericano*, whether they be from among the bishops of Latin America or from the institutes mentioned in the preceding article.

§ 3. The Commission has its own staff.

**Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples**

**Art. 85** — It pertains to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples to direct and coordinate throughout the world the actual work of spreading the Gospel as well as missionary cooperation, without prejudice to the competence of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

**Art. 86** — The Congregation promotes research in mission theology, spirituality

and pastoral work; it likewise proposes principles, norms, and procedures, fitting the needs of time and place, by which evangelization is carried out. Art. 87 — The Congregation strives to bring the people of God, well aware of their duty and filled with missionary spirit, to cooperate effectively in the missionary task by their prayers and the witness of their lives, by their active work and contributions. Art. 88 — § 1. It takes steps to awaken missionary vocations, whether clerical, religious, or lay, and advises on a suitable distribution of missionaries. § 2. In the territories subject to it, it also cares for the education of the secular clergy and of catechists, without prejudice to the competence of the Congregation of Seminaries and Educational Institutions concerning the general programme of studies, as well as what pertains to the universities and other institutes of higher education. Art. 89 — Within its competence are mission territories, the evangelization of which is committed to suitable institutes and societies and to particular Churches. For these territories it deals with everything pertaining to the establishment and change of ecclesiastical circumscriptions and to the provision of these Churches, and it carries out the other functions that the Congregation of Bishops fulfills within the scope of its competence. Art. 90 — § 1. With regard to members of institutes of consecrated life, whether these are erected in the mission territories or are just working there, the Congregation enjoys competence in matters touching those members as missionaries, individually and collectively, without prejudice to art. 21, § 1. § 2. Those societies of apostolic life that were founded for the missions are subject to this Congregation. Art. 91 — To foster missionary cooperation, even through the effective collection and equal distribution of subsidies, the Congregation chiefly uses the Pontifical Missionary Works, namely, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle, and the Holy Childhood Association, as well as the Pontifical Missionary Union of the Clergy. Art. 92 — Through a special office, the Congregation administers its own funds and other resources destined for the missions, with full accountability to the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See. **Congregation for the Clergy** Art. 93 — Without prejudice to the right of bishops and their conferences, the Congregation for the Clergy examines matters regarding priests and deacons of the secular clergy, with regard to their persons and pastoral ministry, and with regard to resources available to them for the exercise of this ministry; and in all these matters the Congregation offers timely assistance to the bishops. Art. 94 — It has the function of promoting the religious education of the Christian faithful of all ages and conditions; it issues timely norms so that catechetical instruction is correctly conducted; it gives great attention so that catechetical formation is properly given; and, with the assent of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it grants the prescribed approval of the Holy See for catechisms and other writings pertaining to catechetical instruction. It is available to catechetical offices and international initiatives on religious education, coordinates their activities and, where necessary, lends assistance. Art. 95 — § 1. The Congregation is competent concerning the life, conduct, rights, and obligations of clergy. § 2. It advises on a more suitable distribution of priests. § 3. It fosters the ongoing education of clergy, especially concerning their sanctification and the effective exercise of their pastoral ministry, most of all in the fitting preaching of the Word of God. Art. 96 — This Congregation deals with everything that has to do with the clerical state as such for all clergy, including religious, in consultation with the dicasteries involved when the matter so requires. Art. 97 — The Congregation deals with those matters that are within the competence of the Holy See: 1. both those concerning presbyteral councils, colleges of consultors, chapters of canons, pastoral councils, parishes, churches, shrines, or those concerning clerical associations, or ecclesiastical archives and records; 2. and those concerning Mass obligations as well as pious wills in general and pious foundations. Art. 98 — The Congregation carries out everything that pertains to the Holy See regarding the regulation of ecclesiastical goods, and especially their correct administration; it grants the necessary approvals and *recognitions*, and it further sees to it that serious thought is given to the support and social security of the clergy. **Pontifical Commission for Preserving the Patrimony of Art and History** Art. 99 — At the Congregation for the Clergy there exists the Pontifical Commission for Preserving the Patrimony of Art and History that has the duty of acting as

curator for the artistic and historical patrimony of the whole Church. Art. 100 — To this patrimony belong, in the first place, all works of every kind of art of the past, works that must be kept and preserved with the greatest care. Those works whose proper use has ceased are to be kept in a suitable manner in museums of the Church or elsewhere. Art. 101 —

§ 1. Outstanding among valuable historical objects are all documents and materials referring and testifying to pastoral life and care, as well as to the rights and obligations of dioceses, parishes, churches, and other juridical persons in the Church. § 2. This historical patrimony is to be kept in archives or also in libraries and everywhere entrusted to competent curators lest testimonies of this kind be lost. Art. 102 — The Commission lends its assistance to particular Churches and conferences of bishops and together with them, where the case arises, sees to the setting up of museums, archives, and libraries, and ensures that the entire patrimony of art and history in the whole territory is properly collected and safeguarded and made available to all who have an interest in it. Art. 103 — In consultation with the Congregation for Seminaries and Educational Institutions and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the Commission has the task of striving to make the people of God more and more aware of the need and importance of conserving the artistic and historical patrimony of the Church. Art. 104 — The president of the Commission is the cardinal prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, assisted by the secretary of the Commission. Moreover, the Commission has its own staff.

**Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and for Societies of Apostolic Life** Art. 105 — The principal function of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and for Societies of Apostolic Life is to promote and supervise in the whole Latin Church the practice of the evangelical counsels as they are lived in approved forms of consecrated life and, at the same time, the work of societies of apostolic life. Art. 106 — § 1. The Congregation erects and approves religious and secular institutes and societies of apostolic life, or passes judgement on the suitability of their erection by the diocesan bishop. It also suppresses such institutes and societies if necessary. § 2. The Congregation is also competent to establish, or, if need be, to rescind, the unions or federations of institutes and societies. Art. 107 — The Congregation for its part takes care that institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life grow and flourish according to the spirit of their founders and healthy traditions, faithfully follow their proper purpose and truly benefit the salvific mission of the Church. Art. 108 — § 1. It deals with everything which, in accordance with the law, belongs to the Holy See concerning the life and work of the institutes and societies, especially the approval of their constitutions, their manner of government and apostolate, the recruitment and training as well as the rights and obligations of members, dispensation from vows and the dismissal of members, and the administration of goods. § 2. However, the organization of philosophical and theological studies and other academic subjects comes within the competence of the Congregation of Seminaries and Institutes of Studies. Art. 109 — It is the function of this Congregation to establish conferences of major superiors of men and women religious, to grant approval to their statutes and to give great attention in order that their activities are directed to achieving their true purpose. Art. 110 — The Congregation has competence also regarding eremetical life, the order of virgins and their associations as well as other forms of consecrated life. Art. 111 — Its competence also embraces the third orders and associations of the faithful which are erected with the intention that, after a period of preparation, they may eventually become institutes of consecrated life or societies of apostolic life.

**Congregation of Seminaries and Educational Institutions** Art. 112 — The Congregation of Seminaries and Educational Institutions gives practical expression to the concern of the Apostolic See for the training of those who are called to holy orders, and for the promotion and organization of Catholic education. Art. 113 — § 1. It is available to the bishops so that in their Churches vocations to the sacred ministry may be cultivated to the highest degree, and seminaries may be established and conducted in accordance with the law, where students may be suitably trained, receiving a solid formation that is human and spiritual, doctrinal and pastoral. § 2. It carefully sees to it that the way of life and government of the seminaries be in full harmony with the programme of priestly education, and that the superiors and teachers, by the

example of their life and sound doctrine, contribute their utmost to the formation of the personality of the sacred ministers. § 3. It is also its responsibility to erect interdiocesan seminaries and to approve their statutes. Art. 114 — The Congregation makes every effort to see that the fundamental principles of Catholic education as set out by the magisterium of the Church be ever more deeply researched, championed, and known by the people of God. It also takes care that in this matter the Christian faithful may be able to fulfill their duties and also strive to bring civil society to recognize and protect their rights. Art. 115 — The Congregation sets the norms by which Catholic schools are governed. It is available to diocesan bishops so that, wherever possible, Catholic schools be established and fostered with the utmost care, and that in every school appropriate undertakings bring catechetical instruction and pastoral care to the Christian pupils. Art. 116 — § 1. The Congregation labours to ensure that there be in the Church a sufficient number of ecclesiastical and Catholic universities as well as other educational institutions in which the sacred disciplines may be pursued in depth, studies in the humanities and the sciences may be promoted, with due regard for Christian truth, so that the Christian faithful may be suitably trained to fulfill their own tasks. § 2. It erects or approves ecclesiastical universities and institutions, ratifies their statutes, exercises the highest supervision over them and ensures that the integrity of the Catholic faith is preserved in teaching doctrine. § 3. With regard to Catholic universities, it deals with those matters that are within the competence of the Holy See. § 4. It fosters cooperation and mutual help between universities and their associations and serves as a resource for them. **IV**

**TRIBUNALS** **Apostolic Penitentiary** Art. 117 — The competence of the Apostolic Penitentiary regards the internal forum and indulgences. Art. 118 — For the internal forum, whether sacramental or non-sacramental, it grants absolutions, dispensations, commutations, validations, condonations, and other favours. Art. 119 — The Apostolic Penitentiary sees to it that in the patriarchal basilicas of Rome there be a sufficient number of penitentiaries supplied with the appropriate faculties. Art. 120 — This dicastery is charged with the granting and use of indulgences, without prejudice to the right of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to review what concerns dogmatic teaching about them. **Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura** Art. 121 — The Apostolic Signatura functions as the supreme tribunal and also ensures that justice in the Church is correctly administered. Art. 122 — This Tribunal adjudicates: 1. complaints of nullity and petitions for total reinstatement against sentences of the Roman Rota; 2. in cases concerning the status of persons, recourses when the Roman Rota has denied a new examination of the case; 3. exceptions of suspicion and other proceedings against judges of the Roman Rota arising from the exercise of their functions; 4. conflicts of competence between tribunals which are not subject to the same appellate tribunal. Art. 123 — § 1. The Signatura adjudicates recourses lodged within the peremptory limit of thirty canonical days against singular administrative acts whether issued by the dicasteries of the Roman Curia or approved by them, whenever it is contended that the impugned act violated some law either in the decision-making process or in the procedure used. § 2. In these cases, in addition to the judgement regarding illegality of the act, it can also adjudicate, at the request of the plaintiff, the reparation of damages incurred through the unlawful act. § 3. The Signatura also adjudicates other administrative controversies referred to it by the Roman Pontiff or by dicasteries of the Roman Curia, as well as conflicts of competence between these dicasteries. Art. 124 — The Signatura also has the responsibility: 1. to exercise vigilance over the correct administration of justice, and, if need be, to censure advocates and procurators; 2. to deal with petitions presented to the Apostolic See for obtaining the commission of a case to the Roman Rota or some other favour relative to the administration of justice; 3. to extend the competence of lower tribunals; 4. to grant its approval to tribunals for appeals reserved to the Holy See, and to promote and approve the erection of interdiocesan tribunals. Art. 125 — The Apostolic Signatura is governed by its own law. **Tribunal of the Roman Rota** Art. 126 — The Roman Rota is a court of higher instance at the Apostolic See, usually at the appellate stage, with the purpose of safeguarding rights within the Church; it fosters unity of jurisprudence, and, by virtue of its own decisions,

provides assistance to lower tribunals. Art. 127 — The judges of this Tribunal constitute a college. Persons of proven doctrine and experience, they have been selected by the Supreme Pontiff from various parts of the world. The Tribunal is presided over by a dean, likewise appointed by the Supreme Pontiff from among the judges and for a specific term of office. Art. 128 — This Tribunal adjudicates: 1. in second instance, cases that have been decided by ordinary tribunals of first instance and are being referred to the Holy See by legitimate appeal; 2. in third or further instance, cases already decided by the same Apostolic Tribunal and by any other tribunals, unless they have become a *res iudicata*. Art. 129 — § 1. The Tribunal, however, judges the following in first instance: 1. bishops in contentious matters, unless it is a question of the rights or temporal goods of a juridical person represented by the bishop; 2. abbots primate or abbots superior of a monastic congregation and supreme moderators of religious institutes of pontifical right; 3. dioceses or other ecclesiastical persons, whether physical or juridical, which have no superior below the Roman Pontiff; 4. cases which the Supreme Pontiff commits to this Tribunal. § 2. It deals with the same cases even in second and further instances, unless other provisions are made. Art. 130 — The Tribunal of the Roman Rota is governed by its own law. V

**PONTIFICAL COUNCILS**  
**Pontifical Council for the Laity** Art. 131 — The Pontifical Council for the Laity is competent in those matters pertaining to the Apostolic See regarding the promotion and coordination of the apostolate of the laity and, generally, in those matters respecting the Christian life of laypeople as such. Art. 132 — The president is assisted by an Advisory Board of cardinals and bishops. Figuring especially among the members of the Council are certain Christian faithful engaged in various fields of activity. Art. 133 — § 1. The Council is to urge and support laypeople to participate in the life and mission of the Church in their own way, as individuals or in associations, especially so that they may carry out their special responsibility of filling the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel. § 2. It fosters joint action among laypeople in catechetical instruction, in liturgical and sacramental life as well as in works of mercy, charity, and social development. § 3. The Council attends to and organizes international conferences and other projects concerning the apostolate of the laity. Art. 134 — Within the parameters of its own competence, the Council performs all activities regarding lay associations of the Christian faithful; it erects associations of an international character and provides approval or *recognitio* for their statutes, without prejudice to the competence of the Secretariat of State. As for secular third orders, the Council deals only with those matters concerning their apostolic activities.  
**Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity** Art. 135 — It is the function of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to engage in ecumenical work through timely initiatives and activities, labouring to restore unity among Christians. Art. 136 — § 1. It sees that the decrees of the Second Vatican Council pertaining to ecumenism are put into practice. It deals with the correct interpretation of the principles of ecumenism and enjoins that they be carried out. § 2. It fosters, brings together, and coordinates national and international Catholic organizations promoting Christian unity, and supervises their undertakings. § 3. After prior consultation with the Supreme Pontiff, the Council maintains relations with Christians of Churches and ecclesial communities that do not yet have full communion with the Catholic Church, and especially organizes dialogue and meetings to promote unity with them, with the help of theological experts of sound doctrine. As often as may seem opportune, the Council deposes Catholic observers to Christian meetings, and it invites observers from other Churches and ecclesial communities to Catholic meetings. Art. 137 — § 1. Since the Council often deals with matters which by their very nature touch on questions of faith, it must proceed in close connection with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, especially if declarations and public documents have to be issued. § 2. In dealing with important matters concerning the separated Oriental Churches, the Council must first hear the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Art. 138 — Within the Council there exists a Commission to study and deal with matters concerning the Jews from a religious perspective, the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews; the president of the Council presides over the Commission.  
**Pontifical Council for the Family** Art. 139 — The Pontifical Council for the Family promotes

the pastoral care of families, protects their rights and dignity in the Church and in civil society, so that they may ever be more able to fulfill their duties. Art. 140 — The president is assisted by an advisory board of bishops. Figuring above all among the members of the Council are laypeople, both men and women, especially married ones, from all over the world. Art. 141 — § 1. The Council works for a deeper understanding of the Church's teaching on the family and for its spread through suitable catechesis. It encourages studies in the spirituality of marriage and the family. § 2. It works together with the bishops and their conferences to ensure the accurate recognition of the human and social conditions of the family institution everywhere and to ensure a strong general awareness of initiatives that help pastoral work for families. § 3. The Council strives to ensure that the rights of the family be acknowledged and defended even in the social and political realm. It also supports and coordinates initiatives to protect human life from the first moment of conception and to encourage responsible procreation. § 4. Without prejudice to art. 133, it follows the activities of institutes and associations which work for the good of the family.

**Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace** Art. 142 — The goal of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is to promote justice and peace in the world in accordance with the Gospel and the social teaching of the Church. Art. 143 — § 1. The Council makes a thorough study of the social teaching of the Church and ensures that this teaching is widely spread and put into practice among people and communities, especially regarding the relations between workers and management, relations that must come to be more and more imbued with the spirit of the Gospel. § 2. It collects information and research on justice and peace, about human development and violations of human rights; it ponders all this, and, when appropriate, shares its conclusions with the groupings of bishops. It cultivates relationships with Catholic international organizations and other institutions, even ones outside the Catholic Church, which sincerely strive to achieve peace and justice in the world. § 3. It works to form among peoples a mentality which fosters peace, especially on the occasion of World Peace Day. Art. 144 — The Council has a special relationship with the Secretariat of State, especially whenever matters of peace and justice have to be dealt with in public by documents or announcements. **Pontifical Council "Cor unum"** Art. 145 — The Pontifical Council "Cor unum" shows the solicitude of the Catholic Church for the needy, to foster human fraternity and make manifest Christ's charity. Art. 146 — It is the function of the Council: 1. to stimulate the Christian faithful as participants in the mission of the Church, to give witness to evangelical charity and to support them in this concern; 2. to foster and coordinate the initiatives of Catholic organizations that labour to help peoples in need, especially those who go to the rescue in the more urgent crises and disasters, and to facilitate their relations with public international organizations operating in the same field of assistance and good works; 3. to give serious attention and promote plans and undertakings for joint action and neighbourly help serving human progress. Art. 147 — The president of this Council is the same as the president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, who sees to it that the activities of both dicasteries are closely coordinated. Art. 148 — To ensure that the objectives of the Council are more effectively achieved, among members of the Council are also men and women representing Catholic charitable organizations.

**Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People** Art. 149 — The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People brings the pastoral concern of the Church to bear on the special needs of those who have been forced to leave their native land or who do not have one. It also sees to it that these matters are considered with the attention they deserve. Art. 150 — § 1. The Council ensures that in the particular Churches refugees and exiles, migrants, nomads, and circus workers receive effective and special spiritual care, even, if necessary, by means of suitable pastoral structures. § 2. It likewise fosters pastoral solicitude in these same Churches for sailors, at sea and in port, especially through the Apostleship of the Sea, over which it exercises ultimate direction. § 3. The Council has the same concern for those who work in airports or airplanes. § 4. It works to ensure that the Christian people become aware of the needs of these people and effectively demonstrate a fraternal attitude towards them, especially on the occasion of World Migration Day. Art. 151 — The Council

works to ensure that journeys which Christians undertake for reasons of piety, study, or recreation, contribute to their moral and religious formation, and it is available to the particular Churches in order that all who are away from home receive suitable spiritual care.

**Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers** Art. 152 — The Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers shows the solicitude of the Church for the sick by helping those who serve the sick and suffering, so that their apostolate of mercy may ever more effectively respond to people's needs. Art. 153 — § 1. The Council is to spread the Church's teaching on the spiritual and moral aspects of illness as well as the meaning of human suffering. § 2. It lends its assistance to the particular Churches to ensure that health care workers receive spiritual help in carrying out their work according to Christian teachings, and especially that in turn the pastoral workers in this field may never lack the help they need to carry out their work. § 3. The Council fosters studies and actions which international Catholic organizations or other institutions undertake in this field. § 4. With keen interest it follows new health care developments in law and science so that these may be duly taken into account in the pastoral work of the Church.

**Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts** Art. 154 — The function of the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts consists mainly in interpreting the laws of the Church. Art. 155 — With regard to the universal laws of the Church, the Council is competent to publish authentic interpretations confirmed by pontifical authority, after consulting the dicasteries concerned in questions of major importance. Art. 156 — This Council is at the service of the other Roman dicasteries to assist them to ensure that general executory decrees and instructions which they are going to publish are in conformity with the prescriptions of the law currently in force and that they are drawn up in a correct juridical form. Art. 157 — Moreover, the general decrees of the conferences of bishops are to be submitted to this Council by the dicastery which is competent to grant them the *recognitio*, in order that they be examined from a juridical perspective. Art. 158 — At the request of those interested, this Council determines whether particular laws and general decrees issued by legislators below the level of the supreme authority are in agreement or not with the universal laws of the Church.

**Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue** Art. 159 — The Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue fosters and supervises relations with members and groups of non-Christian religions as well as with those who are in any way endowed with religious feeling. Art. 160 — The Council fosters suitable dialogue with the followers of other religions and encourages various kinds of relations with them. It promotes appropriate studies and conferences to develop mutual information and esteem, so that human dignity and the spiritual and moral riches of people may ever grow. The Council sees to the formation of those who engage in this kind of dialogue. Art. 161 — When the matter under consideration so requires, the Council must proceed in the exercise of its own function in consultation with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and, if need be, with the Congregations for the Oriental Churches and for the Evangelization of Peoples. Art. 162 — This Council has a Commission, under the direction of the president of the Council, for fostering relations with Muslims from a religious perspective.

**Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers** Art. 163 — The Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers shows the pastoral solicitude of the Church for those who do not believe in God or who profess no religion. Art. 164 — It promotes the study of atheism and of the lack of faith and religion, looking into their causes and their consequences with regard to the Christian faith, so that suitable assistance may be given to pastoral action through the work especially of Catholic educational institutions. Art. 165 — The Council sets up dialogue with atheists and unbelievers whenever they agree to sincere cooperation, and it is represented by true specialists at conferences on this matter.

**Pontifical Council for Culture** Art. 166 — The Pontifical Council for Culture fosters relations between the Holy See and the realm of human culture, especially by promoting communication with various contemporary institutions of learning and teaching, so that secular culture may be more and more open to the Gospel, and specialists in the sciences, literature, and the arts may feel themselves called by the Church to truth, goodness, and beauty. Art. 167 — The Council has its own special structure. The president is

assisted by an advisory board and another board, composed of specialists of various disciplines from several parts of the world. Art. 168 — The Council on its own undertakes suitable projects with respect to culture. It follows through on those which are undertaken by various institutes of the Church, and, so far as necessary, lends them assistance. In consultation with the Secretariat of State, it shows interest in measures adopted by countries and international agencies in support of human culture and, as appropriate, it is present in the principal organizations in the field of culture and fosters conferences. **Pontifical Council for Social Communications** Art. 169 — § 1. The Pontifical Council for Social Communications is involved in questions regarding the means of social communication, so that, also by these means, human progress and the message of salvation may benefit secular culture and mores. § 2. In carrying out its functions, the Council must proceed in close connection with the Secretariat of State. Art. 170 — § 1. The chief task of this Council is to encourage and support in a timely and suitable way the action of the Church and her members in the many forms of social communication. It takes care to see that newspapers and periodicals, as well as films and radio or television broadcasts, are more and more imbued with a human and Christian spirit. § 2. With special solicitude the Council looks to Catholic newspapers and periodicals, as well as radio and television stations, that they may truly live up to their nature and function, by transmitting especially the teaching of the Church as it is laid out by the Church's magisterium, and by spreading religious news accurately and faithfully. § 3. It fosters relations with Catholic associations active in social communications. § 4. It takes steps to make the Christian people aware, especially on the occasion offered by World Communications Day, of the duty of every person to work to ensure that the media are of service to the Church's pastoral mission. VI

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES** **Apostolic Camera** Art. 171 — § 1. The Apostolic Camera, presided over by the cardinal camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, assisted by the vice-camerlengo and the other prelates of the Camera, chiefly exercises the functions assigned to it by the special law on the vacancy of the Apostolic See. § 2. When the Apostolic See falls vacant, it is the right and the duty of the cardinal camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, personally or through his delegate, to request reports from all the administrations dependent on the Holy See on their patrimonial and economic status as well as information on any extraordinary business that may at that time be under way, and, from the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See he shall request a financial statement on income and expenditures of the previous year and the budgetary estimates for the following year. He is obliged to submit these reports and estimates to the College of Cardinals. **Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See** Art. 172 — It is the function of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See to administer the properties owned by the Holy See in order to provide the funds necessary for the Roman Curia to function. Art. 173 — This Council is presided over by a cardinal assisted by a board of cardinals; and it is composed of two sections, the Ordinary Section and the Extraordinary, under the control of the prelate secretary. Art. 174 — The Ordinary Section administers the properties entrusted to its care, calling in the advice of experts if needed; it examines matters concerning the juridical and economic status of the employees of the Holy See; it supervises institutions under its fiscal responsibility; it sees to the provision of all that is required to carry out the ordinary business and specific aims of the dicasteries; it maintains records of income and expenditures, prepares the accounts of the money received and paid out for the past year, and draws up the estimates for the year to come. Art. 175 — The Extraordinary Section administers its own moveable goods and acts as a guardian for moveable goods entrusted to it by other institutes of the Holy See. **Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See** Art. 176 — The Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See has the function of supervising and governing the temporal goods of the administrations that are dependent on the Holy See, or of which the Holy See has charge, whatever the autonomy these administrations may happen to enjoy. Art. 177 — The Prefecture is presided over by a cardinal assisted by a board of cardinals, with the collaboration of the prelate secretary and the general

accountant. Art. 178 — § 1. It studies the reports on the patrimonial and economic status of the Holy See, as well as the statements of income and expenditures for the previous year and the budget estimates for the following year of the administrations mentioned in art. 176, by inspecting books and documents, if need be. § 2. The Prefecture compiles the Holy See's consolidated financial statement of the previous year's expenditures as well as the consolidated estimates of the next year's expenditures, and submits these at specific times to higher authority for approval. Art. 179 — § 1. The Prefecture supervises financial undertakings of the administrations and expresses its opinion concerning projects of major importance. § 2. It inquires into damages inflicted in whatever manner on the patrimony of the Holy See, and, if need be, lodges penal or civil actions to the competent tribunals. © Copyright 1988 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

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