



## **World Council of National Catholic Churches**

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TO THE BELOVED BROTHERS IN THE VENERABLE EPISCOPATE,  
TO THE CLERGY, AND TO ALL THE FAITHFUL OF THE MEMBER CHURCHES  
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCHES

DECLARATION  
ON DOCTRINAL FIDELITY, MORAL DISCIPLINE, CANONICAL ORDER,  
AND THE PUBLIC ACTS OF THE WCNCC

Beloved Brothers in Christ,

With fatherly love, and for the sake of the more harmonious building up of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, we hereby present and establish the following norms for the member Churches of the Old Catholic World Council of National Catholic Churches.

The purpose of this Declaration is to make the doctrine, discipline, canonical order, and public witness of the WCNCC clearer, more unambiguous, and more transparent. This is necessary for the strengthening of the Churches, for the protection of the faithful, for the dignity of holy orders, and for the good name of our common ecclesiastical mission.

The Old Catholic World Council of National Catholic Churches was established as a clear departure from the liberal course of the Union of Utrecht, and also from other doctrinal, moral, and disciplinary deviations increasingly present in many ecclesiastical communities throughout the world.

Therefore, as a canonically competent ecclesiastical authority, and in accordance with our responsibility before God and the Church, we issue this Declaration, which must be observed in all member Churches of the WCNCC.

### **I. DOCTRINAL AND MORAL FIDELITY**

1. The WCNCC firmly adheres to the faith of the undivided Church, to the apostolic doctrine, to the traditional Christian moral teaching, and to the sacramental order received from the Catholic tradition.

2. The WCNCC categorically rejects:

- \* same-sex “marriages” and same-sex unions as contrary to the Christian doctrine of marriage;
- \* the blessing of same-sex couples in any form;
- \* LGBT ideology and gender ideology;
- \* the ordination of women to holy orders;
- \* abortion and any public support for abortion;
- \* the admission to sacred ministry of persons who publicly live, teach, promote, or defend anything contrary to Christian moral doctrine.

3. Marriage, according to the faith and sacramental teaching of the Church, is the union of one man and one woman, established by God and blessed by the Church.

4. The WCNCC also clearly and unequivocally distances itself from *Fiducia supplicans*, “On the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings,” insofar as this Roman document has been used or interpreted as allowing the blessing of same-sex couples. No bishop, priest, or deacon of the WCNCC may bless same-sex couples or same-sex unions in any form.

### **II. REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS**

5. Before ordination, every candidate for holy orders must sign a written declaration affirming that:

- \* he accepts the faith, sacramental discipline, and moral doctrine of the Church;

- \* he rejects same-sex “marriages” and same-sex unions;
- \* he rejects the blessing of same-sex couples in any form;
- \* he rejects LGBT ideology and gender ideology;
- \* he rejects the ordination of women to holy orders;
- \* he rejects abortion and public support for abortion;
- \* he does not live in any public state or relationship contrary to Christian moral doctrine;
- \* he will not publicly teach, promote, defend, or practice anything contrary to the doctrine and discipline of the WCNCC.

6. No one may be admitted to ordination who publicly supports, promotes, defends, or practices:

- \* same-sex “marriages” or same-sex unions;
- \* the blessing of same-sex couples;
- \* LGBT ideology or gender ideology;
- \* the ordination of women to holy orders;
- \* abortion;
- \* public sexual immorality among clergy;
- \* any doctrine or practice contrary to the moral and sacramental teaching of the Church.

7. A candidate who conceals facts relevant to these matters, or who signs the required declaration falsely, shall be considered unworthy of holy orders. If such concealment becomes known after ordination, the competent ecclesiastical authority must take the appropriate canonical measures.

### III. PUBLIC SCANDAL AND CANONICAL DISCIPLINE

8. Some offenses require a canonical inquiry or trial, especially where the facts are unclear, disputed, or not publicly manifest.

9. However, in cases of public scandalous statements or actions, where the offense is manifest and the penalty is already established by law, by this Declaration, or by a previously issued ecclesiastical norm, the competent authority must issue a formal declaratory decree and apply the corresponding penalty without unnecessary delay.

10. If a cleric publicly declares that he lives in open contradiction to Christian moral doctrine, publicly identifies himself with a homosexual lifestyle, publicly presents himself as living in a same-sex relationship, supports same-sex unions, blesses same-sex couples, promotes LGBT ideology or gender ideology, supports the ordination of women to holy orders, or publicly defends abortion, this is not merely a private weakness or an uncertain accusation. It is a public scandal and a violation of ecclesiastical discipline.

11. In such cases, the competent bishop is obliged to act firmly and issue the appropriate decree according to the gravity of the case and the norms of the Church. Such measures may include:

- \* warning;
- \* suspension;
- \* removal from office;
- \* prohibition from public ministry;
- \* deposition from ministry;
- \* dismissal from the clergy;
- \* excommunication;
- \* anathematization.

12. The purpose of these penalties is not personal revenge, hostility, or persecution, but the protection of the faith, the unity of the Church, the dignity of holy orders, the spiritual safety of the faithful, and the good name of the WCNCC before the Church and before the world.

### IV. CANONICAL STRUCTURE AND OFFICIAL TITLES

13. In all official documents of the WCNCC and of its member Churches, the real canonical structure of the Church must be clearly and accurately stated.

14. Bishops and hierarchs must not be identified merely by ethnic, national, or geographical descriptions, but according to their actual canonical office and jurisdiction.

15. When a Metropolitan acts in relation to a Church, diocese, bishop, or cleric subject to his jurisdiction, the document must clearly state:

- \* his proper ecclesiastical title;
- \* his ecclesiastical province;
- \* his canonical authority;
- \* the canonical relationship between the Metropolitan and the subordinate Church, bishop, diocese, or cleric.

16. In all official acts concerning the Polish National Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland, where applicable, it must be clearly stated that this Church belongs to the Ecclesiastical Province of Saint Methodius, and that the Archbishop-Metropolitan of this Province exercises the corresponding canonical authority according to the order of the WCNCC.

17. This is necessary so that no document may create the false impression that one bishop or archbishop is interfering in the internal life of another Church without canonical authority.

18. The same principle must be observed in all ecclesiastical provinces, national Churches, dioceses, missions, and communities of the WCNCC.

## V. ECCLESIASTICAL SUBORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

19. All bishops, clergy, deacons, candidates for holy orders, church workers, and communities must observe the proper order of ecclesiastical subordination.

20. A priest, deacon, candidate for holy orders, or church worker must first address his own Ordinary.

21. He may not bypass his Ordinary and write directly to the Patriarch, the General Secretary, a Metropolitan, or another higher ecclesiastical authority, except in truly exceptional cases, such as:

- \* serious abuse of power;
- \* grave moral scandal;
- \* refusal of the Ordinary to act;
- \* danger to the faith, sacraments, or faithful;
- \* other urgent matters requiring higher intervention.

22. Even in such exceptional cases, the reason for bypassing the Ordinary must be clearly stated.

23. Official appeals to the Patriarch, the General Secretary, a Metropolitan, or any higher ecclesiastical authority must be made in a respectful, orderly, and canonical manner.

24. Repeated aggressive messages, political agitation, manipulation, pressure, disorderly demands, public slander, or attempts to create confusion and division in the Church shall be regarded as violations of ecclesiastical discipline.

## VI. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATION OF CANONICAL ACTS

25. All serious canonical acts must be prepared in a proper ecclesiastical form.

26. Decrees concerning suspension, deposition, dismissal from ministry, excommunication, anathematization, or any other grave canonical penalty must be:

- \* issued in writing;
- \* dated;
- \* signed;
- \* sealed;
- \* addressed to the person concerned;
- \* preserved in the official archives of the competent Church or authority.

27. Where necessary for the protection of the Church, the clergy, and the faithful, such decrees must also be published on the official website of the competent Church or of the WCNCC.

28. This is necessary so that the authenticity of such documents cannot be questioned and so that the faithful may clearly know the official position and disciplinary decisions of the Church.

29. No private image, unofficial copy, screenshot, or informal message can replace a properly issued and, where necessary, publicly published ecclesiastical decree.

## VII. FINAL PROVISIONS

30. All member Churches of the WCNCC are obliged to bring their public statements, official websites, documents, disciplinary acts, and internal procedures into conformity with this Declaration.

31. Bishops and Ordinaries are obliged to ensure that the clergy and candidates for holy orders under their authority understand and observe these norms.

32. Every member Church of the WCNCC must make its public doctrinal and moral position clear, visible, and accessible to the faithful and to the public.

33. This Declaration is issued not for the sake of conflict, but for the sake of truth, order, transparency, and unity.

34. We entrust these norms to the mercy of Almighty God and to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, asking that the Church may remain faithful, pure, courageous, and united in Christ.

35. This Declaration enters into force immediately upon signature and publication.

Given on this day: 5.06.2026

For the World Council of National Catholic Churches,

+ LEONARDO  
Patriarch of the World Council of National Catholic Churches

+ PAVEL  
Metropolitan  
General Secretary of the World Council of National Catholic Churches



✠ LEONARDO  
Patriarcha

✠ Msgr. PAVEL BEGICHEV  
General Secretary

