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Apostolic Letter issued “*Motu Proprio*” by the Supreme Pontiff Francis amending the jurisdiction of the judicial bodies of Vatican City State

APOSTOLIC LETTER
ISSUED “MOTU PROPRIO”
BY THE SUPREME PONTIFF FRANCIS
AMENDING THE JURISDICTION OF THE JUDICIAL BODIES OF VATICAN CITY STATE

According to the conciliar Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, all in the Church are called to sanctity and have received an equal privilege of faith through the justice of God; indeed, “all share a true equality with regard to the dignity and to the activity common to all the faithful for the building up of the Body of Christ” (32). The Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* also affirms that “all men have the same nature and origin, have been redeemed by Christ and enjoy the same divine calling and destiny” (29). This principle is fully acknowledged in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, which states in Canon 208: “there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality in dignity and in action”.

The awareness of these values and principles, which has progressively matured in the ecclesial community, today calls for an ever more adequate conformity to them also in the Vatican system.

In this sense, in my recent address at the opening of the Judicial Year, I wished to recall the “overriding need for the current procedural system - also by means of appropriate changes in the law - to ensure the equality of all members of the Church in their equal dignity and position, without privileges that date back to earlier times and are no longer in keeping with the responsibilities that each person has in building up the Church. This requires solidity of faith and consistency of behaviour and actions”.

On the basis of these considerations, and without prejudice to the provisions of universal law for some specific cases expressly indicated, there is now a need to make some further changes to the judicial system of the State of Vatican City, not least in order to ensure that everyone can enjoy a multi-degree judgement in line with the most advanced international legal experience.

Having said this, with this Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio*, I decree that

1. In the Law on the Judiciary of 16 March 2020, no. CCCLI, in art. 6, the following paragraph shall be added after paragraph 3: "4. In cases involving the Most Eminent Cardinals and the Most Excellent Bishops, except for the cases provided for in canon 1405 § 1, the tribunal shall judge with the prior consent of the Supreme Pontiff.";
2. In the Law on the Judiciary of 16 March 2020, no. CCCLI art. 24 is repealed.

This I decree and establish, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

I decree that this Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio* be promulgated by publication in *L'Osservatore Romano* and enter into force the following day.

Given at Rome, from the Apostolic Palace, 30 April in the year 2021, the ninth of my Pontificate.

FRANCISCUS
