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CLARIFICATION BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE, FR. FEDERICO LOMBARDI, S.I., ON SPECULATIONS ABOUT THE CELIBACY ISSUE IN THE ANNOUNCED APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION REGARDING PERSONAL ORDINARIATES FOR ANGLICAN ENTERING INTO FULL COMMUNION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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There has been widespread speculation, based on supposedly knowledgeable remarks by an Italian correspondent Andrea Tornielli, that the delay in publication of the Apostolic Constitution regarding Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans entering into full communion with the Catholic Church, announced on October 20, 2009, by Cardinal William Levada, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is due to more than "technical" reasons. According to this speculation, there is a serious substantial issue at the basis of the delay, namely, disagreement about whether celibacy will be the norm for the future clergy of the Provision.

Cardinal Levada offered the following comments on this speculation: "Had I been asked I would happily have clarified any doubt about my remarks at the press conference. There is no substance to such speculation. No one at the Vatican has mentioned any such issue to me. The delay is purely technical in the sense of ensuring consistency in canonical language and references. The translation issues are secondary; the decision not to delay publication in order to wait for the 'official' Latin text to be published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* was made some time ago.

The drafts prepared by the working group, and submitted for study and approval through the usual process followed by the Congregation, have all included the following statement, currently Article VI of the Constitution:

*§1 Those who ministered as Anglican deacons, priests, or bishops, and who fulfill the requisites established by canon law and are not impeded by irregularities or other impediments may be accepted by the Ordinary as candidates for Holy Orders in the Catholic Church. In the case of married ministers, the norms established in the Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI *Sacerdotalis coelibatus*, n. 42 and in the Statement "In June" are to be observed. Unmarried ministers must submit to the norm of clerical celibacy of CIC can. 277, §1. §2. The Ordinary, in full observance of the discipline of celibate clergy in the Latin Church, as a rule (pro regula) will*

admit only celibate men to the order of presbyter. He may also petition the Roman Pontiff, as a derogation from can. 277, §1, for the admission of married men to the order of presbyter on a case by case basis, according to objective criteria approved by the Holy See.

This article is to be understood as consistent with the current practice of the Church, in which married former Anglican ministers may be admitted to priestly ministry in the Catholic Church on a case by case basis. With regard to future seminarians, it was considered purely speculative whether there might be some cases in which a dispensation from the celibacy rule might be petitioned. For this reason, objective criteria about any such possibilities (e.g. married seminarians already in preparation) are to be developed jointly by the Personal Ordinariate and the Episcopal Conference, and submitted for approval of the Holy See."

Cardinal Levada said he anticipates the technical work on the Constitution and Norms will be completed by the end of the first week of November.

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