

The Schism and Excommunication of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X (SSPX)

On July 1, 2026, the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X (SSPX) carried out episcopal ordinations without the permission of the Holy See and against the explicit wishes of the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. This inherently schismatic act carries an automatic excommunication, which the Holy See formally stated in a decree released on July 2, 2026 by the Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith.

The faithful are warned that the sacred ministers of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X administer the sacraments illicitly, and that the Sacrament of penance administered by them and marriages assisted by them are invalid.

The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith has provided norms for the priests of the SSPX to return to full communion with Rome, a summary of which can be found in the related Vatican News article below.

Lay faithful who formally adhere to the SSPX are also to be considered schismatic and excommunicated. However, according to the Dicastery, the excommunication and options for reconciliation of adherents with Rome “concerns the question of imputability, or the degree of subjective responsibility, of lay faithful who have formally adhered to, or who attend, the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X and who ask to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.”

Imputability requires full awareness and deliberate consent to an act or belief. The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith has provided some examples of actions which would be considered proven imputability of a member of the lay faithful and therefore incur excommunication and require formal reconciliation with the Church: “lay people who belong to the Third Order of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X; lay people who habitually participate in celebrations of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X and formally share its doctrinal positions.”

The reconciliation of lay faithful who are imputable requires a signed and dated *Professio fidei* (Profession of Faith) and the *Formula adhaesionis* (Formula of Adherence) to be presented to his or her

Bishop. Those who fall under this category are encouraged to contact their pastor or Bishop's office for further guidance.

Examples of lay faithful who would not be considered imputable include: "lay people who have attended the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X only for liturgical or spiritual reasons; lay people who, while aware of the tensions with the Holy See, do not reject the Magisterium or the authority of the Roman Pontiff." Return to Front Page Page 2 | July 8, 2026 Lay faithful who are considered not imputable may approach "a priest in full communion, with the decision not to attend the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X in the future."

Articles for further reading:

Vatican news article regarding the July 1st schism and excommunication:

https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2026-07/holy-see-decrees-excommunication-lefebrians-consecrations.html?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=catholic_news_ssp_x_consecrates_bishops_in_defiance_of_rome_s_schism_warning&utm_term=2026-07-02

Vatican news article detailing the history of the SSPX:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2026-07/lefebvre-s-schism-repeated-38-years-later-editorial-tornielli.html>

Vatican news article regarding the norms to return to communion with Rome:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2026-07/fraternity-saint-pius-x-ways-to-repent-return-full-communion.html>