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## **Priestly celibacy: Card. Sarah, “my attachment to Benedict XVI remains intact and my filial obedience to Pope Francis absolute”**

“The claims that are being circulated to discredit me that insinuate that Benedict XVI was not informed of the publication of the book ‘From the Depths of Our Hearts’ are abject. I sincerely forgive all those who defamed me or wanted to put me in opposition to Pope Francis. My attachment to Benedict XVI remains intact and my filial obedience to Pope Francis absolute”. Card. Robert Sarah, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, wrote this at the end of a long statement released, as he had promised, to clarify the rumours about the book written by the Cardinal and the Pope Emeritus to defend priestly celibacy. Indeed, rumours were circulating that Pope Benedict XVI had not co-authored the text. The Cardinal provided a detailed account of his collaboration with Benedict XVI, recalling that on 5 September, after a visit to the Pope Emeritus, he wrote him a letter asking him if he would write a “text on the Catholic priesthood, with a special focus on celibacy”. In his letter to Pope Benedict, the Cardinal wrote: “I imagine that you might think your reflections might not be opportune, but I am convinced that the whole Church needs this gift, which could be published around Christmas or the start of 2020”. On 20 September, the Pope Emeritus replied to the Prefect, thanking him in writing that “he too – as Card. Sarah reported - had started a work of theological reflection on the subject, even before receiving my letter, but had put the project aside because of his waning strength. My letter, however - Card. Sarah continued - gave him the strength to resume the work. He added that he would send it to me once the Italian translation was ready”.



Immagine non disponibile