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Holy See Press Office Communiqué

The Congregation for the Clergy today issued the Instruction "The pastoral conversion of the parish community at the service of the Church's evangelising mission", promulgated last June 29.

The document deals with the theme of the pastoral care of parish communities, the various clerical and lay ministries, with a view to greater co-responsibility of all the baptised. The text, fundamentally, recalls that "in the Church there is room for all and everyone can find their place" in the one family of God, respecting the vocation of each one.

The Dicastery for the Clergy, encouraged by various bishops, was aware of the need to develop a canonical-pastoral instrument relating to the various projects of reform of parish communities and diocesan restructuring, already underway or in the planning phase, with the related theme of unity and pastoral areas. The document intends, therefore, to place itself at the service of various pastoral choices, already initiated some time ago by pastors and "tested" by the People of God, in order to contribute to their evaluation and to conform particular law with universal law.

From this perspective, the role of the parish priest as the "proper pastor" of the community is emphasised, but the pastoral service connected with the presence in communities of deacons, consecrated and lay people, called to participate actively in the Church's unique evangelising mission according to their vocation and ministry, is also emphasised and highlighted.