

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP OF PIACENZA

### OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION

My recent Pastoral Visit to the parish of St. Damiano as well as the announcement already made of gathering of young people at the place where the apparitions of Mary are presumed to be force me to take action regarding these events. **It is a known fact that for a long time these activities have been disturbing the spiritual life of that parish and are bringing much discredit on Religion and on true Christian piety.**

The authority and responsibility which come from God to me as Bishop of the Church in Piacenza urge me to judge the facts which regard faith and ethics.

**I cannot shrink from the duty to denounce and strongly deplore the serious disobedience of those people, laymen, religious and priests coming from outside the Diocese who continually neglect to follow the judgement and directions of the legitimate and competent Ecclesiastical Authority. The Apostolic See, indeed, has issued, among other correspondences, the letter from the Secretary of State of His Holiness the Pope dated May 16 th 1977 prot. 327.022.**

Therefore, I ORDER AND DECLARE what follows:

1. **Once again I express the negative judgement already more times declared by my Venerable Predecessor and by myself regarding the so called happenings of St. Damiano and which I again stress have no supernatural foundation.**
2. **No act of cult to the Blessed Virgin, connected with those presumed apparitions and messages, may be licitly practiced and encouraged.**
3. **Those who advertise through writings in order to propagate such events, or who organize pilgrimages or go to St. Damiano for devotional reasons are in blatant disobedience to the Church.**
4. **On the 3th. and 4th. of May and in future days during which, according to the judgement of the competent Authority, particular circumstances could require it, St. Damiano's Church will remain closed. The Pastor will provide other means for the parishioners to participate to the celebration of the Eucharist.**
5. **In the whole Diocese I renew the following dispositions:**
  - a) **Priests from outside the Diocese going to St. Damiano for such a devotional reason must not be permitted to celebrate Mass, and if they dared to do it, they are suspended "a divinis".**
  - b) **To the Priests and religious going to St. Damiano Holy communion is to be refused.**
6. **I invite the Rectors of the Churches, including those administered by Religious and at times frequented by groups of "pilgrims of St. Damiano" to give an adequate instruction to enlighten them on true devotion to the Blessed Virgin and on the obedience to the legitimate Authority of the Church according to the doctrine of the Second Vatican Council and in conformity with the Canon Law.**

*Piacenza: Bishop's Office - May 1 th 1980*

**+ ENRICO MANFREDINI**  
*Bishop of Piacenza*

[Note: some minor grammatical errors made during the translation from the original Italian have been left as provided: they do not effect the main thrust of the Bishop's message].