
Romania: Mgr. Kovács (Diocese of Alba Iulia) introduces “radical changes” in the formation and appointment of clergy

The Parish Council, the management of the Church’s assets, the permanent formation of the clergy, and the assumption of responsibilities by the clergy in parishes - these themes are the focus of the four decrees recently issued by Archbishop Gergely Kovács of Alba Iulia, Romania. These mandatory measures were taken by the Archbishop, who has been leading the Archdiocese for two years, “after seeking and listening to the advice of many people”. The measures concerning the Parish Council were from 1995 and were implemented, but the biggest changes – which the Archbishop himself called “radical changes” – concern the clergy. In the first years of the priesthood, new priests shall receive pastoral and spiritual support, and live in a parish together with an experienced priest “to acquire the skills and competencies needed to become, and work as, a parish priest”. Within eight years of being ordained as priests, they will be required to sit an exam to become parish priests. “I believe that this not only promotes a firm awareness of being suitable for the office of pastor, but also allows brother priests to get to know each other better and to learn the delicate practice of ‘fraternal correction’”, the Archbishop stated. Moreover, the continuous formation, entrusted to the diocesan theological seminary, will concern the whole clergy, regardless of a priest’s experience and age, and is proposed as “a source of constant renewal and enrichment to priestly and pastoral life”.

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