



July 1, 2026  
St. Junipero Serra, Priest

Dear Diocesan Family,

It is with great sadness that I must share with you that *the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX)* is in *formal schism with the Roman Catholic Church* due to today's unauthorized episcopal ordinations of four bishops without papal mandate (see Canon 1013).

Those bishops ordained today, and the bishops who consecrated them, have incurred an automatic excommunication whose lifting is reserved solely to the Pope. Such disobedience to Pope Leo XIV as the Successor of St. Peter, the first Pope to whom Christ entrusted his Church, is considered a schismatic act, and gravely harms the unity of the Church for which Christ so fervently prayed the night before he died.

This action by the SSPX constitutes a formal separation from the Church's communion and as such makes it illicit and forbidden for Roman Catholics to participate in and receive the Sacraments from bishops and priests associated with the Society of St. Pius X, including Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, and Holy Orders. The only exception provided for in Canon Law is the Sacrament of Penance when there is a danger of death (see Canons 976 and 1752).

It is of great importance to realize that the division between the Society of St. Pius X and the Roman Catholic Church is not simply about the celebration of the Mass and the Sacrament. The SSPX repudiates and denounces the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, in particular, ecumenism, religious liberty, collegiality of the bishops with the pope, and the Church's understanding of, and relationship with Judaism.

Out of care for souls, I must instruct the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to avoid participating in the activities of the Society of St. Pius X at St. Therese Chapel in Nicholville, NY as well as their schools. I invite those who have been assisting at Mass or the Sacraments administered by the priests of the Society of St. Pius X to now look for spiritual counsel and

nourishment at the traditional Latin Mass and Sacraments celebrated at St. Mary's Church in Potsdam, NY or St. Mary's Church in Evans Mills, NY.

To our brother priests in the Society of St. Pius X who may not wish to be part of this break with the See of Peter, I am always open to receiving you, and assisting you in remaining within the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church

At this time, we pray fervently for Church unity, and ask Mary, Mother of the Church, to intercede for the Church and her members in this moment of sad division.

With care and concern, I ask God's blessing upon all who dwell within the boundaries of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. "Father, may we be one."

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry R. LaValley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is preceded by a small cross symbol. A long, thin line extends from the end of the signature towards the upper right corner of the page.

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg