

DOCUMENTATION

ROMAN CURIA

FIRST OF MARCH: THE NEW ROMAN CURIA

The apostolic Constitution "Regimini Ecclesiae Universae" of August 15, 1967, contains the reform of the Curia. The new organization was effective last March 1, 1968. There are internal general rules which govern the Curia and rules which govern the different offices. Six principal points characterize the new reform: (1) It modernizes the organization of the Church. (2) The principal offices are temporary in nature and last for the space of five years. (3) The officers are taken from different nations and are veritably experts in their respective fields. (4) The election to an office does not claim the right to promotion to a higher office. (5) Other members who do not appear in the list of consultors may be appointed. (6) The continuous consultation with Episcopal Conferences of the different nations is desired.

1. The Pope

2. The Cardinal Secretary of State.

Confers daily with the Roman Pontiff and regularly convokes the heads of the different dicasteries.

3. Secretariate of State or Papal Secretariate.

It is headed by the Secretary of State Cardinal Amleto Cicognani assisted by a substitute, Monsignor Agustin Benelli.

The Secretary of State convokes the cardinal prefects of the dicasteries with a view of coordinating their various functions, to disseminate information to them as well as to listen to their opinions.

4. Sacred Council for the Public Affairs of the Church.

Presided by a cardinal prefect presently, Cardinal Amleto Cicognani who is assisted by a secretary, Monsignor Cassaroli.

It is concerned with affairs related to civil governments. It deals with questions connected with civil laws; it promotes diplomatic relations with different countries; it realizes the formation of nunciatures, internunciatures and apostolic delegations. It is in close contact with the Secretariate of State.

NINE CONGREGATIONS

5. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

It is presided by a cardinal prefect, presently Francis Seper.

Its chief mission is to guard the doctrine of the faith and morals throughout the catholic world.

It investigates and examines new opinions and promotes scientific discussions and congresses.

It examines books which it either approves or reprovcs.

It guards the dignity of the sacrament of penance and is in close relation with the Pontifical Commission for Biblical Affairs.

6. Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

Formerly, it was known as the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church.

It is presently headed by Cardinal Maximilliano de Fuerstenberg.

It counts for its members the patriarchs of the Orient and the cardinal president of the Secretariate for the Unity of the Christians.

It has as many offices as there are number of rites in the Church. It attends to the territories where the majority of the populace belong to the oriental rite through areas where the latin rite predominates.

7. Sacred Congregation for Bishops.

It was until recently known as the Sacred Consistorial Congregation.

It is presided by a cardinal prefect: at present, Carlo Confalonieri.

It is concerned with the establishment of new dioceses, provinces, regions as well as with their division, union or recognition if already formed.

To this congregations are attached the Councils and Secretariates of Emigration, Apostolate of the Sea, Air and of the Nomads.

8. Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments.

It is headed by a cardinal prefect: Francis Brennan.

It deals with matters pertaining to the discipline of the seven sacraments.

It grants dispensations in matters which are beyond the jurisdiction of the bishops. It judges causes on the non-consummation of matrimony including those between catholics and baptized non-catholics.

9. Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Its prefect is Cardinal Benno Gut.

It has competence on everything which refers directly to the divine worship or cult among the different rites.

It is also concerned with the beatification and canonization of saints or the servants of God.

10. Sacred Congregation for the Clerics.

At the helm of this congregation is the present cardinal prefect: Juan Villot.

This congregation has competence on matters which refer to clerics who exercise their apostolate in the various dioceses (diocesan clergy)

most especially, concerning their person and their work or pastoral ministry.

11. Sacred Congregation for the Religious and the Secular Institutes.

This Congregation is headed by a cardinal prefect: at present, Hildebrando Antonutti.

It is divided into two sections: one for the religious and the other for the secular institutes. The section for the religious looks after the affairs of the religious of the latin rite and their discipline. It is also concerned with the affairs of societies of common life and the third order.

12. Sacred Congregation for the Catholic Teaching.

Formerly known as the Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, it has for cardinal prefect Gabriel Maria Garrone.

It is entrusted with the formation of clerics and with the scientific and catholic education of both clerics and lay people.

13. Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations or the Propagation of the Faith.

Until recently, this Congregation was known only as the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.

A cardinal prefect presides over it: at present, Gregorio Pedro Aggagniani.

It has competence on matters that have to do with the missions established for the diffusion of the kingdom of Christ in the world. It promotes the formation of the native clergy and cares for the missionaries scattered all over the globe.

It has for its members the Secretariates for the Union of the Christians, of the Non-Christians and of the Non-Believers.

It receives help from the Supreme Council for the direction of the various pontifical missionary activities.

THREE SECRETARIATES

14. Secretariate for the Non-Believers.

Presently, it is headed by Cardinal Franz Koenig.

It is entrusted with the duty to study atheism with a view of penetrating intimately into its mentality, and whenever possible to establish dialogue with non-believers who would sincerely accept collaboration with it.

15. Secretariate for the Non-Christians.

It is under the direction of its cardinal president: Pablo Marella.

It promotes relations with those who, while being christians, nevertheless, profess a religion distinct from Roman Catholicism, and have different religious sentiments and beliefs.

It is also in-charge with the formation of those destined to dedicate themselves into dialogue with non-christians and establish relations with the Mohammedans.

16. Secretariate for the Union of the Christians.

It is presided by Cardinal Augustin Bea.

It is composed of two offices: one for the so-called Oriental christians and the other for the Occidental christians.

It promotes relations with other christian communities; it is in-charge with the proper interpretation and execution of the principles of ecumenism; it promotes colloquia concerning questions and activities on ecumenism with churches and ecclesiastical communities separated from the Holy See.

It is competent on matters related to the Jews under the aspect of religion.

THREE TRIBUNALS

17. Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signature.

It is presided by Cardinal Francis Roberti.

It is composed of two sections: one section treats of affairs related to the ordinary and delegate powers of the Code of Canon Law; the other section resolves cases concerning the administrative powers of the Church. It also judges conflicts arising from the competence or incompetence of the different departments of the Apostolic See.

18. Sacred Roman Rota.

Its present dean is Monsignor Boleslao Filipak.

Its main concern are causes and questions on the nullity of the marriage bond.

19. Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary.

The present major Cardinal penitentiary is Jose Ferreto.

The jurisdiction of this tribunal embraces matters concerning the forum, including the sacramental forum. It is for this reason that it has power to concede and grant favors, absolutions, dispensations, commutations, sanations and condonations in the internal forum.

TWO COUNCILS

20. Council of the Laity.

It is under Cardinal Mauricio Roy.

Its main function at present and "ad experimentum" for a 5-year period, is the promotion and direction of the lay apostolate.

21. Pontifical Commission "Justice and Peace".

It is likewise headed by Cardinal Mauricio Roy.

And similarly, "ad experimentum" for a 5-year period, it aims at the promotion of national progress and social justice among nations.

SIX OFFICES

22. Apostolic Chancellery.

It is presided by Cardinal Luigi Traglia.

It expedites decretal letters and apostolic constitutions as well as papal bulls and letter of briefer forms. It is entrusted with the care and safeguarding of the lead seal and the fisherman's ring.

23. Economic Prefecture of the Holy See.

It is composed of a commission of 3 cardinals headed by Cardinal Egidio Vagnozzi.

Among its functions are: reception of reports concerning the patrimonial and economic Estate; reception of the accounts concerning income and expenses and the examination of the reports of accounts of the various administrators of goods dependent on the Holy See.

24. Apostolic Chamber.

It is presided by the papal Chamberlain presently, Cardinal Aloisi Masella.

Its main function is the administration and care of the temporal rights and properties of the Holy See during a period of vacancy.

25. Patrimony of the Apostolic See.

At the head of this administrative office is Cardinal Amleto Cicognani.

26. Prefecture of the Apostolic Palace.

It is under the direction of Cardinal Efren Forni.

It takes charge of arranging and ordering audiences with the Roman Pontiff. It also prepares everything related to pontifical rites and ceremonies.

27. Statistical Institute or Office of the Church.

This Office compiles and orders news and notices which are necessary and useful in order to have full knowledge of the state of the Church. It also assists the sacred pastors all over the world.

OTHER PONTIFICAL COMMISSIONS

Commission for Latin America.

Its president is Antonio Samore.

Commission for the Reform of the Code of Canon Law.

It is presided by Cardinal Pericle Felici.