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New revision of number 2267 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the death penalty – Rescriptum “ex Audentia SS.mi”

The Supreme Pontiff Francis, in the audience granted on 11 May 2018 to the undersigned Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has approved the following new draft of no. 2267 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, arranging for it to be translated into various languages and inserted in all the editions of the aforementioned Catechism.

The death penalty

2267. Recourse to the death penalty on the part of legitimate authority, following a fair trial, was long considered an appropriate response to the gravity of certain crimes and an acceptable, albeit extreme, means of safeguarding the common good.

Today, however, there is an increasing awareness that the dignity of the person is not lost even after the commission of very serious crimes. In addition, a new understanding has emerged of the significance of penal sanctions imposed by the state. Lastly, more effective systems of detention have been developed, which ensure the due protection of citizens but, at the same time, do not definitively deprive the guilty of the possibility of redemption.

Consequently, the Church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that “the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person”,^[1] and she works with determination for its abolition worldwide.

[1] FRANCIS, *Address to Participants in the Meeting organized by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization*, 11 October 2017: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 13 October 2017, 5.

