



*Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Saint Cloud*

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July 3, 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am saddened by the decision of the Society of St. Pius X to proceed with the ordination of four bishops without papal authorization, despite Pope Leo XIV's repeated appeals for the society to reconsider. By taking this action, the SSPX has placed itself in schism with the Roman Catholic Church.

The consecrating bishops and the four newly ordained bishops who participated in the July 1 ceremony in Switzerland automatically incurred the penalty of excommunication. In addition, the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith stated that lay faithful who formally adhere to the SSPX are also considered excommunicated. The dicastery further stated that the sacraments celebrated by the SSPX going forward are illicit. It specifically noted that confessions heard by SSPX clergy and marriages witnessed by them are invalid.

These are grave penalties that reflect the seriousness of the decisions made by the SSPX. The society also continues to reject the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, as well as the council's teachings on religious freedom and ecumenism. The faithful of our diocese should refrain from participating in SSPX liturgies, schools, and other activities.

At the same time, it is important to remember our diocesan mission and our commitment to be Christ's heart of mercy and voice of hope. I know that many local families involved with the SSPX, as well as members of its clergy, are sincere people who possess a deep love for Christ. Many do not desire to be separated from full communion with the Church and are experiencing real pain because of decisions made by others.

I ask you to pray for these families and clergy members. I also ask you to pray for the unity of the Church, as Christ prayed: "I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (John 17:20-21).

In its mercy, the Church has already established a process through which priests and lay faithful associated with the SSPX may return to full communion with the Catholic Church. Anyone seeking more information is encouraged to contact our vicar for canonical affairs, Father Matthew Crane, at [Matthew.Crane@gw.stcdio.org](mailto:Matthew.Crane@gw.stcdio.org) or 320-251-2340.

For lay faithful who have been attending Mass at SSPX churches, I encourage you to participate instead in the traditional Latin Masses authorized by the Diocese of Saint Cloud at St. Paul Church in St. Cloud or Sacred Heart Church in Flensburg.

May Christ the Healer bring unity and peace to his Church and to our world.

Yours in Christ,

+Patrick M. Neary, C.S.C.  
Bishop, Diocese of Saint Cloud