



SECRETARIA STATUS

The Vatican, 12th December 2016

Prot. No. 534/SdS/2016

Your Eminent Highness,

With reference to the unhappy events, which have affected the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in the last few days, I feel compelled to inform you, on behalf of – and by specific request of – the Holy Father, Pope Francis, that the only instructions given by him are those that were communicated in writing on 1st December last, in the letter addressed to Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke, *Patronus* of the Order.

In particular, regarding the use and dissemination of methods and means contrary to the moral law, His Holiness asked that dialogue be the approach used to address and resolve potential problems. He never mentioned, conversely, expelling anyone.

I do hope that, notwithstanding the unpleasant and perilous turn taken by events, it might still be possible, by way of dialogue, to find a prudent way forward that is advantageous for all: for the Church, for the Order and for the individuals involved.

I accompany this wish with my prayers, and assure you of my high esteem and consideration

Yours sincerely,

Pietro Card. Parolin
*Secretary of State
of His Holiness*

His Most Eminent Highness
Fra' Matthew FESTING
Prince and Grand Master
Sovereign Military Order of Malta
PALAZZO DI MALTA