



The Holy See

MOTU PROPRIO

«*THE ANCIENT AND VENERABLE BASILICA*»

OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF

BENEDICT XVI

FOR THE BASILICA OF ST PAUL-OUTSIDE-THE-WALLS

AND FOR ITS EXTRA-TERRITORIAL COMPLEX

1. The ancient and venerable Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls, which stands on the place where the memory of the Apostle to the Gentiles is venerated, has always had a special importance in the history of Christianity, together with the other three Major Basilicas of Rome. They are the destination of many pilgrimages, especially on the occasion of Holy Years.

St Paul's Basilica serves as the Abbatial Church of the prestigious Abbey of the Benedictine monks adjacent to it with the same name, which has existed for 13 centuries.

2. The Lateran Treaty of 1929 and subsequent Agreements between the Holy See and Italy recognize that the areas and buildings which constitute the complex of St Paul Outside-the-Walls belong to the Holy See and enjoy a special legal *status*, in accordance with the norms of international law. As decreed by the norms in force, the Supreme Pontiff exercises civil powers over the entire extra-territorial complex of St Paul's Outside-the-Walls (cf. *Legge Fondamentale dello Stato della Città del Vaticano*, 26 November 2000, in AAS Suppl. 71 [2000] pp. 75-83).

3. Mindful that in the past the Holy See defined only some aspects of the respective competence exercised by the Pontifical Administration of the Basilica and by the Benedictine Abbey, I now deem it appropriate to issue several general norms for the purpose of clarifying or defining the main aspects of the pastoral and administrative management of the complex of St Paul Outside-the-Walls. This will enable Statutes to be drawn up that establish the competence of those concerned and regulate their relations.

4. I establish that the Roman Pontiff designate an Archpriest, as for the other three Major

Basilicas, for the Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls, which I confirm as a canonical body with a public juridical personality. In this Basilica the Archpriest will exercise ordinary and immediate jurisdiction. The Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of St Paul will be his Vicar for Pastoral Care, and he will have a Delegate for Administration.

Furthermore, the Archpriest of St Paul's must supervise the entire extra-territorial complex and coordinate the work of the various administrative offices, each according to their proper purpose, excepting all that belongs to the exclusive province of the Abbot within the Abbey.

5. The Abbot of the Monastery of St Paul Outside-the-Walls, after being canonically elected, must receive confirmation from the Roman Pontiff. He enjoys all the rights and prerogatives proper to the Superior of the Benedictine Community. To permit the Abbot to pay increasing attention to his duties within the monastic Community (cf. Paul VI, *Motu Proprio Catholica Ecclesia*, 23 October 1976, in AAS 68 [1976], pp. 694-696), my Venerable Predecessor John Paul II disposed that the extra-territorial area adjacent to the Abbey should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Abbot of St Paul's, who will retain his ordinary jurisdiction *intra septa monasterii*, as well as his liturgical role in the Basilica, as defined in this Document and as the forthcoming Statutes will specify.

6. As from 7 March 2005, the Abbey has taken the title of: "Abbey of St Paul Outside-the-Walls", since its character and title as a "territorial" circumscription have recently been suppressed.

However, with the exception of the competence of the Archpriest of St Paul's and that proper to the Abbot, the Cardinal Vicar of Rome is empowered with ordinary pastoral jurisdiction over the entire extra-territorial area of St Paul Outside-the-Walls. He will exercise this power through the parish that is part of the territory of the Diocese.

7. Consequently, the Pontifical Administration of the Patriarchal Basilica of St Paul, established by Pope Pius XI of venerable memory with his Chirograph of 30 April 1933 and updated by Blessed John XXIII with his Chirograph of 20 December 1962, is suppressed and all its functions are transferred to the Archpriest, who will exercise them in accordance with what is established in the Statutes that will be approved by the competent Offices of the Holy See.

8. Since I am particularly keen that the ministry of Penance in the Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls be assured for all the faithful who go there, both those who belong to the Diocese of Rome and the many pilgrims who come from various parts of the world, I willingly confirm what my Predecessor Pope Pius XI established (cf. Apostolic Constitution *Quod Divina Favente*, 3 May 1933, in AAS 25 [1933], pp. 229-232), that is, that the administration of the sacrament of Penance continue to be entrusted to the attentive care of Confessors chosen from among the Benedictine Monks and constituted in accordance with what is to be established by the forthcoming Statutes.

9. In recent times, the Holy See has taken particular care to promote special ecumenical events in

the Basilica or in the Abbey environment. It will therefore be the task of the Monks, under the supervision of the Archpriest, to organize, coordinate and develop such programmes, also with the help of Benedictine confreres from other Abbeys and in accordance with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

10. May the Apostle to the Gentiles enlighten and protect all those who carry out their duties in the Basilica dedicated to him. May he also grant help and comfort to all the faithful and the pilgrims who visit with sincere devotion this place, sacred to the memory of his martyrdom, to strengthen their faith and invoke his protection on their personal journey of sanctification and on the commitment of the Church to spread the Gospel in the contemporary world.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, though it be worthy of special mention.

Given at Vatican City on 31 May 2005, Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

BENEDICT XVI

© Copyright 2005 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana