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COMMUNIQUÉ FROM THE GENERAL HOUSE

During the meeting on 12 February between Father Pagliarani, Superior General of the Society of Saint Pius X, and His Eminence Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, organised after the announcement of future episcopal consecrations for the Society, the latter proposed “a path of specifically theological dialogue, according to a very precise methodology, [...] to highlight the minimum requirements for full communion with the Catholic Church”, on the condition that the announced episcopal consecrations be suspended.

At the request of the Prefect of the Dicastery, the Superior General presented this proposal to the members of his Council and took the time necessary to evaluate it.

On 18 February, Father Pagliarani sent his written response to the Cardinal, accompanied by several annexes and signed by the five members of the General Council.

Since the matter is now in the public domain, due to the statement published by the Holy See on 12 February, it seems appropriate also to make public the content of this letter and its annexes, in order to allow interested faithful to know precisely the response delivered.

The Superior General entrusts this situation to the prayers of the members of the Society and all the faithful. He asks that the Rosary, as well as the sacrifices of Lent, which is beginning, be offered especially for the Holy Father, for the good of the Holy Church, and to prepare souls worthily for the ceremony of 1 July.

Menzingen, 19 February 2026



Letter from Father Pagliarani to Cardinal Fernández

Menzingen, 18 February 2026

Ash Wednesday

Most Reverend Eminence,

First of all, I thank you for receiving me on 12 February, and for making public the content of our meeting, which promotes perfect transparency in communication.

I can only welcome the opening of a doctrinal discussion, as signalled today by the Holy See, for the simple reason that I myself proposed it exactly seven years ago, in a letter dated 17 January 2019.¹ At that time, the Dicastery did not truly express interest in such a discussion, on the grounds—presented orally—that a doctrinal agreement between the Holy See and the Society of Saint Pius X was impossible.

For the Society's part, a doctrinal discussion has always been—and remains—desirable and useful. Indeed, even if we do not reach an agreement, fraternal exchanges allow us to better know one another, to refine and deepen our own arguments, and to better understand the spirit and intentions behind our interlocutor's positions—especially their genuine love for the Truth, for souls, and for the Church. This holds true, at all times, for both parties.

This was precisely my intention in 2019, when I suggested a discussion during a calm and peaceful time, without the pressure or threat of possible excommunication, which would have undermined free dialogue—as is, unfortunately, the situation today.

That said, while I certainly rejoice at a new opening of dialogue and the positive response to my proposal of 2019, I cannot accept the perspective and objectives in the name of which the Dicastery offers to resume dialogue in the present situation, nor indeed the postponement of the date of 1 July.

I respectfully present to you the reasons for this, to which I will add some supplementary considerations.

1. We both know in advance that we cannot agree doctrinally, particularly regarding the fundamental orientations adopted since the Second Vatican Council. This disagreement, for the Society's part, does not stem from a mere difference of opinion, but from a genuine case of conscience, arising from what has proven to be a rupture with the Tradition of the Church. This complex knot has unfortunately become even more inextricable with the doctrinal and pastoral developments of recent pontificates.

I therefore do not see how a joint process of dialogue could end in determining together what would constitute “the minimum requirements for full communion with

¹ Cf. Annex I.



the Catholic Church”, since—as you yourself have recalled with frankness—the texts of the Council cannot be corrected, nor can the legitimacy of the liturgical reform be challenged.

2. This dialogue is supposed to clarify the interpretation of the Second Vatican Council. But this interpretation is already clearly given in the post-Conciliar period and in the successive documents of the Holy See. The Second Vatican Council is not a set of texts open to free interpretation: It has been received, developed, and applied for sixty years by successive popes, according to precise doctrinal and pastoral orientations.

This official reading is expressed, for example, in major texts such as *Redemptor hominis*, *Ut unum sint*, *Evangelii gaudium*, or *Amoris lætitia*. It is also evident in the liturgical reform, understood in the light of the principles reaffirmed in *Traditionis custodes*. All these documents show that the doctrinal and pastoral framework within which the Holy See intends to situate any discussion has already been firmly established.

3. One cannot ignore the context of the dialogue proposed today. We have been waiting for seven years for a favourable response to the proposal of doctrinal discussion made in 2019. More recently, we have written twice to the Holy Father: first to request an audience, then to clearly and respectfully explain our needs and the real-life situation of the Society.

Yet, after a long silence, it is only when episcopal consecrations are mentioned that an offer to resume dialogue is made, which thus seems dilatory and conditional. Indeed, the hand extended to open the dialogue is unfortunately accompanied by another hand already poised to impose sanctions. There is talk of breaking communion, of schism,² and of “serious consequences”. Moreover, this threat is now public, creating pressure that is hardly compatible with a genuine desire for fraternal exchanges and constructive dialogue.

4. Furthermore, to us it does not seem possible to enter into a dialogue to define what the minimum requirements for ecclesial communion might be, simply because this task does not belong to us. Throughout the centuries, the criteria for belonging to the Church have been established and defined by the Magisterium. What must be believed in order to be Catholic has always been taught with authority, in constant fidelity to Tradition.

Thus, we do not see how these criteria could be the subject of joint discernment through dialogue, nor how they could be re-evaluated today so as not to correspond to what the Tradition of the Church has always taught—and which we desire to observe faithfully in our place.

² The Society, however, defends itself against any accusation of schism and, relying on all traditional theology and the Church's constant teaching, maintains that an episcopal consecration not authorised by the Holy See does not constitute a rupture of communion—provided it is not accompanied by schismatic intent or the conferral of jurisdiction. Cf. Annex II.



5. Finally, if a dialogue is envisaged with the aim of producing a doctrinal statement that the Society could accept regarding the Second Vatican Council, we cannot ignore the historical precedents of efforts made in this direction. I draw your attention to the most recent: the Holy See and the Society had a long course of dialogue, beginning in 2009, particularly intense for two years, then pursued more sporadically until 6 June 2017. Throughout these years, we sought to achieve what the Dicastery now proposes.

Yet, everything ultimately ended in a drastic manner, with the unilateral decision of Cardinal Müller, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, who, in June 2017, solemnly established, in his own way, “the minimum requirements for full communion with the Catholic Church”, explicitly including the entire Council and the post-Conciliar period.³ This shows that, if one persists in a doctrinal dialogue that is too forced and lacks sufficient serenity, in the long term, instead of achieving a satisfactory result, one only worsens the situation.

Thus, in the shared recognition that we cannot find agreement on doctrine, it seems to me that the only point on which we can agree is that of charity toward souls and toward the Church.

As a cardinal and bishop, you are above all a pastor: allow me to address you in this capacity. The Society is an objective reality: it exists. That is why, over the years, the Sovereign Pontiffs have taken note of this existence and, through concrete and significant acts, have recognised the value of the good it can accomplish, despite its canonical situation. That is also why we are speaking today.

This same Society asks you only to be allowed to continue to do this same good for the souls to whom it administers the holy Sacraments. It asks nothing else of you—no privileges, nor even canonical regularisation, which, in the current state of affairs, is impracticable due to doctrinal divergences. The Society cannot abandon souls. The need for the sacraments is a concrete, short-term need for the survival of Tradition, in service to the Holy Catholic Church.

We can agree on one point: neither of us wishes to reopen wounds. I will not repeat here all that we have already expressed in the letter addressed to Pope Leo XIV, of which you have direct knowledge. I only emphasise that, in the present situation, the only truly viable path is that of charity.

Over the last decade, Pope Francis and yourself have abundantly advocated “listening” and understanding of non-standard, complex, exceptional, and particular situations. You have also wished for a use of law that is always pastoral, flexible, and reasonable, without pretending to resolve everything through legal automatism and pre-established frameworks. At this moment, the Society asks of you nothing more than this—and above all it does not ask it for itself: it asks it for these souls, for whom, as already promised to the Holy Father, it has no other intention than to make true children of the Roman Church.

³ Cf. Annex III.



Finally, there is another point on which we also agree, and which should encourage us: the time separating us from 1 July is one of prayer. It is a moment when we implore from Heaven a special grace and, from the Holy See, understanding. I pray for you in particular to the Holy Ghost and—do not take this as a provocation—His Most Holy Spouse, the Mediatrix of all Graces.

I wish to thank you sincerely for the attention you have given me, and for the interest you will kindly take in the present matter.

Please accept, Most Reverend Eminence, the expression of my most sincere greetings and of my devotion in the Lord.

Daide Pagliarani

Superior General

+ Alfonso de Galarreta

First Assistant General

Christian Bouchacourt

Second Assistant General

+ Bernard Fellay

First Counsellor General

Former Superior General

Franz Schmidberger

Second Counsellor General

Former Superior General

Annex I: Letter from Father Pagliarani to Bishop Pozzo, 17 January 2019

Annex II: Order and Jurisdiction: The Futility of the Schism Accusation

Annex III: Letter from Cardinal Müller to Bishop Fellay, 6 June 2017



Annex I

Letter from Father Pagliarani to Bishop Pozzo, 17 January 2019

Most Reverend Excellency,

First of all, I wish to thank you for the benevolent attention you have shown over all these years toward the Society of Saint Pius X, as well as the warm welcome you gave me during our meeting on 22 November 2018. My gratitude naturally extends also to His Eminence Cardinal Ladaria.

As agreed during that meeting, I am writing to you about the planned theological discussions. In light of what we have done in the past, I propose to prioritise regular written exchanges between theologians of the Holy See and of the Society, with the possibility of, for example, two annual meetings.

The interlocutors I propose for the Society are priests qualified for doctrinal discussion. They are Fathers Arnaud Sélégnny, Guillaume Gaud, and Jean-Michel Gleize. It is planned that Father Sélégnny will soon reside at the General House, which will allow for maintaining a more direct link between us. This does not preclude other confrères from contributing as well.

I think it would be good to consider now the possibility of publishing the results of these discussions. This idea came to me upon reading the transcript of your meeting on 28 February 2018, with my predecessor. You yourself expressed the desire for such a publication. That is why I take the liberty of making this suggestion. But I leave it to you to indicate to us the manner of publishing respective summaries of our discussions, if this seems reasonable to you.

As to the themes of the discussions, I think it would be good for them to concern both the Council and the subsequent Magisterium. Indeed, in the post-Conciliar development, there are many elements that allow for specifying the true interpretation to be given to the Council: hence the importance of including the post-Conciliar Magisterium in the exchanges.

I therefore propose the following list, which should allow us to cover all the themes to be treated:

1. The ecclesiological foundations of ecumenism;
2. The practice of ecumenism by the hierarchy of the Church;
3. The foundations and goals of interreligious dialogue;
4. The salvation of the Jews according to the current Magisterium;
5. The new conception of the priesthood: its theological foundations and its liturgical consequences;
6. The Petrine ministry in the light of *Apostolos Suos, Ut Unum Sint*, and the other teachings of John Paul II;
7. Synodality in the framework of the current Magisterium;
8. The current doctrine on conjugal morality;
9. The primacy and role of conscience in the Conciliar and post-Conciliar Magisterium.

I hope that this also corresponds to your expectations.

Please accept, Most Reverend Excellency, my most respectful greetings *in Domino*.

Don Davide Pagliarani



Annex II

Order and Jurisdiction: The Futility of the Schism Accusation

The Constitution *Lumen gentium* on the Church states in chapter III, no. 21, that the power of jurisdiction is conferred by episcopal consecration simultaneously with the power of order. The Decree *Christus Dominus* on the pastoral charge of bishops affirms the same in its Preface, no. 3. And this affirmation is reiterated in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, c. 375 § 2. In the Church, the reception of the episcopal power of jurisdiction depends by divine right on the will of the Pope, and schism is precisely defined as the act of one who assumes jurisdiction independently and without regard for the Pope's will. Therefore, according to these documents, an episcopal consecration carried out against the Pope's will would necessarily be an act of schism.

This argument, which would conclude that the upcoming episcopal consecrations within the Society would be schismatic, rests entirely on the premise of the Second Vatican Council that episcopal consecration confers both the power of order and the power of jurisdiction.

However, according to pastors and theologians whose authority was recognised at the time of the Second Vatican Council, this premise is not traditional and lacks any solid foundation. At the Council, Cardinal Browne and Bishop Luigi Carli demonstrated this in their written remarks on the draft of the future Constitution *Lumen gentium*. Bishop Dino Staffa likewise affirmed it, relying on the most firmly established data from Tradition.

Pius XII stated three times—in *Mystici Corporis* (1943), in *Ad Sinarum gentem* (1954), and in *Ad apostolorum principis* (1958)—that the ordinary episcopal power of governance enjoyed by bishops, and exercised under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, is communicated to them immediately—i.e. without the intermediary of episcopal consecration—by the same Sovereign Pontiff: “*immediate sibi ab eodem Pontifice Summo impertita*”. If this power is conferred immediately by the sole act of the Pope's will, we do not see how it could derive from the consecration.

Still less so, since the vast majority of theologians and canonists deny absolutely that episcopal consecration confers the power of jurisdiction.

And the discipline of the Church contradicts this thesis. Indeed, if the power of jurisdiction is conferred by consecration, how is it that an elected Sovereign Pontiff who has not yet been consecrated bishop still possesses by divine right the fullness of jurisdiction, as well as infallibility, from the moment he accepts his election? By the same logic, if it is the consecration that confers jurisdiction, then residential bishops who have been appointed but not yet consecrated, although already established at the head of their diocese as true pastors, would have no power of jurisdiction and no right to sit in council, whereas in reality they clearly possess both prerogatives before their episcopal consecration. As for titular bishops, who do not hold any authority over any diocese, they would have been deprived for centuries of exercising a power of jurisdiction that, according to *Lumen gentium*, they would have received through their consecration.

If one objects that the consecration already grants a power of jurisdiction properly speaking, but one which requires the Pope's intervention to be exercised concretely, we respond that this distinction is contrived, since Pius XII clearly states that it is the power of jurisdiction in its essence which is immediately communicated by the Pope, who therefore does not merely satisfy a condition required for the proper exercise of this power.

The bishops who will be consecrated on 1 July as auxiliaries of the Society will therefore assume no jurisdiction against the will of the Pope, and will in no way be schismatic.



Annex III

Letter from Cardinal Müller to Bishop Fellay, 6 June 2017

Your Excellency,

As you are aware, Pope Francis has repeatedly expressed his goodwill toward your Society, granting in particular to all its priest members the faculty to validly confess the faithful, and authorising local Ordinaries to grant permissions for the celebration of marriages for the faithful who follow your Society's pastoral activities. Moreover, discussion continues regarding the questions related to the full restoration of your Society to communion with the Catholic Church.

In this regard, with the approval of the Sovereign Pontiff, I have deemed it necessary to submit to the Ordinary Session of our Dicastery, held on 10 May 2017, the text of the doctrinal Declaration that was communicated to you during the meeting of 13 June 2016, as a necessary condition for the full restoration of communion. Here are the unanimous decisions of all the members of our Dicastery:

1. It is necessary to require members of the Society of Saint Pius X to adhere to the new form of the *Professio fidei* dating from 1988. Consequently, it is no longer sufficient to ask them to make the *Professio fidei* of 1962.
2. The new text of the doctrinal declaration must include a paragraph in which the signatories explicitly declare their acceptance of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and of the post-conciliar period, granting to said doctrinal affirmations the degree of assent due to them.
3. Members of the Society of Saint Pius X must recognise, not only the validity, but also the legitimacy of the Rite of the Holy Mass and the Sacraments, according to the liturgical books promulgated after the Second Vatican Council.

During the audience granted to the Cardinal Prefect on 20 May 2017, the Sovereign Pontiff approved these decisions.

By communicating them to you, I would be grateful if you would make them known to the members of the Society of Saint Pius X.

Assuring you of my prayer for your delicate mission, I ask you to accept the expression of my devoted sentiments in the Lord.

Gerhard Card. Müller, Prefect