



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH  
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



August 8, 2014

Bishop Olson Statement Regarding Ecclesia Dei's Closing  
of Fisher More College Matter

On May 15, 2014 I received a letter dated May 8, 2014 from Archbishop Guido Pozzo, Secretary for the Pontifical Commission of Ecclesia Dei, inquiring as to the reasons for my pastoral decision of February 24, 2014 to remove the past permission of my predecessor, Bishop Kevin Vann, for the Extraordinary Form of the Mass to be celebrated bi-weekly and not on Sunday at Fisher More College. The inquiry was prompted by a formal request of "recourse" from Fisher More College after the College formally contested on March 4, 2014 my administrative act of February 24, 2014. I responded to Archbishop Pozzo's inquiry in a lengthy missive dated May 30, 2014.

In summary of my missive to Archbishop Pozzo, it remains my judgment that the limited scope of the previous permission granted by Bishop Vann had indeed been, in effect, ignored and abused by the administration of Fisher More College. My assessment regarding this matter remains also accompanied by several ecclesiological and pastoral concerns that I perceived to be attached circumstantially to the celebration of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass at Fisher More College. These judgments informed my pastoral decision to remove permission to celebrate the Extraordinary Form (since even the limited scope of the previous permission for bi-weekly daily celebration was summarily ignored by the college's administration). I acted in accord with my responsibility as the bishop as articulated in church law "to direct, to promote, and to guard the entire liturgical life" in the Church entrusted to me. (See **Canon 835, Code of Canon Law**). This responsibility has been further emphasized for the purpose of church unity by Pope St. John Paul II in Paragraph 5 of his *Motu Proprio, Ecclesia Dei*, "To the bishops especially it pertains, by reason of their pastoral mission, to exercise the important duty of a clear-sighted vigilance full of charity and firmness, so that this fidelity might be everywhere safeguarded."

On July 24, 2014 I received a letter dated July 17, 2014 from Archbishop Pozzo informing me that the Pontifical Commission, Ecclesia Dei, considers the matter involving the celebration of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass at Fisher More College to be closed. It is my sincere hope that all of us in the Diocese of Fort Worth might now be able to move past this recent unpleasantness for the sake of the mission of the Church. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Diocese of Fort Worth is considering, as part of the development of an overall pastoral plan, the establishment of an independent parish devoted to the Extraordinary Form and entrusted to capable priests.