**Vatican commission on female diaconate holds first meeting**

(Vatican Radio) The Vatican announced on Friday that the newly established commission for the study of the female diaconate was holding its first meeting at the offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The two day meeting brings together the 12 members of the commission, under the presidency of Jesuit Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, who also serves as Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

During the morning and afternoon sessions, members will study the situation of women deacons in the early centuries of Church history.

Pope Francis announced the setting up of the new commission on August 2nd this year, following a May 12th meeting with participants at a plenary assembly of female religious superiors, who asked him about the possibility of restoring the permanent diaconate for women.

The commission includes six men and six women from eight different countries, with a wide variety of theological perspectives. Five of the members teach at pontifical universities in Rome, while four are members of the International Theological Commission.

The full list of commission members includes:
Sr. Nuria Calduch-Benages, M.H.S.F.N., Member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission;
Prof. Francesca Cocchini, Professor at the University "La Sapienza" and at the Patristic Institute "Augustinianum," Rome;
Rev.do Msgr. Piero Coda, Dean of the University Institute "Sophia," Loppiano, and Member of the International Theological Commission;
Rev.do P. Robert Dodaro, O.S.A., Dean Patristic Institute "Augustinianum," Rome
Rev.do P. Santiago Madrigal Terrazas, S.J., professor of ecclesiology at the Pontifical University "Comillas," Madrid;
Sr. Mary Melone, S.F.A., rector of the Pontifical University "Antonianum," Rome;
Rev.do Karl-Heinz Menke, Emeritus Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the University of Bonn and member of the International Theological Commission;
Rev.do Aimable Musoni, S.D.B., professor of ecclesiology at the Pontifical Salesian University, Rome;
Rev.do P. Bernard Pottier, S.J., Professor at the ''Institut d'Etudes théologiques," Brussels, and member of the International Theological Commission;
Prof. Marianne Schlosser, Professor of Spiritual Theology at the University of Vienna and a member of the International Theological Commission;
Prof. Michelina Tenace, Professor of Fundamental Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome.
Prof. Phyllis Zagano, Professor at Hofstra University, New York.

(from Vatican Radio)