

Il card. Basilio Hume, Ordinario di Westminster (Inghilterra), precisa le condizioni da osservarsi dai fedeli della sua diocesi qualora intendano entrare a far parte dell'Opus Dei.

STATEMENT BY CARDINAL BASIL HUME
GUIDELINES FOR « OPUS DEI » IN WESTMINSTER DIOCESE

For a considerable time I have studied carefully certain public criticisms made about the activities of *Opus Dei* in Britain and I have also examined the correspondence addressed to me on the same subject. Some of these letters have been critical; some have expressed sincere admiration for the personal qualities of members of *Opus Dei* and appreciation of their influence. I have also had meetings with those responsible for *Opus Dei* in this country.

Opus Dei is a movement of priests and lay-people within the Church which has the official approval of the Holy See. However, in so far as it is established within the diocese of Westminster, I have a responsibility, as bishop, to ensure the welfare of the whole local Church as well as the best interests of *Opus Dei* itself.

As a result of this study I have made known to those responsible for *Opus Dei* in this country what I consider to be the right recommendations for the future activity of its members within the diocese of Westminster. I now wish

to make public these four recommendations. Each of them arises from one fundamental principle: that the procedures and activities of an international movement, present in a particular diocese, may well have to be modified prudently in the light of the cultural differences and legitimate local customs and standards of the society within which that international body seeks to work.

These recommendations must not be seen as a criticism of the integrity of the members of *Opus Dei* or of their zeal in promoting their apostolate. I am making them public in order to meet understandable anxieties and to encourage sound pastoral practice within the diocese.

The four recommendations are as follows:

1. No person under eighteen years of age should be allowed to take any vow or long-term commitment in association with *Opus Dei*.
2. It is essential that young people who wish to join *Opus Dei* should first discuss the matter with their parents or legal guardians. If there are, by exception, good reasons for not approaching their families, these reasons should, in every case, be discussed with the local bishop or his delegate.
3. While it is accepted that those who join *Opus Dei* take on the proper duties and responsibilities of membership, care must be taken to respect the freedom of the individual; first, the freedom of the individual to join or to leave the organisation without undue pressure being exerted; secondly, the freedom of the individual at any stage to choose his or her own spiritual director, whether or not the director is a member of *Opus Dei*.
4. Initiatives and activities of *Opus Dei*, within the diocese of Westminster, should carry a clear indication of their sponsorship and management.

I am confident that these four guidelines will in no way hinder *Opus Dei* in the apostolic work to which it has committed itself, but will help it to adapt to the traditional spirituality and instincts of our people.

I will naturally remain in close touch with priests and members of *Opus Dei* within the diocese of Westminster.

2nd December 1981.

Questo documento è stato pubblicizzato dalla stampa internazionale e a me è stato possibile ricontrollare l'esattezza di alcune espressioni grazie a una copia fornitami direttamente dalla Curia di Westminster.