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Menzingen, 6 January 2004  
Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord

Your Eminence,

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the pontificate of John Paul II, it seems to us important to address ourselves to you, as well as to other cardinals, to share with you our serious concerns on the situation of the Church. Due to the deterioration of the Holy Father's health, we have had to forgo writing to him directly, even though the enclosed study was initially intended for him personally.

Beyond the optimism that surrounds the celebration of this 25th anniversary, the extremely serious situation that both the world and the Catholic Church are passing through does not escape anyone. The Pope himself, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*, acknowledges noticeably that the time in which we live is that of a "silent apostasy" wherein there reigns a sort of "practical agnosticism and religious indifference whereby many Europeans give the impression of living without spiritual roots and somewhat like heirs who have squandered a patrimony entrusted to them by history<sup>1</sup>."

Amongst the principal causes of this tragic state of affairs, how can we not put in the chief place the ecumenism that was officially initiated by Vatican II and promoted by John Paul II? In the avowed purpose to establish a new unity, and in the name of a will to "see rather that which unites us rather than that which divides us", there is the pretense to sublimate or to reinterpret or to put aside specifically Catholic elements that appear to be causes of division. One despises thereby the constant and unanimous teaching of Tradition, which states that the Mystical Body of Christ is the Catholic Church and that outside of it there is no salvation. This ecumenism, has seemingly destroyed the most beautiful treasures of the Church, because instead of accepting the Unity which is founded on the plenitude of truth, it wishes to establish a unity adapted to a truth mixed with error.

This ecumenism was the principal reason of a liturgical reform that has been disastrous for the faith and religious practice of the faithful. This ecumenism has revised the Bible, distorting the divinely inspired text in order to present a watered down version incapable to hold up the Catholic faith. This ecumenism now seeks to found a new Church of which

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<sup>1</sup> John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, n° 7 & 9.

Cardinal Kasper in a recent conference<sup>2</sup> has given the precise outlines. We can never be in communion with the promoters of such an ecumenism which leads to the dissolution of the Catholic Church, that is, Christ in His Mystical Body, and which destroys the unity of the faith, the true foundation of this communion. We do not want the unity wished by this ecumenism, because it is not the unity wished by God, it is not the unity that characterizes the Catholic Church.

It is thus this ecumenism that we mean to analyze and denounce by the enclosed document, as we are persuaded that the Church cannot correspond to her divine mission if she does not begin to renounce openly and to firmly condemn this utopia which in the words of Pius XI, “completely destroy the foundations of the Catholic faith<sup>3</sup>.”

Conscious of belonging by right to this same Church, and ever desiring to serve her more, we beg of you to do all that is in your power to give to the present Magisterium, as soon as possible, the centuries old language of the Church, according to which “the union of Christians can only be promoted by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it, for in the past they have unhappily left it<sup>4</sup>.” The Catholic Church will then become again the lighthouse of truth and the port of salvation in the midst of the world that risks its ruin because the salt has lost its savor.

Please, your Eminence, do not believe that we would want in anyway take the place of the Holy Father, but rather we await from the Vicar of Christ the energetic measures necessary to liberate the Mystical Body from the morass in which a false ecumenism has sunk her. Only he who has received the full, universal, and supreme authority over the entire Church can perform these salutary acts. From the successor of Peter, we prayerfully hope that he would hear our humble appeal for help, and that he would heroically manifest that charity which had been asked of the first Pope when he received his office, the greatest of charity – “*Amas Me plus his*”, the charity necessary to save the Church.

Deign, your Eminence, to receive our devoted and most respectful sentiments in Jesus and Mary.

+ Bernard Fellay  
Superior General

Franz Schmidberger +  
First Assistant General

+ Alfonso de Galarreta  
Second Assistant General

+ Bernard Tissier de Mallerais

+ Richard Williamson

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<sup>2</sup> W. Kasper, *The Tablet*, Saturday 24 May 2003, *May They All Be One? But how? A Vision of Christian Unity for the Next Generation*.

<sup>3</sup> Pius XI, *Mortalium animos*, 6 January 1928, *AAS* 20 (1928), pg. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 14.