

SACRED CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

*Notification**

His Excellency Mons. Pierre Martin Ngô-dinh-Thuc, titular Archbishop of Bulla Regia, in the month of January 1976 ordained several priests and bishops in the village of Palmar de Troya in Spain, in a way which was completely illicit. Consequently, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, on 17 September of the same year, issued a decree (cf. *AAS* LXVIII, 1976, p. 623), mentioning the canonical penalties incurred both by himself and by the others who were thus illicitly ordained by him.

Later the same Prelate requested and obtained absolution from the excommunication most specially reserved to the Holy See which he had incurred.

It has now come to the knowledge of this Sacred Congregation that His Excellency Mons. Ngô-dinh-Thuc, since the year 1981, has again ordained other priests contrary to the terms of canon 955. Moreover, what is still more serious, in the same year, disregarding canon 953, without pontifical mandate and canonical provision, he conferred episcopal ordination on the religious priest, M.-L. Guérard des Lauriers, O.P., of France, and on the priests Moises Carmona and Adolfo Zamora, of Mexican origin. Subsequently Moises Carmona in his turn conferred episcopal ordination on the Mexican priests Benigno Bravo and Roberto Martínez, and also on the American priest George Musey.

Moreover, His Excellency Ngô-dinh-Thuc wished to prove the legitimacy of his actions especially by the public declaration made by him in Munich on 25 February 1982 in which he asserted that "the See of the Catholic Church at Rome was vacant" and therefore he as a bishop "was doing everything so that the Catholic Church of Rome would continue for the eternal salvation of souls".

After duly pondering the seriousness of these crimes and erroneous assertions, the Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, by special mandate of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, deems it necessary to renew the prescripts of its decree of 17 September 1976, which in this case is applied fully, namely.

1) Bishops who ordained other bishops, as well as the bishops ordained, besides the sanctions mentioned in canons 2370 and 2373, 1 and 3, of the Code of Canon Law, incurred also, *ipso facto*, excommunication most specially reserved to the Apostolic See as stated in the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office of 9 April 1951 (*AAS* XLIII, 1951, p. 217 f.) The penalty contained in canon 2370 applies also to assisting priests, should any have been present.

2) In accordance with canon 2374 priests illicitly ordained in this way are *ipso facto* suspended from the order received, and they are also irregular should they exercise the order (canon 985, 7).

3) Finally, as regards those who have already received ordination in this illicit manner, or who will perhaps receive ordination from them, whatever about the validity of the orders, the Church does not nor shall it recognize their ordination, and as regards all juridical effects, it considers them in the state which each one had previously, and the above-mentioned penal

sanctions remain in force until repentance.

Moreover, this Sacred Congregation deems it its duty earnestly to warn the faithful not to take part in or support in any way liturgical activities or initiatives and works of another kind which are promoted by those mentioned above (1).

Given in Rome, at the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 12 March 1983.

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Secretary

* *L'Osservatore Romano*, English Edition, 18 April 1983, Page 12.

1) As regards the concordance of the canons mentioned above with the canonical legislation recently promulgated, cf. in the New Code of Canon Law canons 1015, par. 1; 1013; 1382-1385; 104, 6.