



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Society of St Pius X and Recent Vatican Actions

1. What has happened?

The Society of St Pius X proceeded with the consecration of four bishops without the approval of Pope Leo XIV. The Holy See declared this action a schismatic act and stated that the bishops who performed the consecrations and the four newly consecrated bishops incurred excommunication.

2. What is a schism?

A schism is a refusal of to accept the authority of the Roman Pontiff or a refusal to remain in communion with the members of the Church subject to him.

3. What is excommunication?

Excommunication is the Church's public declaration that a person's actions have caused a grave rupture in ecclesial communion. It is a medicinal penalty, intended not to condemn but to invite conversion, by prohibiting excommunicated persons from participating in the Church's sacramental life and from exercising ecclesiastical rights until reconciliation is achieved.

4. Does this mean the Society of St Pius X is no longer in communion with the Catholic Church?

The Vatican has declared that the Society of St Pius X is in schism following the unauthorized episcopal consecrations and has warned clergy and laity against adhering to that schism.

5. Are Society of St Pius X Masses valid?

The Vatican has stated that Masses celebrated by Society of St Pius X priests remain valid; however, these Masses are celebrated contrary to the law and discipline of the Church.



6. Are Confessions heard by Society of St Pius X priests valid?

No. The Vatican has stated that confessions heard by Society of St Pius X priests are invalid. Catholics seeking the Sacrament of Penance should approach priests in full communion with the Church.

7. Are marriages conducted by Society of St Pius X priests valid?

No. The Vatican has stated that marriages at which Society of St Pius X priests officiate are invalid. Catholics should arrange marriages through their parish or another Catholic priest with the appropriate faculties.

8. May Catholics attend Society of St Pius X Masses?

Catholics are strongly encouraged not to participate in Society of St Pius X liturgies or ministries. Participation may be interpreted as support for a community that has separated itself from ecclesial communion.

9. May Catholics receive Holy Communion at a Society of St Pius X Mass?

Because reception of Holy Communion is a sign of universal Church communion, Catholics are encouraged to refrain from receiving Holy Communion at Society of St Pius X Masses. Catholics are encouraged to participate in Masses celebrated within the full communion of the Catholic Church.

10. Does this affect Catholics who prefer the traditional Latin Mass?

No. A preference for the Traditional Latin Mass does not place a person outside communion with the Church. There are communities and clergy authorised by the Church that celebrate Mass according to the 1962 Missal while remaining in full communion with Pope Leo XIV, for example Clergy of the Personal Parish of Saint John Henry Newman.

11. What could I do if I have been attending a Society of St Pius X parish?

You are encouraged to:

- Seek pastoral guidance.
- Continue participating in the sacramental life of the Church in parishes that are in full communion with the Catholic Church.
- Remain united with the wider Catholic community and the Holy Father.



12. Why is unity important in the Catholic Church

Unity in the Catholic Church is a fundamental aspect of our identity and mission. We believe that Christ established one Church and that the Church is one body of Christ. This unity is expressed and strengthened through the sacramental life of the Church, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, which brings believers into communion with Christ and one another.

Unity is also expressed by being in union with the Holy Father – the direct successor of St Peter. Unity with the Holy Father links Catholics throughout the world as one universal family of faith.

13. How can we respond as Catholics?

We can:

- Pray for Pope Leo XIV.
- Pray for members and leaders of the Society of St Pius X
- Pray for unity within the Church.
- Support those experiencing confusion or distress.
- Remain faithful to the Church's teaching, sacraments, and communion.

14. Where can I seek further guidance?

Please contact your parish priest for pastoral assistance and advice regarding your specific circumstances.

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9th July 2026