

## **FAQ ABOUT THE SSPX and THEIR CONSECRATION of BISHOPS**

### **Q: What is the Society of St. Pius X [SSPX]?**

**A:** The Society of St. Pius X [SSPX] was founded in 1970 by the French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who was a severe critic of the changes brought about in the Roman Catholic Church by the Second Vatican Council [1962-65]. In addition to the reforms of the Mass and Sacraments, Lefebvre also opposed Vatican II's teachings on ecumenism, religious liberty, collegiality among bishops with the pope, and the Church's understanding of, and relationship to Judaism. The SSPX is present in 30 countries with an estimated 800,000 adherents; it operates priories, chapels, schools, and missions as well as seminaries. The SSPX has approximately 700 priests, and several hundred seminarians.

### **Q: What has occurred between the SSPX and the Pope to cause this disunity within the Church?**

**A:** The Society of St. Pius X [SSPX] consecrated four bishops on July 1, 2026, in Écône, Switzerland. Both Pope Leo XIV and Vatican officials pleaded with the SSPX, on several occasions, not to take this action. Without a papal mandate, the consecration of bishops leads to automatic excommunications of those who were consecrated bishops as well as those bishops who officiated at that ceremony on July 1, 2026 [canon 1382]. The SSPX were officially warned that this consecration of bishops, would lead to formal schism.

### **Q: What is Schism in the Roman Catholic Church?**

**A:** *Schism* is a formal action by which, with full knowledge and intention, a group or individual breaks away from essential unity with the pope, bishops and all the members of the Roman Catholic Church. This essential unity is called *Full Communion*.

### **Q: What constitutes *Full Communion* with the Roman Catholic Church?**

**A:** To be in *Full Communion* with the Roman Catholic Church one who is baptized is joined to its visible structure "...by bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments and ecclesiastical governance." [canon 205] Thus, *Full Communion* includes obedience to the pope and the college of bishops united to the pope. [cf. canons 750-752]

### **Q: What is the Vatican's official stance?**

**A:** Prior to the SSPX's July 1, 2026, consecration of bishops, the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, led by Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, stated that conducting episcopal ordinations without a pontifical mandate would be an illicit and "schismatic act". On June 29, 2026, Pope Leo XIV expressed sorrow over this situation stating, "I urge you to consider carefully the spiritual good of the faithful, because the schismatic act you are about to undertake would deprive them of the licit and, in some cases, even valid reception of the Sacraments...I pray for you, because to tear the seamless garment of Christ [the Church's unity] is a sin of extreme gravity."

### **Q: Can there be a reconciliation between the SSPX and the Roman Catholic Church?**

**A:** Yes. For a reconciliation between the Society of St. Pius X and the Roman Catholic Church to take place, the SSPX will have to declare an unequivocal acceptance of the principal teachings and statements of the Second Vatican Council, recognize the validity of the Novus Ordo Mass and Sacraments, and fully submit to the authority of the pope.