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VATICAN CITY STATE

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132

Law on the protection of copyright and related rights

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**No. 132 – Law on the protection of copyright and related rights**

*19 March 2011*

THE PONTIFICAL COMMISSION  
FOR VATICAN CITY STATE

Having regard to the Fundamental Law of Vatican City State of November 26, 2000;

having regard to the Law on the Sources of the Law of October 1, 2008, No. 71;

having regard to the Law on the Government of Vatican City State of July 16, 2002, No. 384

considering the need to adapt the Law on Copyright of January 12, 1960, No 12;

has ordered, and orders, that the following will be observed as the law of the State:

ARTICLE 1

1. With regard to copyright and related rights, where not otherwise specified herein, Vatican City State observes the legislation in force in Italy, including regulations issued there, provided this is not contrary to the precepts of divine law, the general principles of canon law, the laws under the Lateran Pacts signed by the Holy See and Italy on February 11, 1929 (as amended), and the international agreements to which the Holy See is or desires to be a signatory, and provided that it is applicable in relation to the actual and legal conditions in existence within Vatican City State.
2. Any amendments to Italian legislation on copyright and related rights are understood in future to be transposed into the law of Vatican City State, without prejudice to the limitations set out in paragraph 1, above.

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ARTICLE 2

The regulations on the protection and management of copyright also apply to the texts of published laws and official acts, in any form, of the Holy See and of Vatican City State.

ARTICLE 3

1. The writings and speeches of the Roman Pontiff are protected under this law, except where otherwise provided by Him in specific cases.
2. The image of the Roman Pontiff may not be shown, reproduced, disseminated or sold in any way that harms, or may harm, the honor, reputation, standing or prestige of His Person.
3. Except where justified for religious, cultural, educational or scientific reasons, and unless derived from public activities, events or ceremonies, or those that take place in public, the image of the Roman Pontiff may not be shown, reproduced, disseminated or sold without His consent as expressed via the relevant authorities, which are required to inform the Secretary of State in the most important such cases.
4. The provisions of the foregoing paragraphs apply equally to the protection of the Roman Pontiff’s voice.

ARTICLE 4

1. The provisions of Article 1 apply to reproductions, including purely for documentary reasons, of the cultural assets described in Article 1 of Law No. 355 of July 25, 2001, obtained using photography or similar processes, in any format and howsoever they are obtained. The only entities legally allowed to make reproductions of such assets are the institutions in possession thereof.
2. The duration of the copyright referred to in the preceding paragraph is 70 years, starting from the year in which the work is first reproduced in each format.
3. Reproduction in another format is considered, to all legal intents and purposes, to be a new publication of the work.

ARTICLE 5

1. The Holy See and Vatican City State hold the copyright for the works created or published under their name or realized on their behalf.

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1. For the purposes of this law, “Holy See” is understood to mean the Roman Pontiff, the Dicasteries and the Bodies of the Roman Curia, and the Institutions connected thereto.
2. Each of the entities referred to in paragraph 2, whether they have administrative autonomy under the law or under their own rules of procedure, are required to enforce and protect copyright and related rights in the areas for which they are responsible.
3. The entities referred to in the preceding paragraphs have exclusive economic exploitation rights for 70 years from the first publication of the work, regardless of the format of its publication, or from the year of the death of the creator if this is indicated in the work.

ARTICLE 6

Regardless of the exclusive economic exploitation rights of the work, and even after these rights cease to apply, the entities referred to in Article 5 retain the right to claim ownership of the work and to oppose any deformation, defacement or other modification, or any act that would harm said work.

ARTICLE 7

1. The Commission for Intellectual Property is established, comprising the Assessor of the Secretariat of State, who chairs the Commission, and a representative of each of the entities referred to in Article 5.
2. The Commission assists with and coordinates the activities of the various administrations with regard to copyright and related rights, provides them with general guidelines, and offers guidance following any requests to this effect from the entities referred to in Article 5. The Commission meets at least twice per year and operates in accordance with its Rules of Procedure, which will be approved by the Secretariat of State.
3. In the event of any disputes over competence in matters of copyright and related rights that may arise between the entities referred to in Article 5, the Commission will attempt mediation before referring the decision to the Secretariat of State.

ARTICLE 8

This law repeals all previous provisions on copyright. It enters into force on the seventh day after its publication in the Supplement to the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis.*

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The text of this law was submitted for the consideration of the Supreme Pontiff on February 14, 2011.

The original of this law, bearing the seal of the State, will be submitted to Vatican City State archive of laws and its text will be published in the Supplement to the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, to be sent to all those bound by it and responsible for its enforcement.

Vatican City, the nineteenth day of March, two thousand eleven

CARDINAL GIOVANNI LAJOLO  
*President*

Approved  
Secretary-General of the Governatorate  
+ CARLO MARIA VIGANÒ

VATICAN TYPOGRAPHY