



Site Web

[Search](#)

Saturday, 24th January 2009



**Vatican
won't take**

on Italian laws after 'anti-Church' rulings

Published Date: 01 January 2009

By Deepa Babington

THE Vatican will no longer automatically adopt new Italian laws as its own because many of them are at odds with Catholic doctrine.

The surprise announcement by a top Church official in the Vatican's newspaper, Osservatore Romano yesterday, prompted debate on whether the move was a rebuke to Italian government policies, with one commentator calling it a "masked warning".

The

ADVERTISEMENT

Vatican's relationship with left-leaning Italian governments over issues such as gay unions and stem cell research has sometimes been tense.

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's current conservative government is less controversial, though the Vatican has expressed concern over a crackdown on immigration.

Under existing law, the Vatican accepts Italian law automatically except on bilateral treaties or when there is a sharp divergence with basic canon law, wrote Jose Maria Serrano Ruiz, president of the Vatican commission on law revisions.

But under a new law signed by Pope Benedict on 1 October, Vatican authorities will examine Italian laws before deciding whether to adopt them, he wrote in Osservatore Romano. The change stemmed from the "really exorbitant number" of Italian laws, their "instability", and their frequent "contrast" with Catholic Church principles, Mr Ruiz wrote, and the new procedure comes into effect today.

Taken by surprise, Roberto Calderoli, Italy's minister for legislative simplification, complained that the Vatican ought to have made the change under the previous centre-left government.

"Frankly, until now I have not seen any move by our government that goes in a direction against Church values," he said.

He later said a court decision last month to allow an Italian man to let his comatose daughter die by cutting off her feeding tube was probably what swayed the Vatican, which had strongly opposed letting her die.