

ON THE RELATIONSHIP  
OF ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM  
MYSTERIORUM  
WITH THE OUTER MANIFESTATIONS OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH



PUBLISHED BY ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM  
MYSTERIORUM

NO. 65 OF 2010

© MMX : ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. UNAUTHORISED DISTRIBUTION, SALE OR  
REPRODUCTION OF ANY PART OF THIS DOCUMENT IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT  
THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER

# ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM WITH THE OUTER MANIFESTATIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

## THE VALIDITY OF THE HOLY ORDERS AND SACRAMENTS OF E.A.D.M. ACCORDING TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

**T**he Roman Catholic Church, so far as we are aware, has no official position on the status of E.A.D.M. Every indication we have examined, including the opinions of individual clergy, lead us to believe that the Holy Orders and Sacraments conferred within E.A.D.M. are regarded as valid.

The Holy Orders of E.A.D.M. derive from an Oecumenical Apostolic Succession that combines the lines of Apostolic Succession that have passed into the Roman Catholic, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches. The aim of this Oecumenical Succession, which has been the subject of the work of over seventy years, is to aid the unity of a Christendom otherwise divided by disputes over sacramental validity; it is directly inspired by a Resolution of the 1920 Lambeth Conference that recommended that such unity would be achieved by bishops of the various denominations receiving additional commissioning until the different lines of succession were united. The documentary evidence in support of this succession is considerable and in most cases represents successions derived within the past century which are readily verifiable.

This summary should therefore be read in conjunction with the document "General Considerations pertaining to the Apostolic Succession in Ecclesia Apostolica Divinorum Mysteriorum" which discusses other relevant aspects of this matter, such as the concept of jurisdiction, and certain aspects of detailed theology and practice. Additional discussion pertaining specifically to Liberal Catholicism can be found in "The Apostolic Succession in the Liberal Catholic Church" by the Revd. Alban Cockerham, which can be obtained from St Alban Press.

For our purpose, it will be enough to show that Catholic writers over the years, frequently in documents carrying the *imprimatur* and *nihil potest* of the Holy See, have commented on the sacramental validity of the orders of Old Catholic and related communions, which are among those from which our Ecclesia is directly descended.

A selection of such commentaries follows below.

*“The Church does not judge about the mind and intention, in so far as it is something by its nature internal; but in so far as it is manifested externally she is bound to judge concerning it. A person who has correctly and seriously used the requisite matter and form to effect and confer a sacrament is presumed for that very reason to have intended to do (intendisse) what the Church does.”*

Pope Leo XIII, *Apostolicae Curae*, On the Nullity of Anglican Orders (1896)

*“Every validly consecrated bishop, including heretical, schismatic, simonistic or excommunicated bishops, can validly dispense the Sacrament of Order, provided that he has the requisite intention, and follows the essential external rite (set. Certa). Cf. D 855, 860; CIC 2372. (...) In antiquity and in the early Middle Ages, numerous re ordinations occurred, that is, repetitions of Orders administered by heretical, schismatic or simonistic bishops. The Fathers and theologians of early Scholasticism were uncertain about this question. Petrus Lombardus does not venture to make any decision in view of the contradictory patristic authorities (Sent. IV 25,1) St Thomas confirms the validity of Orders confirmed by heretical bishops separated from the Church. Suppl 38, 2)”*

Dr. Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, pp. 458. (1952)

*“A validly consecrated bishop can validly confer all orders from the minor orders to the episcopate inclusively ... For this reason the ordinations performed by the bishops of the Old Catholics are considered valid.”*

Revd. Stanislaw Woywod, OFM, LLB., *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, revised and enlarged edition, Vol. 1, Sec. 881 P. 558

*“Cum ordo sacramentalis conferatur non per potestatem iurisdictionis, sed per potestatem ordinis tantum, et cum ordinans potestatem suam acceperit per infusionem characteris indelebilis, sequitur validitatem ordinationis non pendere neque a probitate neque a fide ministri. Ergo episcopus haereticus vel schismaticus, dummodo servet materiam et formam et habeat necessariam intentionem, valide ordinat.”* (translation)...*When a sacramental order is conferred not through the power of jurisdiction, but through the power of order alone, and when the ordinand receives his power through the infusion of the indelible character, it follows that the validity of the ordination does not hang either on the probity or the faith of the minister. Therefore an heretical or schismatic bishop validly ordains whenever he uses the matter and form and has the necessary intention.”*

C. Pesch, *Praelectiones Dogmaticae* Vol 7 p 327 (1909)

*“...tum quia actus, praesertim adeo solemnus qualis est ordinatio, habendus est ut validus, donec invaliditas non evincatur”* (translation)...*an act, especially one as*

*solemn as an ordination, must be regarded as valid, as long as invalidity would not be clearly demonstrated.*”

P. Gasparri, *Tractatus de Sacra Ordinatione* (Paris: Delhomme 1893), 1:970.

*“When the fact of ordination is duly established, the validity of the orders conferred is naturally to be presumed.”*

William J. Doheny CSC, *Canonical Procedure in Matrimonial Cases*, (Milwaukee: Bruce 1944), 2:72

## SPECIFIC COMMENTARY ON THE VALIDITY OF THE ORDERS OF THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

In 1930, a member of the Liberal Catholic Church in Belgium received a prison sentence of a few months. The Roman Catholic prison chaplain had never heard of the Liberal Catholic Church and wrote to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Mechlin seeking information and clarification. The Cardinal in turn put the question to the Roman Congregation of Rites, “An Ecclesia Libero-Catholicae validi sunt titus et ordines?” – are the sacraments of the Liberal Catholic Church valid?

The Congregation responded in the affirmative on 12 March 1931. It further recommended that “members of the so-called Liberal Catholic body should be treated according to the special instructions of Pope Leo XIII to Cardinal Lavigerie, regarding the Eastern schismatics.”

These instructions were sent by order of the Pope in 1882 to Cardinal Lavigerie, Archbishop of Carthago, by the Special Congregation of the Propaganda for the Oriental Rites. They read as follows, “With regard to the Eastern Schismatic Christians. Your Eminence should impress upon his clergy the fact that their foremost two feelings must be: love for the individuals and respect for their rites. For the Schismatic Christians are our brethren, baptized with us in the Blood of Jesus Christ. We therefore must ever have for them “Bowels of compassion”, as the Blessed Apostle Paul puts it, and always be willing to show them our loving-kindness...Let your Clergy therefore never despise or slight their ways and uses, their language, or their Liturgy, which Holy Church approves of as being quite just and rightful.” [Mgr. Bernard Cardinal Lavigerie, Paris, 1896, vol. 1, p 86; vol 2, p 98.]

## CONCERNING THE BRAZILIAN CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The Brazilian Catholic Apostolic Church (ICAB), from whom we derive our closest Apostolic relation to the Holy See, and with which our mother church the Apostolic Episcopal Church is in intercommunion,

definitively separated from Rome in 1945 as a consequence of the political stance adopted by Archbishop Carlos Duarte Costa<sup>1</sup> (1888-1961) in opposing the granting of Vatican passports to high-ranking Nazis and in the abuse of power by the Church hierarchy.

The separation of Dom Carlos from the Holy See did not affect his episcopal standing, nor his ability to confer valid Holy Orders. Concerning these ordinations, we are told that the Brazilian Catholic Apostolic Church has preserved “The Tradition used by the Church at the time of the separation in 1945 especially with regard to the matter and the form”.<sup>2</sup>

It has only been since the Decree of the Holy Office of 9 August 1951 that excommunication *ipso facto* has been applicable to episcopal consecrations performed illicitly, that is without the permission of the Holy See. The Code of Canon Law of 1917 provides that the penalty for illicit consecrations shall be suspension, not excommunication: “Ipso iure suspensi sunt, donec sedes Apostolica eos dispenaverit” – “They are suspended by the law itself, until the Apostolic See dispenses them.” [Canon 2370, CC 1917.1).

The lineage to the Metropolitan Primate of EADM depends on a bishop, Dom Luis Fernando Castillo-Mendez, who was consecrated by Dom Carlos on 3 May 1948 – before the changes of 1951. None of the other bishops in the lineage following him were ever in communion with Rome. This is significant because had they been ex-Roman Catholics they would have incurred canonical penalties in their own right. These penalties cannot be said to apply to persons who are not and have never placed themselves under Roman jurisdiction.

Although sources hostile to ICAB maintain that Dom Carlos was excommunicated and declared *vitandus* by the Holy See, we continue to believe that Dom Carlos acted out of necessity in his violation of canon law and therefore did not incur such a penalty.

The 1983 Code of Canon Law, canon 1323, §4 holds that a person who violates a law believing that they act out of necessity is not subject to a penalty, even if there is, in fact, no such state of necessity. Canon 1323, 70 provides that if one inculpably thought there was, he would not incur the penalty, and Canon 1324, §3; §1, 80 provides that if one culpably thought there was, he would still incur no automatic penalties. Excommunication for schism (canon 1382) or the unlawful consecration of a bishop (canon 1364) is of this last kind.

The state of necessity is defined as a state where the necessary goods for natural or supernatural life are so threatened that a person is morally

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bduco.html>

<sup>2</sup> [www.icab.or.br/ordem.htm](http://www.icab.or.br/ordem.htm)

compelled to break the law in order to preserve them. It can readily be argued that this was the position of Dom Carlos, who believed quite correctly that the hierarchy of his church had fallen into profound moral error and that nothing short of drastic action would correct that error.

We should note that no penalty in canon law is incurred unless a subjective mortal sin has been committed (canons 1321 §1, 1323 70), and recall that Dom Carlos acted throughout in obedience to God and in perfect accord with the dictates of his conscience. Even if Dom Carlos was wrong to do this, he had not committed a subjective sin in doing so.

Further, there is no authority on earth that can compel a bishop to compromise in his teaching of the Catholic faith or act in such a way as to corrupt or destroy the Church. The Divine power accorded to Dom Carlos, as with every validly consecrated bishop, at his consecration was given to him for a reason, and when the circumstances arose whereby that power was needed, he demonstrated the courage to invoke it. It comes as no surprise that ICAB after due investigation declared him a saint on 4 July 1970.

Several individual bishops of ICAB, notably Dom Salomão Barbosa Ferraz<sup>3</sup> (1880-1969), who was consecrated by Dom Carlos on 15 August 1945, have reconciled with the Holy See. In the case of Dom Salomão, he was appointed Titular Bishop of Eleutherna and served as a Council Father for all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council.

Dialogue between Rome and ICAB took place during the 1980s, and it is not impossible that if it should resume, the aim of reconciliation of ICAB with the Holy See could eventually result. We certainly pray for that outcome in the interests of Christian unity, although we do not accept that the price of such unity is that conscience should be sacrificed.

#### ISSUES OF SUPPOSED “SCHISM” AND “HERESY” CONSIDERED MORE GENERALLY

**I**n more general terms, Canon 751 of the current Code of Canon Law provides that “Heresy is the obstinate denial or obstinate doubt after the reception of baptism of some truth which is to be believed by divine and Catholic faith...schism is the refusal of submission to the Supreme Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him.”

Neither of these definitions apply to E.A.D.M. On matters of faith, our faith is that of the undivided Church of Christ. Nor do we refuse to submit to the Pope. We are not at present under his jurisdiction, but that does not mean that

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bferraz.html>

if we were not asked by proper authority to submit as a body to a just ruling of his that we would necessarily refuse that command. We do not cut ourselves off from those in communion with the Pope; by contrast we are only too happy to share in Christian fellowship and in the sacramental life with them when opportunity permits.

Even were we to be termed schismatics, that would not cut us off from the Church, nor would it mean that we were to be counted among the damned. Ludwig Ott, in his “Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma” (1955) explains, “*Schismatics in good faith (material) like heretics in good faith, can by a desire to belong to the Church, belong spiritually to the Church, and through this achieve justification and salvation.*”

*“Pope Alexander VIII, in 1690, condemned the Jansenistic propositions that Christ died for the faithful only and that Pagans, Jews and heretics receive no grace from him. Denz 1294 et seq. cf Denz 1376 et seq.”*

## ISSUES OF DIVERGENT PRACTICE

**N**or should faith and practice be confused. We are not a modernist church; we regard innovation with significantly greater caution than do many within the larger denominations, and our position is perhaps rightly described both as paleo-Orthodox and – to coin a phrase – paleo-Catholic.

Where we diverge in matters of practice from the modern Roman church is chiefly in the matters of the permitting of a married priesthood, in our policy concerning ordination, and in a more inclusive approach to matters of sexuality. The fact that these issues have also become a focus for liberals and modernisers within the mainstream denominations does not mean that we are also liberal or modernistic. Rather, our positions on all of these issues reflect that of the undivided church of the first centuries after Christ, and in many cases recall the lives and teachings of faithful Catholics who have either advocated these causes or pointed out that the position of the Roman church on them is at variance with the true Catholic faith.

## THE MARRIED PRIESTHOOD

**W**e permit a married priesthood because the requirement of compulsory celibacy is a modernist Roman innovation, dating from the First Lateran Council of 1123. The Apostles were married men; the first Popes were married men. The Eastern Catholic churches today permit the ordination of married men as priests, and do not require them as a consequence to abstain from sexual relations with their wives. Today the Roman Catholic Church has begun again to admit married men to the

permanent diaconate. Compulsory celibacy is a law, not a doctrine. This is not to deny the virtues of celibacy for those who are called to that state. St Paul, a celibate, expresses the position clearly in writing, “For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am.” (1 Cor 7: 32) And he is explicit when he says “Regarding celibacy, I have no command from the Lord” (1 Cor 7:25).

## ORDINATION

**I**n an Encyclical Letter, the Presiding Bishop of E.A.D.M. has outlined in some detail the reasons in historical and doctrinal support of the ordination of women based both on Scriptural evidence and on the practice of the early church, particularly in respect of the admission of women to the diaconate. Women deacons are mentioned frequently in the records of the early church. They appear in the Didascalia of the Apostles, where it is claimed retrospectively that Mary Magdalene, Susanna and Joanna were among their number. The Council of Nicaea of 325AD likewise makes reference to female deacons. The legislation of Justinian in the sixth century mentions female deacons on multiple occasions, and in the Great Church of Hagia Sophia he lists the male and female deacons together, and goes on to specify that there should be one hundred male and forty female deacons. In the eighth century the Barberini Codex contains a rite for the ordination of female deacons which is in large part identical to the corresponding rite for male deacons. In the tenth century, Constantine Porphyrogenitus in *De Ceremoniis* refers to a special area for female deacons in the Hagia Sophia.

Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, one of the foremost scholars in contemporary Orthodoxy, has written: “The order of deaconesses seems definitely to have been considered an “ordained” ministry during early centuries in at any rate the Christian East. ... Some Orthodox writers regard deaconesses as having been a “lay” ministry. There are strong reasons for rejecting this view. In the Byzantine rite the liturgical office for the laying-on of hands for the deaconess is exactly parallel to that for the deacon; and so on the principle *lex orandi, lex credendi* — the Church's worshipping practice is a sure indication of its faith — it follows that the deaconesses receives, as does the deacon, a genuine sacramental ordination: not just a **χειροθεσια** (*chirothesia*) but a **χειροτονια** (*chirotonia*). However, the ordination of women in the Catholic Church does exist. Although it is not widespread, it is official by the Roman Catholic Church.” [“Man, Woman and the Priesthood of Christ,” in *Women and the Priesthood*, ed. T. Hopko (New York, 1982, reprinted 1999), 16, as quoted in *Women Deacons in the Early Church*, by John Wijngaards, ISBN 0-8245-2393-8.] We should note that the Greek

Orthodox Church has admitted several women to the diaconate in recent years.

Following the interpretation of Metropolitan Kallistos quoted above, we cannot regard the interpretation that the female diaconate was a lay ministry, or that the status of “deaconess” was separate from the diaconate, or a term that meant anything other than “female deacon”, as in any way credible. Further, the sacrament of Holy Orders is a unified sacrament, that is to say if a woman may be ordained deacon, we hold that there is no theological impediment that would then prevent her being ordained priest or consecrated a bishop.

The mother church of E.A.D.M., the Apostolic Episcopal Church, has in the past admitted women to the Order of Deaconesses. At present, however, neither the A.E.C. nor E.A.D.M. have any female clergy.

## ISSUES OF HUMAN SEXUALITY

**O**n matters of human sexuality, we are in overall agreement with Bishop Elizabeth Stuart SSB of the Liberal Catholic Church International, Professor of Christian Theology at the University of Winchester, in her statement that “gender and sexuality are not matters of ultimate theological concerns and that the Christian duty is to refuse to work theologically with such categories.” This is our day-to-day position on the issue.

Much writing concerning references to homosexuality in the Scriptures unfortunately depends on a standard of Scriptural exegesis that is unduly selective in its presentation and conclusions. We find ourselves in general agreement with the moral theology of the current Archbishop of Canterbury in the Church of England, Professor Rowan Williams, whose conclusion in his essay “The Body’s Grace” (1989) is that “the absolute condemnation of same-sex relations of intimacy must rely either on an abstract fundamentalist deployment of a number of very ambiguous biblical texts, or on a problematic and nonscriptural theory about natural complementarity, applied narrowly and crudely to physical differentiation without regard to psychological structures.”<sup>4</sup>

We believe that the current teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on this issue is in particular error because it is likely to promote hatred and discrimination against persons with a homosexual orientation, and is therefore at profound odds with the commandment of Christ that we must love our neighbour as ourself. Nor is this teaching supported unambiguously by

---

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.igreens.org.uk/bodys\\_grace.htm](http://www.igreens.org.uk/bodys_grace.htm)

Scriptural evidence or by the historic practice of the Church, in which people of all sexualities have played a full and integral part.

In general, we are not convinced that the responses of the Catholic hierarchy to homosexuality adequately address the genetic component in the determination of sexuality that has been identified by modern science. This understanding is summarized by the Emeritus Primate of the Apostolic Episcopal Church, Archbishop Bertil Persson, who has written, “In fact, homosexuality is not a question for the advocates of religion, it is rather a scientific or social complex. Homosexuality studies has been made within the science of the brain, whose wide studies indicates that the homosexual disposition is a consequence of structural differences in the brain. However, the question about the origin is until now not solved.”<sup>5</sup>

The former superior of the English Province of the Dominicans, Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., has acknowledged that “there are many excellent priests who are gay and who clearly have a vocation from God.” (Article in *The Tablet*, November 2005) We share this belief, and will admit persons to Holy Orders irrespective of their sexuality. In the case of all clergy regardless of their sexuality, we naturally expect either that they will be celibate, or that their sexual behaviour will be in accordance with their interpretation of the Catholic faith in conscience.

## HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVITY

Regarding the distinction between homosexual orientation and homosexual activity, we believe that the latter is a matter for individual conscience based on a full and careful study of the teachings of the Faith, and enjoin upon all people the virtues of chastity as they have been proclaimed through the ages.

We note the comments of Dr. Rowan Williams in a letter in 2000 that, “*An active sexual relationship between two people of the same sex might therefore reflect the love of God in a way comparable to marriage, if and only if it had about it the same character of absolute covenanted faithfulness.*”<sup>6</sup>

## CEREMONIES OF SAME-SEX PARTNERSHIP

The ceremony of *adelphopoeisis* is common to Eastern Christianity in earlier times and is a ceremony of union between two persons of the same sex. The *Ordo ad fratres faciendum* described by Alan Bray in his

---

<sup>5</sup> Persson, Bertil, *The Fight Against Sects*, Solna, Swedish Interreligious Peace Council, 2008, p 144.

<sup>6</sup> Butt, Riazat, “Rowan Williams: gay couples reflect the love of God”, *The Guardian*, Thursday 7 August 2008, p 11

book “The Friend” is a Western counterpart to this rite, as is the *affrèment* ceremony in mediaeval France that has recently been described by Allan Tulchin. The nature of the relationship in each of these ceremonies is categorized by the term “brotherhood” and commits the participants to a lifelong bond including shared property rights which can be inherited by a surviving partner. The origin of the *affrèment* ceremony was among biological brothers who had jointly inherited their parents’ property, but in time it was used by persons who were not biologically related.

There is no explicit sexual connotation to any of these ceremonies, and they are distinct from marriage. However, Tulchin points out that in a number of these ceremonies there is explicit reference to the partners declaring love for each other. He continues by saying that there is “*considerable evidence that the affrérés were using affrèments to formalize same-sex loving relationships...I suspect that some of these relationships were sexual, while others may not have been. It is impossible to prove either way and probably also somewhat irrelevant to understanding their way of thinking. They loved each other, and the community accepted that. What followed did not produce any documents.*”<sup>7</sup>

These ceremonies are all examples of an indigenous response from within the authentic tradition of the Church to the wish for persons of the same sex to recognise their bond of lifelong partnership through a formal service of commitment and Christian blessing. There is no reason why they should not serve the same purpose today. An alternative is the sacramental blessing of a service of civil partnership, for which a form exists within our Ecclesia.

None of these services presumes either that the couple in question may not choose to live in celibacy, nor that if they do not, that their sexual behaviour will be other than in accordance with their interpretation of the Catholic faith in conscience. It is characteristic of the approach of the Ecclesia that such matters are left to those directly concerned to decide for themselves.

## CONTRACEPTION AND ABORTION

**E**.A.D.M. takes a position on issues of contraception in line with the Winnipeg Statement of the Conference of Canadian Bishops (1968), a response to the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. This states in part, “*In accord with the accepted principles of moral theology, if these persons have tried sincerely but without success to pursue a line of conduct in keeping with the given directives, they may be safely assured that, whoever honestly chooses that course which seems right to him does so in good conscience.*” It concludes that, “*The unity of the Church does not*

---

<sup>7</sup> Tulchin, Allan, “Same-Sex Couples Creating Households in Old Regime France: The Uses of the *Affrèment*.” *Journal of Modern History*: September 2007.

*consist in a bland conformity in all ideas, but rather in a union of faith and heart, in submission to God's will and a humble but honest and ongoing search for the truth."*

On the issue of abortion, E.A.D.M. does not impose a central position upon its members, although the majority of Catholics are strongly opposed to all forms of medical intervention aimed at the termination of human life.

Reflecting one viewpoint on this subject, the Primate of the Apostolic Episcopal Church, Archbishop Francis Spataro, has written,

*"In the Epistle of Barnabas, an apocryphal New Testament book, abortion is forbidden. It was very common throughout the Roman Empire. Why didn't the Church Fathers then allow this Scripture to become part of the canonical New Testament? The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelation of St John were kept out until a compromise was reached between the East and the West. The Church of the East (Nestorian) which separated after the Council of Ephesus does not have either in its canon. So what was it that the Church Fathers taught about abortion? A correspondent who is a widow (her husband died) and who is pregnant asks St Basil if she can have an abortion because the child would have no father and she would have no support. He answers her from the scientific knowledge of that age; since a child (according to Aristotle) goes through the stages of nature: mineral, vegetable, animal and human, explains St Basil, an abortion would be permissible during the first trimester when the foetus is in the mineral-vegetable stages. Once the foetus graduates to the animal-human then abortion is forbidden. Now this was the teaching of the Church and St Thomas Aquinas until the end of the 19th century. At that time Fr. Rosmini, a Catholic Philosopher and Scientist, thought that the Church should base its teaching about abortion on modern scientific research; thus the modern teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on abortion and when human life begins in a woman's womb. But it was not always so with the Church as with its condemnation of Copernicus and Galileo and now its acceptance that the Sun is indeed at the center of the Solar System. The Church is not infallible when it comes to science. So while it claims to be infallible in faith and morals when such is proclaimed from the Cathedra of St. Peter, so far no Pope has proclaimed either its teaching on abortion or the ordination of women as an infallible dogma of the Holy Roman Apostolic Church!"*

## CONCLUSIONS

**T**he choice of the term "ecclesia" to describe E.A.D.M. is deliberate, and reflects our jurisdictional position. "Ecclesia" was the term used by the first Christians for their assemblies; a term that deliberately has both local and universal meaning, and that thus establishes us as a part of a wider structure and context.

We are not an “independent” church; we are an autocephalous rite within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. We do not make claim to be the universal church, nor to supplant the mainstream churches in their work. We offer a very specific mission and witness to the esoteric traditions pursued in a traditionalist Catholic and paleo-Orthodox context. Where possible, this mission is pursued in full co-operation with and alongside fellow Catholics wherever they may be found.

We are autocephalous, or self-governing, not because we wish for any form of separation, but because the esoteric tradition is not welcomed by the contemporary Roman Catholic hierarchy despite its historic roots within the practice of that church. We contend that, notwithstanding these differences, we are neither heretical nor schismatic under Roman Catholic canon law, and pray along with Our Lord that at some point in the future “all may be as one”. Nevertheless, we have set our hands to the plough, and we will not compromise in our mission until we are satisfied either that we have achieved the reconciliation of the esoteric traditions within the Catholic Church as a whole, or that other means have come about that will achieve that objective in our stead. Until then, some measure of separation from our Catholic brethren – though not in any of the essentials of the Catholic faith – is a necessary burden that we are prepared to bear.