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# What are the Statutes? Why are they so important for the Prelature?

Questions and answers about the Motu Proprio "Ad charisma tuendum" and the Extraordinary General Congress of Opus Dei.

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The Code of Canon Law foresees that the Holy See, at the very moment of the creation of a personal prelature, gives the statutes which are the

norms defining the scope of the prelate, the particular pastoral mission that justifies its existence, and the determinations of its form of government. They are, therefore, together with the pontifical document that establishes them, the constitutional norms of the entity. The Statutes of the Prelature of Opus Dei, in addition to defining the mission (the furthering of holiness in the middle of the world) and declaring its universal character, contain a description of the charism – “the gift of the Spirit received by Saint Josemaría Escrivá” of which Pope Francis speaks – and the means by which the faithful of Opus Dei should live their mission. The Statutes describe the organization of the Prelature’s government. In addition to the provision for vicars and councils that directly assist the Prelate, the Statutes dictate that the exercise of government is to be carried out following two guidelines

explicitly desired by Saint Josemaría:  
collegiality in decision-making and  
an important participation of the  
laity (men and women).

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