

## The Authority of Edicts

Edicts relating to church business are considered to be administrative decisions of the Church. Edicts relating to opinion on issues are to be considered where the Church stands on those issues. Edicts are the voice of the Church and do not necessarily represent the personal views of all members of the Church. Our religion strongly supports {In:Individualism} and members are required to think things through for themselves and interpret reality using their own {In:Wisdom}. The Church however does not issue edicts lightly and members should give great weight to Church edicts. Likewise, if a Church member needs confirmation of a personal decision that invokes a religious right they can ask the Church for an edict to support their decision adding the support of the Church to their situation.

For example. The Church of Reality requires individual Realists to determine if a war is just or not before participating in a military conflict. The Church of Reality from time to time might issue an edict to declare a war just or unjust. If the Church of Reality declares a war to be unjust then that adds the power of Church authority to the decision of the individual to refuse to serve in the military. If the Church issues an edict that a war is just then that provides guidance to members in their decision to participate or not. But it is ultimately up to the individual to decide. The Church of Reality supports members who decide that all war is wrong. Not all Realists agree on this issue and a person's decision to live their life without being required to kill other people falls within the {In:Principle of Freedom}. If the Church issues no edict regarding a war then nothing should be inferred from that. It doesn't mean that the Church is neutral or that the Church has affirmatively decided not to act. It could mean that we have yet to decide the issue. If we don't speak, it doesn't mean that we have decided to not speak.

Edicts of Doctrine are declarations of Church law for the purpose of resolving issues brought before the Church. If a member is asserting a right to a religious freedom to a governmental body and it is unclear if the right is supported in Church of Reality doctrine, the Church might issue an edict to declare how church doctrine relates to the challenged issue.