

**Special Statutes  
for the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology  
(abbreviated as TST - Faculty of Catholic Theology  
of Tilburg University)**

January 3, 2022

The Chancellor,

- having come to the conclusion in accordance with the Congregation for Catholic Education that, in view of the number of students and the number of qualified teachers, there should be only one canonically recognized Roman Catholic Faculty of Theology in the Netherlands;
- having noted that the Faculty of Catholic Theology of Tilburg University (hereafter: 'the Faculty of Catholic Theology') has been established canonically in Utrecht by the Holy See on January 1, 2007 *ad experimentum* for five years and definitely on January 1, 2012;
- having established that the Dutch Bishops' Conference has agreed that the Faculty of Catholic Theology is the only full academic theological institute in the Netherlands that can grant the canonical degrees of Baccalaureate, Licentiate and Doctorate in Catholic theology;
- having concluded that the Dutch Bishops' Conference has the goal to deepen the cooperation with the Faculty of Catholic Theology and by doing so to enable this Faculty to achieve its mission to contribute to the Church by its research and ecclesiastical educational work;
- having concluded that the Dutch Bishops' Conference has the intention to come to a closer cooperation between the Faculty of Catholic Theology and the Dutch seminaries and to investigate the possibilities to come to a future affiliation with all due respect for each other's function and mission;
- recognizing that it is the Chancellor who with regard to the administration of the Faculty of Catholic Theology is allowed to issue Special Statutes on the basis of the requirements of canon law;
- recognizing that regarding the Faculty of Catholic Theology these Special Statutes are to be considered the supreme rules, but that, as far as civil affairs are concerned, compulsory civil law and the rules concerning the public funding of the Faculty of Catholic Theology are to be followed;
- having noted that, according to art. 89.1 of the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (hereafter: VG), he should issue a revised version of the Special Statutes of the Faculty of Catholic Theology, before December 8, 2019, to the Congregation for Catholic Education for approval;

decrees,

after consultation with the Board of Governors of Tilburg University (hereafter: the Board of Governors) and after having consulted the Dutch Bishops' Conference;

having received the approval of the Special Statutes of the Congregation for Catholic Education in its decree of December 20, 2021;

the following definite Special Statutes for the Faculty of Catholic Theology, canonically established in Utrecht, in agreement with the norms of the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (hereafter: VG) and its *Norms of Application* (hereafter: NoA).

## **I. Nature and Goal of the Faculty of Catholic Theology**

### **Art. 1**

- 1.1 The Faculty of Catholic Theology, which is a Faculty of Tilburg University, a Roman Catholic university, is responsible for promoting academic theological education and research, in accordance with the articles 3, 11 and 69-76 VG.
- 1.2 The formation provided by the Faculty of Catholic Theology is open to those preparing for ecclesiastical offices.

## **II. General Norms**

- Art. 2 The determination and emendation of the Regulations of the Faculty of Catholic Theology can be made by the Dean but must be approved by both the Executive Board of Tilburg University (hereafter: the Executive Board) and the Chancellor.
- Art. 3 By virtue of the authority granted by the Holy See, the Faculty of Catholic Theology has the right to confer academic degrees with canonical effects (cf. VG, arts. 45-51 and 74).
- Art. 4 The education and research offered by the Faculty of Catholic Theology will be in accordance with the applicable canonical determinations.

## **III The Chancellor**

### **Art. 5**

- 5.1 The Archbishop of Utrecht is the Chancellor of the Faculty of Catholic Theology. The Chancellor has all the rights and duties due to him according to the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* and due to the accompanying *Norms of Application*.
- 5.2 The Chancellor represents the Holy See to the Faculty of Catholic Theology and, equally, the Faculty to the Holy See. He promotes the continuation and progress of the Faculty, and he fosters its communion among all members of the Faculty and its communion with the local and universal Church (cf. VG, art. 12 and NoA, art. 9.1 and 9.2).

- 5.3 The Chancellor ensures that Catholic doctrine is integrally followed and enforces the faithful implementation of these Special Statutes and of the prescriptions of the Holy See (cf. *NoA*, art. 9.1).

Art. 6

The duties of the Chancellor are (cf. *NoA*, art. 9):

- to give to or take from the teachers the *missio canonica* or the *venia docendi* (cf. *NoA* art. 9.5);
- to propose to the Congregation for Catholic Education the names of teachers for whom the *nihil obstat* of the Holy See is to be requested, of the candidate whom the Executive Board intends to appoint as Dean and of those upon whom an honorary Doctorate in Theology will be conferred (cf. *NoA* art. 9.3 and 9.6);
- to inform the Congregation for Catholic Education about more important matters and to send a quinquennial report on the Faculty of Catholic Theology to the Congregation for Catholic Education (cf. *NoA* art. 9.7);
- to receive the profession of faith of the Dean (cf. *NoA* art. 9.4);
- to ratify the determination and emendation of the Faculty Regulations and the Examination Regulations after having received the approval by the Holy See. This ratification does not concern changes due to changes in Dutch law or to technical and administrative adaptations.

Art. 7

- 7.1 In view of the structure of the Faculty of Catholic Theology, the Chancellor may appoint after consultation with the Bishops' Conference a Vice-Chancellor from among the bishops of the Bishops' Conference. The appointment of a Vice-Chancellor has to be approved by the Congregation for Catholic Education. The Vice-Chancellor, if one has been appointed, has distinct responsibilities, and cooperates closely with the Chancellor.

- 7.2 The Vice-Chancellor assists the Chancellor and exercises his advisory and executive tasks in good consultation with him (cf. *VG*, art. 13.2).

**IV. Academic Authorities**

- Art. 8 The Faculty of Catholic Theology has the following governors: the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor if one has been appointed, and the Dean.

Art. 9

9.1 The duties of the Dean are, among other things (cf. NoA, arts. 16 and 17):

- to be responsible for governing the Faculty of Catholic Theology with regard to theological teaching and research;
- to promote the progress of the Faculty of Catholic Theology, its cooperation with other Faculties of Tilburg University and its integration in Tilburg University;
- to be responsible for the ordinary administration of the Faculty of Catholic Theology in accordance with university regulations;
- to keep the Chancellor and the Executive Board informed of important matters concerning these Special Statutes;
- to update electronically, at least once a year, the data-base of the Congregation for Catholic Education (cf. NoA, art. 17.6).

9.2 The Dean is (re-)appointed, suspended or dismissed by the Executive Board. The Dean is appointed for a period of four years, unless there are reasons to apply another term; reappointment for another period is possible without limit. At least six months before the term of appointment of the Dean ends, the Chancellor consults the Executive Board about the reappointment of the acting Dean or the appointment of a new Dean. If the Chancellor has reasons for not approving the reappointment of the Dean for another term, he will communicate this to the Executive Board at least six months before the term of appointment of the Dean ends.

9.3 If the appointment of a new Dean is at hand, an Appointment Advisory Committee is installed according to the applicable rulings of Tilburg University. The Chancellor may appoint (after consultation with the Bishops' Conference) one member of the Appointment Advisory Committee.

9.4 If the Executive Board on advice of the Appointment Advisory Committee decides to have a preliminary procedure with one or more candidates, the Chancellor may propose one or more candidates for the position of Dean. He does this through his nominee in the Appointment Advisory Committee.

9.5 If the Chancellor makes known through his nominee in the Appointment Advisory Committee that he has serious and reasoned objections against a certain candidate in the preliminary procedure, the candidate may only be invited for further talks in the procedure in consultation with the Chancellor.

9.6 If in the normal procedure the Chancellor through his nominee in the Appointment Advisory Committee makes known that he has serious and reasoned objections against one or more of the selected candidates this candidate(s) may only be invited for further talks in the procedure in consultation with the Chancellor.

- 9.7 The Dean is to be appointed by the Executive Board in accordance with relevant university regulations, which in this regard should comply with these Special Statutes (cf. VG, arts. 16-20; NoA, arts. 13-17). This appointment has to be civilly approved by the Board of Governors.
- 9.8 The (re-)appointment of the Dean has to be ecclesiastically approved by the Chancellor.
- 9.9 The (re-)appointment of the Dean has to be ecclesiastically confirmed by the Congregation for Catholic Education (cf. VG, art. 18), at the request of the Chancellor (cf. NoA, arts. 9.3).
- 9.10 The Dean makes his confession of faith before the Chancellor (cf. NoA, art. 9.4).

## **V. The Teachers**

Art. 11 The minimal number of chairs and the disciplines concerned must correspond to the compulsory subjects mentioned in the *Ratio Nationalis Neerlandica* for the formation of priests.

Art. 12 The academic personnel consists of (cf. VG, arts. 22 and 23; NoA, art. 18):

- Professors;
- Extraordinary professors;
- Permanent academic staff;
- Temporary academic staff.

Art. 13

13.1 To be appointed a tenured lecturer (as a professor or as a permanent attached lecturer) it is required that the candidate (cf. VG, art. 25.1):

- is distinguished by wealth of knowledge, witness of Christian and ecclesial life, and a sense of responsibility;
- has a suitable doctorate or equivalent title or exceptional and singular scientific accomplishment;
- shows documentary proof of suitability for doing scientific research, especially by a published dissertation;
- demonstrates teaching ability.

13.2 Teachers are appointed with due observance of the academic requirements set by Tilburg University.

13.3 To enhance a closer cooperation between the Dutch Seminaries and the Faculty of Catholic Theology, within the framework of investigating the possibilities of a future affiliation of them with this Faculty, the Chancellor may appoint (after consultation with the Bishops' Conference) one member of the Appointment Advisory Committee for teachers. The proposed member should have the necessary academic qualifications and be preferably a teacher – and

if possible a professor - the discipline for which the vacancy is published.

- 13.4 The proposed member as mentioned in article 13.3 of these Special Statutes has to obey the rules of confidentiality applicable to the work of the Appointment Advisory Committees of Tilburg University. He may, however, in confidentiality consult with the Chancellor. If these rules are violated the chairman of the Appointment Advisory Committee can refuse him further admittance.
- 13.5 Through the member of the Appointment Advisory Committee for teachers, appointed by him, the Chancellor may propose candidate teachers. These candidates will be admitted to the regular procedure of selection and its criteria.
- 13.6 The requirements for appointing tenured teachers are in proportionate measure to be applied to appointments of temporary teachers (cf. VG, art. 25.2).
- 13.7 A temporary appointment to replace a suspended teacher can only be converted into a tenured appointment after all possibilities for civil and canonical appeals against the suspension have been exhausted.

#### Art. 14

- 14.1 All teachers of every rank must be marked by an upright life, integrity of doctrine, and devotion to duty, so that they can effectively contribute to the proper goals of a canonically recognized faculty. Should any of these requirements subsequently cease to be, the teachers must be removed from their post, observing the established procedures (cf. VG, art. 26.1).
- 14.2 Those who teach matters touching on faith and morals are to be conscious of their duty to carry out their work in full communion with the authentic Magisterium of the Church, above all, with that of the Roman Pontiff (cf. VG, art. 26.2).

#### Art. 15

- 15.1 For all teachers a *missio canonica* or a *venia docendi* is required.
- 15.2 All teachers of every rank who teach disciplines concerning faith or morals must be presented to the Chancellor or the delegated vice-Chancellor in order to receive, after making their profession of faith, a *missio canonica* (cf. VG, art. 27.1).
- 15.3 The other teachers must be presented to the Chancellor or the delegated vice-Chancellor in order to receive a *venia docendi* (cf. VG, art. 27.1).
- 15.4 Non-catholic teachers, co-opted according to the norms of competent ecclesiastical authority, require permission to teach from the Chancellor (cf. NoA, art. 20.1; Directory for the Application of



Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (1993), nn. 191 ff.: AAS 85 (1993), 1107 ff.).

Art. 16

16.1 A *nihil obstat* is required

- for all teachers before they are given a tenured position (cf. VG, art. 27.2) and
- for all professors and professors occupying endowed chairs before they are actually appointed as such (cf. VG art. 27.2).

A *nihil obstat* is not required for academic personnel mentioned in article 15.4 of these Special Statutes.

16.2 The Executive Board notifies the Chancellor of the names of the candidates as referred to in this article, the Chancellor requests a declaration of *nihil obstat* from the Congregation for Catholic Education (cf VG, art. 27.2).

Art. 17

17.1 With due observance of the provisions set out in articles 13, 14 and 15 of these Special Statutes, the Executive Board appoints professors.

17.2 Academic personnel in other ranks than professors is appointed, on behalf of the Executive Board, by the Dean.

17.3 The appointment as professor can, in principle, only take place after at least three years teaching experience, unless the Chancellor decides to waive this requirement in a particular case (cf. NoA, art. 22).

17.4 Teachers are also the professors occupying endowed chairs in the Faculty of Catholic Theology. The Executive Board will approve the appointment of professors on endowed chairs on condition that (1) the Board of Governors will issue a certificate of no objection and on the condition that (2) the Chancellor after receiving the *nihil obstat* confers the *missio canonica* or the *venia docendi* on the candidate.

Art. 18 *Suspension and dismissal on grounds of or pursuant to Dutch Law* (cf. NoA, art. 24.2)

If for legal reasons the Executive Board intends to suspend or dismiss academic personnel, the Chancellor in due time is informed about his.

Art. 19 *Suspension or removal of a teacher on ecclesiastical grounds at the Dean's initiative* (cf. NoA, art 24.1)

19.1 The Dean is empowered to recommend the Executive Board to suspend or dismiss a member of the academic staff from the Faculty of Catholic Theology for ecclesiastical reasons if the person involved:

- does severe injury to Catholic teaching,
- or acts in contradiction to Church discipline,



- or neglects his duties as teacher or contravenes the norms of moral conduct.
  - 19.2 Such a recommendation is made only after the person involved is heard and efforts to settle the matter have failed. The Dean will keep the Chancellor informed.
  - 19.3 The Executive Board informs the Chancellor about the intended decision and offers him the opportunity to present his views.
  - 19.4 In case the Executive Board will not follow the view presented by the Chancellor, he will be informed accordingly, before the decision is made known. The Chancellor then has the possibility to start the procedure described in article 20 of these Special Statutes.
  - 19.5 The person involved may at any time appeal to the Chancellor who immediately sets in motion a procedure which closely resembles the procedure described in the articles 19 and 20 of these Special Statutes.
- Art. 20 *Suspension or removal of a teacher on ecclesiastical grounds at the Chancellor's initiative (cf. NoA art. 24.1)*
- 20.1 With due observance of the provisions set out in the paragraphs 2 – 10 of this article the Chancellor can call to account a member of the academic staff and may, temporarily or permanently withdraw the *missio canonica* or *venia docendi* (cf. VG, art. 30.b; NoA, art. 24), if the person involved
    - does severe injury to Catholic teaching,
    - or acts in contradiction to Church discipline,
    - or neglects his duties as teacher or contravenes the norms of moral conduct.
  - 20.2 The Chancellor informs in writing the person involved about objections he has on the basis of any of the grounds mentioned in article 20.1 of these Special Statutes. The person concerned has one month to deliver a written response to these objections.
  - 20.3 If the written response referred to in article 20.2 of these Special Statutes does not eliminate the objections, the Chancellor hears the person concerned. The latter may have the assistance of an advisor. The Chancellor in due time informs the Executive Board and the Dean and keeps them informed during the whole procedure.
  - 20.4 If the Chancellor considers the grounds sufficient, he gives the person concerned a written and motivated warning and informs the Executive Board about this warning.
  - 20.5 If, after having received the warning, the person concerned continues with the censured speech or behaviour, the Chancellor can inform him that he is considering withdrawing the *missio canonica* or *venia docendi*.

- 20.6 In this case the Chancellor forms a three-member Advisory Committee. One member is appointed on the recommendation of the person concerned.
- 20.7 The Advisory Committee informs the person involved in writing down the objections regarding him. A written response is possible.
- 20.8 The person is then examined by the Advisory Committee, where he may have the assistance of an advisor.
- 20.9 The Advisory Committee informs the Chancellor in writing of its opinion supported by reasons.
- 20.10 If the Chancellor, based on the procedure described in this article, considers the grounds sufficient, he can withdraw the *missio canonica* or *venia docendi* of the person involved.
- 20.11 The Executive Board will suspend the teacher from the Faculty of Catholic Theology in case the *missio canonica* or *venia docendi* is temporarily withdrawn, and will dismiss this person from the Faculty when the *missio canonica* or *venia docendi* is permanently withdrawn.
- 20.12 The teacher can appeal to the Holy See (cf. NoA art. 24.2). During this appeal the teacher remains suspended from the Faculty of Catholic Theology.

Art. 21 *Immediate suspension*

- 21.1 If the Chancellor, for the well-being of the students and the faithful, is of the opinion that the objections are such that immediate action is necessary, he can forbid the teacher with immediate effect to teach at the Faculty of Catholic Theology while simultaneously asking the Executive Board for a temporary suspension of the teacher from this Faculty.
- 21.2 Immediately after that this request for temporary suspension has been made, the procedure described in art. 19 or 20 of these Special Statutes is started (cf. NoA, art. 24).
- 21.3 The teacher involved may appeal to the Holy See (cf. NoA, art. 24.2). During this appeal the teacher will remain being suspended from the Faculty of Catholic Theology.

**VI Students**

Art. 22

- 22.1 The students can, according to the manner determined in the Faculty Regulations, contribute to the common good of the Faculty of Catholic Theology (cf. VG, art. 34).
- 22.2 The Executive Board can refuse a student to enrol or terminate his/her registration if there is reasonable fear that the student concerned will damage the Catholic basis of the Faculty of Catholic Theology.

- 22.3 Refugees, exiles and persons in similar situations who lack the normal documentation required can take an admission test (cf. 'Rules and Regulations for Colloquium Doctum University Entrance Examination Tilburg School of Catholic Theology') (cf. VG, art. 32.3).

## **VII Support personnel**

- Art. 23 Tilburg University provides for the appointment of sufficient staff to support the Faculty of Catholic Theology.

## **VIII Plan of Studies of the Canonical Degrees**

### **Art. 24**

- 24.1 In determining the Plan of Studies, consideration is taken of:
- articles 37-44 and 74-76 VG.
  - articles 30-34, 53-59 and 70 NoA.
- 24.2 The Plan of Studies consists of the first, second and third cycles.
- 24.3 The Plan of Studies of the first cycle (cf. art. 24.4 of these Special Statutes) and the second cycle (cf. art. 24.5 of these Special Statutes) as determined by the Dean keeping in mind the provisions of art. 24.1 of these Special Statutes is confirmed by the Chancellor after having received the approval of the Holy See.
- 24.4 The duration of the first cycle is five years; if pastoral training is included in the cycle, the duration is six years. The cycle may be completed, after a comprehensive examination or an equivalent test (cf. NoA, art. 58), with the canonical degree of Baccalaureate, corresponding to the Baccalaureate within the European framework of academic degrees.
- 24.5 After having completed the Baccalaureate, the student may obtain a Licentiate, corresponding to the Master within the European framework of academic degrees (cf. the Bologna process), after two years of specialization.
- 24.6 The third cycle consists in the autonomous writing of a dissertation under the guidance of a professor. The cycle closes with the canonical Doctorate, comparable with the civil law Doctorate.
- 24.7 Apart from the canonical degree in theology, the Faculty may provide an academic degree for teaching religion or for practical pastoral work following ecclesiastical norms by offering a program for obtaining a canonical degree of 'Religious Sciences', equivalent to civil degrees of theology, i.e. a Baccalaureate of 'Religious Sciences' after three years and a Licentiate of 'Religious Sciences' after three more years, including a pastoral training year, equivalent to a master of civil theology (the so-called second course of studies, indicated in VG, art. 85-87).

## **IX      Examinations and Degree Conferral**

### **Art. 25**

- 25.1 Examinations in the Faculty of Catholic Theology are regulated by separate regulations.
- 25.2 The Examination Regulations stipulate which subjects are required of all students, how the requirements can be met regarding practical work and seminars, how examination results are determined and what programs of study can be followed for the examinations mentioned in articles 24.4-24.6 of these Special Statutes.
- 25.3 Determination and alterations to these regulations must be confirmed by the Chancellor after the approval of the Holy See.

### **Art. 26**

- 26.1 The conferral of degrees is subject to the stipulations of canon law maintaining the competence of Tilburg University.
- 26.2 A printed copy of the published doctoral dissertation is must be sent to the Congregation for Catholic Education by the Dean (cf. *NoA*, art. 37).
- 26.3 The conferral of an honorary Doctorate in theology requires the consent of the Chancellor, who gives this only after having obtained the *nihil obstat* from the Holy See (cf. *VG*, art. 51; *NoA*, arts. 9.6 and 40).

## **X.      Didactic Materials**

- Art. 27 The Executive Board provides the necessary didactic materials required by the Faculty of Catholic Theology.
- Art. 28 The Faculty of Catholic Theology maintains an adequate and updated library.

## **XI.     Economic Affairs**

- Art. 29 The economic affairs of the Faculty of Catholic Theology are administered by or in the name of the Executive Board.

## **XII     Cooperation of the Faculty of Catholic Theology with other institutes**

### **Art. 30**

- 30.1 Other institutes, such as seminaries or diocesan or religious theological study centres, may be affiliated with the Faculty of Catholic Theology for the purpose of being able to grant the ecclesiastical bachelor's degree. For this the approval of the

Congregation for Catholic Education is required and the conditions of the same Congregation have to be fulfilled (cf. VG, art. 63). The regulations of Tilburg University have to be respected as well.

- 30.2 Other institutes, such as seminaries or diocesan or religious theological study centres, may be aggregated to or incorporated into the Faculty of Catholic Theology for the purposes of also granting higher academic degrees. For this the approval of the Congregation for Catholic Education is required and the conditions of the same Congregation have to be fulfilled (cf. VG, art. 64). The regulations of Tilburg University have to be respected as well.
- 30.3 Higher Institutes of Religious Sciences can (according VG, art. 65) be linked with the Faculty of Catholic Theology by concluding a contract of collaboration.<sup>1</sup>

### **XIII. Final Provisions**

#### **Art. 31**

- 31.1 Emendations to these Special Statutes can be made on the Chancellor's initiative.
- 31.2 A change of these Special Statutes is decreed by the Chancellor after consultation with the Executive Board.
- 31.3 Every change of these Special Statutes is decreed by the Chancellor and has to be submitted for approval to the Congregation for Catholic Education (cf. VG, art. 7).

Art. 32 These Special Statutes take effect immediately after the Chancellor's notifying the Executive Board of the Congregation for Catholic Education's approval.

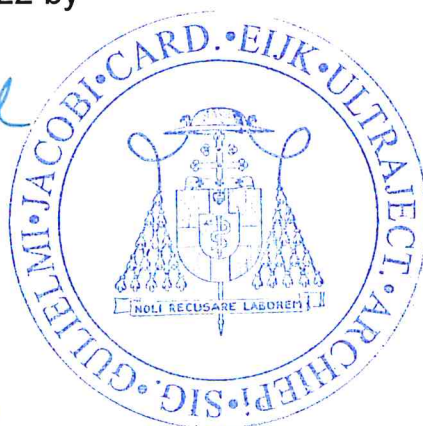
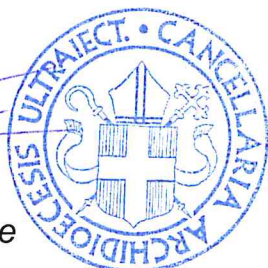
Enacted in Utrecht on January 3, 2022 by

*W. J. C. Eijk*

+ Willem Jacobus Cardinal Eijk  
Chancellor

*R. L. A. Knoren*

R.L.A. Knoren  
Notary *pro hac vice*



<sup>1</sup> Linked (cf. VG art. 65) to the Faculty of Catholic Theology is the *Fontys Institute of Professional Theological Studies*, which was canonically erected on July 15, 2010.