

Questions & Answers about the Adaptation of the Statutes of Opus Dei

Questions and answers about the process of adapting the Statutes requested by Pope Francis. Updated on 11 June 2025.

06/11/2025

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- Why did the Holy See ask for the Statutes to be adapted?
- Who has the authority to modify the Statutes of Opus Dei?
- What role did the General Congress in April 2025 play in relation to the Statutes?
- How has the process of adapting the Statutes unfolded? What are the next steps?
- Will any more information about the Statutes be shared soon?
- How important is juridical structure in the life of an institution?
- Some observers interpreted the new regulations on personal prelatures as restricting their influence. Is there any truth to that interpretation?

- Recently, there have been rumours about a supposed ultimatum and a letter from Pope Leo XIV. Is there any truth to them?
- How might the eventual modifications to the Statutes affect members of the Work in their daily lives?
- Other questions and answers

Why did the Holy See ask for the Statutes to be adapted?

The revision of the Statutes of Opus Dei is part of a broader reform of the Roman Curia. In 2022, Pope Francis promulgated the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*, which restructured the Roman Curia and emphasized its missionary service. As part of this reform, the responsibilities of various Dicasteries

were reorganized; among other changes, the Dicastery for the Clergy assumed oversight of personal prelatures. A few months later, Pope Francis issued the motu proprio *Ad charisma tuendum*, followed in 2023 by another motu proprio titled “On the modification of canons 295–296 concerning personal prelatures.” The Statutes need to be aligned with the provisions of these two motu proprio. *Ad charisma tuendum* states that “the proper Statutes of the Prelature of Opus Dei shall be suitably adapted upon the proposal of the Prelature itself, to be approved by the competent bodies of the Apostolic See.”

Who has the authority to modify the Statutes of Opus Dei?

The authority to modify the Statutes or to introduce new provisions rests with the Holy See, either at its own

initiative or at the request of the General Congress of Opus Dei (cf. Statutes, no. 181). When the initiative for the change is the Prelature's, to guarantee the juridical certainty of the need for these changes, the Statutes stipulate that they be proposed and ratified in three General Congresses (no. 181, § 3). In this case, since it is the Holy See that has requested the proposed modifications, the procedure and timeline established in no. 181, §3 do not apply.

What role did the General Congress in April 2025 play in relation to the Statutes?

At the suggestion of the Dicastery, the draft of the Statutes was to be presented to the congress members, as the Prelate announced. However, the *sede vacante* meant that the General Congress, which had been convened eight months in advance,

was limited to renewing the corresponding positions, as the Prelate explained in his message on 21 April.

With regard to the Statutes, the congress members gave their positive opinion so that the Prelate, with his new councils, could submit the proposal he considered most appropriate, taking all the suggestions already received from the Extraordinary General Congress in 2023 and from the prior consultation of all members of Opus Dei into account.

How has the process of adapting the Statutes unfolded? What are the next steps?

The process has unfolded in two stages. The first, in 2023, involved a general consultation with all members of Opus Dei regarding

possible adjustments to the Statutes in light of *Ad charisma tuendum*.

Based on the suggestions received, a draft was prepared and submitted to the Extraordinary Congress convened for this purpose by Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz in April 2023.

Following the publication of a second motu proprio in August 2023 (“On the modification of canons 295–296 concerning personal prelatures”), a second stage began to study further revisions. This phase involved the formation of two working groups of experts: one from the Dicastery for the Clergy and the other from the Prelature of Opus Dei. The approach was based on two guiding principles: first, filial obedience to the directives of ecclesiastical authority, and second, safeguarding the charism of Opus Dei, as Pope Francis urged in the introduction to *Ad charisma tuendum*.

After a series of study sessions and working meetings between both parties, the Prelature submitted a proposed version of the Statutes with the relevant modifications. Thus, with after the Dicastery's observations, the final proposal was to be worked on at the Ordinary Congress. However, due to the Pope Francis' death, the Congress's task was limited to carrying out the necessary appointments. When Pope Leo was elected, following the process as originally planned, the Prelate and his new central councils finished preparing the draft Statutes, which were submitted to the Holy See on 11 June. The next step now rests with the authorities of the Apostolic See.

Will any more information about the Statutes be shared soon?

Once the Statutes have been approved by the Holy See, the updated text and ample explanatory material will be made available on the website. Understandably, however, the Prelature cannot share details before the Statutes are approved by the Pope, who is the competent legislator. Therefore, there are no plans for a public release of the final proposed modifications to the Statutes by Opus Dei; the matter will be entrusted entirely to the Holy See.

How important is juridical structure in the life of an institution?

Juridical structure is important for any institution within the Church.

Opus Dei can be viewed both from a juridical and a charismatic perspective. One of the purposes of canon law is to safeguard the charism and to establish the most suitable conditions for it to bear fruit for the good of the whole Church, contributing to evangelisation in accordance with the particular characteristics of its charism.

Some observers interpreted the new regulations on personal prelatures as restricting their influence. Is there any truth to that interpretation?

Pope Francis was asked this very question in a book-length interview. He responded: “I do not agree. It is a typically worldly interpretation, alien to the religious dimension. For one thing, Opus Dei – which remains a prelature – is not the only one to

have undergone a reorganisation during my pontificate. I am thinking, for example, of Communion and Liberation, the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Focolare Movement. Opus Dei used to report to the Congregation for Bishops, but now it will report to the Congregation for the Clergy, as is the case for personal prelatures. This means that the report on its work will no longer be five-yearly, but annual. As for the fact that whoever is at the head will no longer be promoted to the episcopate, the decision – as the decree clearly states – is intended to reinforce a form of government based not so much on hierarchical authority, but above all on the charism which, in the case of Opus Dei, involves seeking sanctification through work and family and social commitments" (*El pastor*, Sergio Rubin and Francesca Ambrogetti, Ediciones B, March 2023, our translation).

Recently, there have been rumours about a supposed ultimatum and a letter from Pope Leo XIV. Is there any truth to them?

We clarified at the time that a news report falsely claiming that Opus Dei had received a letter from Pope Leo XIV concerning the process of adapting the Statutes was untrue. The process of adapting the Statutes has proceeded without interruption, in a spirit of trust and unity with the Holy See. A brief pause was taken only during the *sede vacante* period, out of respect for the moment. In his audience with Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz, the Prelate informed Pope Leo XIV about the status of the Statutes and the intention to submit them in the near future.

How might the eventual modifications to the Statutes affect members of the Work in their daily lives?

We will only know the effects of the modifications after the Holy See issued the updated Statutes, but in members' daily lives, the aim is precisely to safeguard the essential elements of the charism.

The motu proprio requesting these modifications is a call to become more deeply aware of the potential of Opus Dei's charism in the Church's mission. As the Holy Father says, "In accordance with the gift of the Spirit received by Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, the Prelature of Opus Dei, with the guidance of its Prelate, carries out the task of spreading the call to holiness in the world, through the sanctification of work and family and social commitments."

Being reminded of this by the Pope himself will encourage the faithful of Opus Dei all the more to deepen their understanding of the charism and to discern, with the light of the Holy Spirit, how to incarnate it in new situations in our world.

Other questions and answers

About the motu proprio *Ad charisma tuendum* ([here](#))

About the motu proprio regarding personal prelatures ([here](#))
