



# Letter to Friends and Benefactors

May 2012

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Feast of the Ascension, 17 May 2012

Dear friends and benefactors,

There has been, during the past few weeks, a veritable flood of articles and opinions concerning the relations between Rome and the SSPX. The information provided by these texts may seem alarming and even contradictory, threatening to trouble our peace of mind and obscure our judgment. I would like, during these confusing times, to outline clearly the purpose of the Society, its common and unwavering aim to promote the Catholic faith, and the importance of unity.

## **The purpose of the SSPX – the priesthood.**

The purpose of the Society of Saint Pius X is “the priesthood and all that pertains to it and nothing but what concerns it” (Statutes II.1). To this end, the Society has established six international seminaries which focus solely on the formation of truly Catholic priests. Once ordained, these priests are sent throughout the world to work in parishes and schools for the honor of God and the good of souls. Wherever they go, they administer the Sacraments and spread the Faith, for the spirit of the Society is “essentially apostolic, because such is the Sacrifice of the Mass and because, as a rule, the members will have to exercise an exterior ministry” (Statutes I.2).

## **The SSPX and the Faith – passing on what we have received.**

Archbishop Lefebvre, moments before consecrating four bishops at Écône in 1988, explained clearly how the SSPX operates within the Church:

This is why we do this ceremony. Far be it from me to set myself up as pope! I am simply a bishop of the Catholic Church who is continuing to transmit Catholic doctrine. I think, and this will certainly not be too far off, that you will be able to engrave on my tombstone these words of St. Paul: “Tradidi quod et accepi – I have transmitted to you what I have received,” nothing else. I am just the postman bringing you a letter. I did not write the letter, the message, this Word of God, God Himself wrote it. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself gave it to us. As for us, we just handed it down, through these dear priests here present and through all those who have chosen to resist this wave of apostasy in the Church, by keeping the Eternal Faith and giving it to the faithful. We are just carriers of this Good News, of this Gospel which Our Lord Jesus Christ gave to us, as well as of the means of sanctification: the Holy Mass, the true Holy Mass, the true Sacraments which truly give the spiritual life.

The profound reason why Archbishop Lefebvre proceeded with this heroic (and seemingly disobedient) act was to pass on the Catholic Tradition, whole and uncompromised. He thus concluded: “Today, by consecrating these bishops, I am convinced that I am continuing to keep Tradition alive, that is to say, the Catholic Church.”

The Archbishop, moreover, when faced with considerable opposition from the media and even from Rome, was not really troubled because he knew that what he was doing was in fact a great service to the Church. In this same sermon, he explained:

The headlines will, of course, be “Schism, Excommunication!” ... yet we are convinced that all these accusations of which we are the object, all the penalties of which we are the object, are null, absolutely null and void, and of which we will take no account. Just as I took no account of the suspension, and ended up by being congratulated by the Church and by progressive churchmen, so likewise in several years - I do not know how many, only the Good Lord knows how many years it will take for Tradition to find its rights in Rome - we will be embraced by the Roman authorities, who will thank us for having maintained the Faith in our seminaries, in our families, in civil societies, in our countries, and in our monasteries and our religious houses, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls.

On this occasion Archbishop Lefebvre made himself perfectly clear: all that he did was not done for himself, and not even for the SSPX, but for the honor of God and the service of His Church.

### **United in the same goal.**

The guidelines given by our venerated founder are clear and we all agree with them. None of us want to contradict them, and each of us strives to apply these principles in our own lives. We all want to preserve the Catholic Faith in its beauty, purity, and entirety. This common goal is precious to us all – it unites us and gives us strength.

For this very reason – out of a sincere and praiseworthy concern for the maintenance of our unity in the Faith – I have received many letters and emails from the faithful spread throughout Canada. Some of them are in favor of a canonical solution, and some of them are opposed to such an agreement. The tone of these letters has been at times friendly and encouraging, at times confused and concerned. However, despite any differences of opinion, of content, and of tone, all the letters are written out of a great love for the Faith and testify remarkably to our unity in the love of God, His Priests, and His Church. This is a spirit I am very happy to see! I ask you, during this time of uncertainty, to continue being patient and to keep these bonds of charity intact.

### **Unexpected offer from Rome.**

It has been very obvious since last September that Rome, and especially Pope Benedict XVI, wants to regularize the situation of the SSPX within the Church. The steps taken are coming from Rome, not from the Society. There is a clear and persistent will from Rome to come to an agreement. Our Superior General, for his part, has not answered Rome's request with a categorical refusal.

There are now thus two possible options: either to accept a canonical solution – considering carefully, of course, its specific conditions – or to refuse it.

### **Two possible ways, one goal.**

The first option is to accept canonical regularization. Some authors of the letters I received see in this a betrayal of the mission of the Society. They argue that to accept such a canonical solution means to surrender our liberty of action which in turn will force us to incorporate the modernist errors of the Council. This would include a watering down of Catholic doctrine and an increasingly coercive influence exercised by both Roman and local Church authorities. The SSPX would effectively be silenced, no longer able to condemn conciliar errors and their perverse manifestations.

Those who, on the other hand, support the acceptance of a canonical solution anticipate the great good the SSPX could accomplish with the blessing and protection of the Roman authorities. We would no longer be stigmatized as schismatics and could thus more freely and more effectively serve the Church and promote the restoration of the Faith and the good of souls. The unjust separation from Rome (one which Archbishop Lefebvre especially regretted because of his great love for the Church) would also come to an end.

The other option is to refuse Rome's offer. Those in favor of a refusal note that the SSPX would thus remain undisturbed and would be able to safely continue its vital apostolate as it has for the past few decades. Some, however, fear that such a refusal may well lead to true schism. The pope, after all, may in all sincerity be seeking to extend the good influence and teachings of the SSPX throughout the rest of the Church as a catalyst for its restoration. To refuse the Holy Father our cooperation and support in such an important work would seem selfish.

We do not yet know what will be the outcome. Will the Society of St. Pius X be "recognized," or will we have to remain in our current situation for some time longer? In either case, let us trust in the leadership of our Superior General, Bishop Fellay, who has been tasked specifically by God with making this crucial decision.

### **Faith, serenity, and the seriousness of the Saints.**

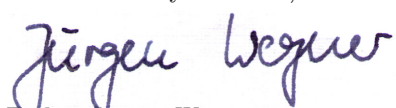
For our part, we must beware of curiosity, impatience, anxiety, pride, and rash conclusions – these all threaten to divide the SSPX internally, to the great detriment of Tradition. Moreover, when the enemies of the Society and the Church see us quarreling openly with one another, they will take this as a sign of weakness and will attack, seeking to use our own imprudent feuding as the very weapon of our destruction.

We need – now more than ever – the serenity, and seriousness of the Saints. Prayer is powerful, and we are confident that, if we remain faithful to the Rosary Crusade - which will end this Pentecost Sunday - it will provide us all with the necessary graces to persevere in our combat for the honor of God. Let us imitate Our Lady and the Apostles as they awaited patiently, quietly, and prayerfully the coming of the Holy Ghost. The times they lived in were much more uncertain and dangerous than ours are currently. Let us beg of God during these holy days preceding Pentecost for the rebirth of the Church and the rekindling of the love of God's truth.

Let us remember in our prayers both the Holy Father and Bishop Fellay and pray that the Holy Ghost may guide them and all our priests under such difficult circumstances. Whatever the decision may be, our goal will never change. Our uncompromising battle for Tradition, for the Faith, and for the Church will continue.

May the Immaculate Heart of Mary protect and guide the Society of St. Pius X.

Yours Sincerely in Christ,



Father Jurgen Wegner