



Catholic Diocese of Columbus

DECREE the *Ordo Viduarum* (ORDER of WIDOWS) in the DIOCESE of COLUMBUS

Office of the Bishop
614 • 224 • 2251

WHEREAS, the diocesan Bishop has all the ordinary, proper, and immediate power required for the exercise of his pastoral office, except in those matters which the law or a decree of the Supreme Pontiff reserves to the supreme authority or to some other ecclesiastical authority (c. 381);

WHEREAS, the diocesan Bishop must in a very special way foster vocations to the various ministries and to consecrated life, having a special concern for priestly and missionary vocations (c. 385);

WHEREAS, there as yet does not exist in the Universal Law for the Latin Church an order of widows, and diocesan Bishops are to endeavor to discern new gifts of consecrated life which the Holy Spirit entrusts to the Church (cf. c. 605);

WHEREAS, an order of widows, like an order of virgins, does not intend a new religious institute or association destined for recognition as a religious institute of diocesan rite or of pontifical rite, which requires the recognition of the Apostolic See (cf. cc. 605, 579; *Vita Consecrata* 62), but rather denotes an entrance into a special class of persons in the Church who are received into that order by a proper liturgical rite and consecratory prayer;

WHEREAS, proper statutes have been drawn up which describe the formational path necessary before the reception of the consecration, the expected continued formation and rule of life, the relationship to the diocesan Bishop, and conditions for definitive departure from the order of widows;

THEREFORE, I, Most Reverend Earl K. Fernandes, decree the following:

- 1) The approval of the statutes for the *Ordo Viduarum* in the Diocese of Columbus which are attached.
- 2) This decree takes immediate effect upon legitimate promulgation in *The Catholic Times* diocesan newspaper and on the Diocese of Columbus website.

Given at the Chancery Office, 198 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio this 16th day of October, 2024.



+ Earl K. Fernandes

Most Reverend Earl K. Fernandes
Bishop of Columbus

Deacon Tom Berg, Jr.

Deacon Tom Berg, Jr.
Chancellor