

The 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration of Bishop Fellay: Proof of Treason

by *Sacerdos*

Lest we forget...!

Much has been said and written in recent times about the **Doctrinal Declaration (DD)** presented to Rome by Bishop Bernard Fellay on 15 April 2012 on behalf of the Society of St. Pius X.

Nevertheless, it seems to us that it would be important to make **a detailed study** of the text itself and the circumstances surrounding it. We will also compare it to other similar documents.

The following study of the document does not claim to be exhaustive. The only goal is to contribute to the search for truth and to open a frank and honest debate on the consequences of this text.

Furthermore, this study has become necessary in order to respond to all those who have recently taken up the defense of this Declaration—not only Bishop Fellay himself, but the other SSPX bishops, priests, and laity as well.

In order to better understand the evolution of the circumstances which surround the composition of the Doctrinal Declaration, we are going to divide our study into three parts:

Part I: Before the Declaration;

Part II: Analysis of the Declaration;

Part III: Response to the Objections.

Part I should not be neglected, because it serves **to situate the different stages** through which Bishop Fellay passed before writing his Doctrinal Declaration.

Part II, which is longer, will analyze **the Declaration itself** and the circumstances which immediately preceded it.

Part III will mainly expose the **consequences and reactions** following the publication of the DD and will **respond to the arguments** of those who take the defense of its author.

CONTENTS

PART I: BEFORE THE DOCTRINAL DECLARATION

I. Why talk about it?

II. The Situation Before the Preamble of 15 April 2012

- 1) Bishop Fellay began by ignoring what Archbishop Lefebvre had always hold.
- 2) Next, bishop Fellay decides to ignore what the 2006 General Chapter had clearly decided.
- 3) The letter of the three Bishops of the Society, Bps. Williamson, Tissier de Mallerais and de Galarreta.
- 4) Finally, Bishop Fellay has contradicted himself!

III. The First Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) of Rome, 14 September 2011

1. The “Preliminary Note.”
2. The Doctrinal Preamble [DP1] of 14 September 2011.
 - A. The Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 in general.
 - B. The Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 in particular.

IV. The Double Response of the Society (30 November 2011 and 12 January

1. The first response, dated 30 November 2011, with a proposition for a new Doctrinal Preamble [DP2].
 - A. The Preliminary Note.
 - B. The Doctrinal Preamble 2 [DP2].
2. The second response, dated 12 January 2012 to Cardinal Levada [addendum to DP2, dated 30 November 2011]
 - A. On the subject of the Preamble in general.
 - B. On the subject of the Preamble in particular.
 - a. On the subject of “criteria of interpretation”:
 - b. On the subject of the “progress of Tradition”
 - c. On the subject of a practical application.

PART II: THE 15 APRIL 2012 DOCTRINAL DECLARATION

I. The circumstances surrounding the declaration

1. Cardinal Levada’s Letter dated 16 March 2012.
2. Bishop Fellay’s reaction to Cardinal Levada’s Letter.
 - a. An optimism without foundation: Rome has changed!

- b. The dilemma of making the good choice.
 - (a) The option to reject.
 - (b) The option to continue.
 - (c) The decision is made: let's continue!

II. The 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration (DD) of Bishop Fellay

A. Analysis of the Declaration in general.

1. Bishop Fellay's Introductory Note in *Cor Unum* No. 104.
2. The Ambiguity of the Doctrinal Declaration
3. Bishop Fellay's Reasons Advanced to Justify This Declaration
 - a.) The fear of possible sanctions from Rome.
 - b.) The desire to join the official Church.

B. Analysis of the Doctrinal Declaration in Particular:

1. The text of the Doctrinal Declaration.
 2. Suppressions and additions in Bishop Fellay's Doctrinal Declaration (DD).
 - a. Suppressions compared to the Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) proposed by Rome.
 - b. Additions in comparison with the Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 (DP1) proposed by Rome.
 3. Internal analysis of the 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration.
 - A.) Paragraph I, speaks about the fidelity to the Church and to the Pope:
 - B.) Paragraph II speaks of submission to the teachings of the Magisterium, according to the conciliar doctrine of number 25 of *Lumen gentium*:
 - a.) No. 25 of *Lumen gentium*.
 - b.) The new Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity of 1989.
- C. Paragraph III is indisputably the worst part of the whole document.
- No. 1: The Authority of the Pope and the Bishops
 - No. 2: The Authority of the Magisterium of the Church
 - No. 3: The "Progress" of Tradition:
 - No. 4: The criteria of interpretation between Tradition and the Second Vatican Council texts in general.
 - No. 5: The Criteria of Interpretation Between Tradition and the Second Vatican Council Texts on Ecumenism and Religious Liberty
 - No. 6: The Opportuneness of the Doctrinal Discussions.
 - No. 7 : On the "Validity" and the "Legitimacy" of the New Mass and the New Sacraments
 - No. 8 : The Acceptance of the New Code of Canon Law.

CONCLUSION OF PART TWO.

PART I: BEFORE THE DOCTRINAL DECLARATION

I. Why talk about it?

The recent publication of the Doctrinal Preamble (or Doctrinal Declaration) signed by Bishop Fellay and presented to William Cardinal Levada on 15 April 2012, continues to provoke **a great controversy** among the priests and faithful of the Society of St. Pius X together with the Traditional Catholic world.

Those who have taken up the **defense** of Bishop Fellay have attempted to show that this Preamble or Declaration is “orthodox” and offer as proof the fact that Rome rejected it on 13 June 2012. Anyway, they say, Bishop Fellay has “withdrawn” it and, moreover, he has promised to no longer refer to this document in future conversations with Rome, (cf. Part III: Responses to the Objections).

But others affirm **the contrary**, saying that an attentive study of the document itself, reveals that there has been **a serious change in the doctrinal positions** that Archbishop Lefebvre, the Society of St. Pius X and, formerly, Bishop Fellay himself, held regarding the Second Vatican Council, the New Mass, and the new Code of Canon Law.

The stakes are high, because this doctrinal document is supposed to delineate **the official doctrinal position of the Society of St. Pius X** vis-à-vis the conciliar novelties, before advancing toward a possible practical accord with the official Church, similar to that which was promised by Rome and desired by Bishop Fellay.

This is why, during the drafting of this document, each word should be carefully weighed so as to verify if it conforms to the Catholic Theology of all time. Further, this document must correspond with the reality of the crisis situation which the Church has been suffered in for the past 50 years and its possible solution.

We must keep in mind that it has been 24 years since the Society has submitted to Rome a document of such importance, a document setting the doctrinal foundation for a canonical regularization.

Indeed, since 5 May 1988, the date upon which Archbishop Lefebvre signed Cardinal Ratzinger’s Protocol of agreement—which he retracted the next day—the Society has never been so close to enter into a doctrinal and practical agreement of incalculable consequences, an agreement which would decide its future, whether to continue or not the work of condemning modernist errors, defending Tradition and restoring the Church.

Above all, the **priests** (to whom this study is primarily intended) should not neglect the study of the doctrinal questions underlying this document, through intellectual laziness or under the pretext that it is only “pastoral” work that counts. Unfortunately, we well know how after the Council these same negligent attitudes drove the majority of the clergy and bishops to accept the conciliar errors, slowly but surely. Therefore, we must not repeat these same actions and errors.

I would especially like to invite **my brother priests in the Society of St. Pius X**, who are either perplexed, or disoriented, or even favorably disposed towards this document, to look into this serious problem, because on this depends whether or not we keep the principles always held by Archbishop Lefebvre, and, not so long ago, even by Bishop Fellay.

In these particular circumstances, if we want to be faithful to our priestly work and produce spiritual fruit in souls, we must first of all defend **doctrinal purity**.

But the defense of doctrine requires the **refutation of and combat of modern errors** which have been ravaging the Church for over 50 years; to do otherwise would be to commit the sin of omission.

So, the principal stakes are these: if the continuation of our fight for Tradition is compromised by official, **ambiguous texts** signed by our superiors, the common good of the Society would be put in danger by the betrayal of truth and **a grave compromise** with conciliar authorities.

II. The Situation Before the Preamble of 15 April 2012

Following the publication of the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* in 2007, and the lifting of the “excommunications” of the four Society bishops in 2009, and despite the fact that these two acts of Benedict XVI were **insufficient and poisoned**, Bishop Fellay hastened to thank the Pope for these “generous acts” and chose to commit to doctrinal meetings with Rome.

The meetings between the Roman theologians and the Society theologians took place from 27 October 2009 through 11 April 2011. These **doctrinal discussions** with conciliar Rome were necessary, provided that they served to make the authorities understand the gravity of their errors and so convince them to return to Tradition.

The doctrinal discussions, which were justified in trying to convert Rome, thus **began on a bad basis** with a compromise of principles. Rome’s refusal to properly give us the preconditions set down by Bishop Fellay in 2007 and 2009 was, however, the first sign that we should not continue.

What was the conclusion of these meetings? No surprise! It was impossible to come to an understanding on the doctrinal level!

Bishop de Galarreta, the president of the theological commission of the Society, has clearly stated that these discussions have shown that the Roman authorities “are not ready to give up the Second Vatican Council,” that they want “to bring us back to it,” and that they want us to return so that the Society can be “useful” and only “to support the renewal of the reform in continuity.” (Albano, 7 October 2011)

Bishop Fellay, himself, publicly declared the same thing, “the discussions manifested a profound disagreement on almost all the points that were addressed.” (Cor Unum, March 2012)

So, if at the end of the doctrinal discussions in 2011, Rome **refused to adhere** to the encyclicals condemning modern errors, an essential condition demanded by Archbishop Lefebvre for any agreement, what good was there in continuing?

But, despite this *impasse*, five months later, **Cardinal Levada**, the Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, invited Bishop Fellay and his two assistants to a meeting on 14 September 2011 in order to “make an assessment on these interviews” and “to view the future prospect.” (Cor Unum, no. 103)

The Cardinal sent them a letter along with:

- 1) a proposal for a **Doctrinal Preamble**, (DP) with the Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity of 1989; and
- 2) the project for a possible **canonical regularization** of the Society of St. Pius X.

The Cardinal then gave them one month to “disclose the official position of the Society regarding this documentation.”

He told them he was ready “to take into consideration all requests for precision or suggestions intended to improve the quality of these texts, except their substance.” In other words, despite eventual changes of details being made, the Society must always accept the essentials of the Preamble proposed by Rome on 14 September 2011.

We must ask ourselves this: if Rome does not leave “maneuvering room” to substantially modify the Preamble text, what good is it to continue?

We must also point out that the Cardinal wants to go beyond the purely doctrinal discussions and wants to go ahead and begin working on a practical agreement, hence the inclusion of some elements for a canonical regularization of the Society, elements that, incidentally, the members of the Society have never seen.

In other words, if the Society accepts the “doctrinal exam,” vis-à-vis the Roman authorities, then it will have a right to a canonical regularization.

For the Society, at this time, to agree to continue the dialogues with Rome would totally change the situation between the two parties:

- the doctrinal discussions of 2009-2011, although the preliminary conditions had not been properly fulfilled, had established an even footing between the Society and Rome, because they had been discussing the points as between theologians, “peer to peer”
- on the other hand, in the new situation, it is Rome who gets the upper hand, who offers the documents to be signed, and, above all, who decides, in the final analysis, if the Society is right or wrong!

At that point Bishop Fellay had a duty to take a new look at a second strong sign in Rome’s unacceptable 14 September 2011 demands and to stop all negotiations at that time, instead he committed two serious mistakes of judgment here, which would be fatal for him later:

- Despite the fact that the 2009-2011 doctrinal discussions had reached the conclusion that the Society could not agree with modernist Rome, he was going to try to reach a semblance of a

doctrinal accord, an accord fatally destined to be **ambiguous**, since Rome had asked that the substance of the unacceptable text of 14 September 2011 should remain unchanged.

– And from that moment on he also accepted from to enter into the practical domain with the perspective of a canonical regularization, without a clear doctrinal accord and on the basis of a text that he had himself declared bad.

As proof of his blindness, Bishop Fellay accepted the new Roman propositions and so decided to ignore the advice of 1) Archbishop Lefebvre, 2) the 2006 General Chapter, 3) the three other Society bishops, and 4) to top it all, to contradict his own earlier statements.

1) Bishop Fellay began by ignoring what **Archbishop Lefebvre had always hold.**

The Archbishop said after the 1988 Episcopal Consecrations:

*I shall not accept being in the position where I was put during the dialogue [of 1988]. No more. I will place the discussion at the doctrinal level: “Do you agree with the great encyclicals of all the popes who preceded you? Do you agree with Quanta Cura of Pius IX, Immortale Dei and Libertas of Leo XIII, Pascendi of Pius X, Quas Primas of Pius XI, Humani Generis of Pius XII? Are you in full communion with these Popes and their teachings? Do you still accept the entire Anti-Modernist Oath? Are you in favor of the social reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ? If you do not accept the doctrine of your predecessors, it is useless to talk! As long as you do not accept the correction of the Council, in consideration of the doctrine of these Popes, your predecessors, no dialogue is possible. It is useless. (Interview with Archbishop Lefebvre, *Fideliter*, no. 66, Nov.-Dec. 1988.)*

What is the “position” during the dialogues of 1988 in which Archbishop Lefebvre no longer wanted to find himself? Why, from that point on, did he speak of demanding Rome for “a doctrinal plan,” when the 1988 accord contained a “doctrinal declaration”?

It means that in 1988 Abp. Lefebvre fixed the following principle: when they ask us to adhere, at least implicitly, to the conciliar errors and reforms, it is up to us to test the doctrinal fidelity of the Roman authorities, not the other way around!

Therefore, without a clear and genuine acceptance by present-day Rome of the encyclicals mentioned by Abp. Lefebvre, “no dialogue is possible. It is useless!”

The main reason being that, if Abp. Lefebvre, after having tried to come to a practical agreement in 1988 without having resolved the doctrinal problem, decided to stop everything then, since our differences with Rome are above all of a doctrinal nature, so likewise we should not commit ourselves to a practical agreement if the doctrinal problem has not been resolved.

Now, it is evident that the current Roman authorities do not accept these encyclicals which condemn modern errors. And still worse, they promote them and boast about them!

Further, in his letter to Pope John Paul II, **Archbishop Lefebvre** set down the same condition:

The conversations and meetings . . . persuaded us that the moment for a frank and efficacious collaboration between us has not yet arrived . . . Given the refusal to consider our requests, and being evident that the purpose of this reconciliation is not at all the same in the eyes of the Holy See as it is in our eyes, we

believe it preferable to wait for times more propitious for the return of Rome to Tradition . . . We shall continue to pray for modern Rome, infested with modernism, to become once more Catholic Rome and to rediscover its two-thousand-year-old Tradition. Then the problem of our reconciliation will have no further reason to exist and the Church will experience a new youth. (Letter from Abp. Lefebvre to John Paul II; 2 June 1988)

Before envisioning a “frank and efficacious collaboration” with Rome, we must wait for the “return of Rome to Tradition.” Modernist Rome must “become once more” Catholic in adhering to the two-thousand-year-old Tradition of the Church.

Now, if one examines Cardinal Levada’s letter of 14 September 2011, there are two parts: one doctrinal with the Preamble to sign, and one practical with the canonical regularization. Thus, Bishop Fellay knew perfectly well that if he succeeded in passing the first step, he would have to accept the other. One (practical) will follow the other (doctrinal).

But here it was not about to place the discussions on the “doctrinal level” of which Abp. Lefebvre spoke. On the contrary, it was precisely about bypassing the doctrinal condition concerning the conversion of Rome! Especially when Bp. Fellay had the evidence that the conclusions of the 2009-2011 doctrinal discussions showed that Rome had not changed one iota of its doctrinal errors.

If Rome refuses to change, to convert, what good is there in continuing?

But Bishop Fellay prefers to continue, by committing himself to the prospect of a practical agreement, and by deciding to consider the propositions of Cardinal Levada’s letter.

Thus, is it not **a serious imprudence** by Bishop Fellay not to take into consideration Archbishop Lefebvre’s warnings? He acts contrary to the virtue of prudence, which demands always to follow the advice of prudent men. Unfortunately this will not be the only time that Bishop Fellay will decide to ignore prudent advice.

2) Next, bishop Fellay decides to ignore what the 2006 General Chapter had clearly decided.

The 2006 Chapter advised against any practical agreement with Rome without first resolving the doctrinal problem:

the contacts made from time to time with the authorities in Rome have no other purpose than to help them embrace once again that Tradition which the Church cannot repudiate without losing her identity. The purpose is not just to benefit the Society, nor to arrive at some merely practical impossible agreement. When Tradition comes back into its own, “reconciliation will no longer be a problem, and the Church will spring back to life.” (Declaration of the 2006 General Chapter of the SSPX)

In that declaration, the 2006 Chapter was only following what Abp. Lefebvre recommended, which they quoted with the same text we mentioned above.

Bishop Fellay, in a conference given to the priests of the South American District in October 2012, contemptuously rejected this Chapter condition, describing it as “impractical.” He said that there was no hope of resolving the doctrinal problems from Rome’s side and that all we could hope

to get from them would only be the “power to criticize the reforms.” He affirmed that his position is more “concrete” and “easier to verify,” and that, in the end, it is “the same” as that of the 2006 Chapter.

Is this true?

It is evident that it is not about what the 2006 Chapter spoke, because the two ways are opposed!

Bishop Fellay is truly making a fool of the Chapter which explicitly said that the “only goal” of the contacts with Rome was to “help them to reclaim Tradition”—that is, to help them join Tradition.

At present, there is another goal: Bishop Fellay speaks of only obtaining “the right to criticize” the reforms, no more.

This new position represents a considerable step back, because the subject of the request has totally changed: for the 2006 Chapter it is Rome who must change; for Bishop Fellay in 2012, it is no longer necessary for Rome to change (at least, not yet . . . he must wait for new discussions so as to hope that Rome changes).

Bishop Fellay at present begs Rome the permission for the Society to criticize the errors. Thus the Society is on inferior position with Rome, while formerly the only thing the 2006 Chapter demanded from Rome was its conversion.

Therefore, the 2006 Chapter and Bp. Fellay are not speaking about the same thing!

And even in supposing that Liberal Rome gave us this “right to criticize,” we must remember that no *Ecclesia Dei afflictata* community has ever been able to put into practice the “right to criticize” since 1988, even though that right had been promised to them at times by Rome in their foundation documents!

So it is clear: Bishop Fellay totally ignores this condition passed by the 2006 Chapter to whom he owes obedience because it is above him. We see in him, once again, disobedience and a serious imprudence.

3) The letter of the three Bishops of the Society, Bps. Williamson, Tissier de Mallerai and de Galarreta.

They wrote a common letter warning Bishop Fellay and his two Assistants of the same danger:

“The 2009-2011 doctrinal discussions have proven that a doctrinal agreement with present-day Rome is impossible.” They manifest *“their formal opposition to any kind of [practical] agreement.”* (Letter to Bishop Fellay from the Three Bishops, 7 April 2012)

It is clear that his three brothers in the Episcopacy, without wanting to impose a decision upon Bp. Fellay, tried in all charity to warn him of the serious consequences of a practical agreement with Rome, because the doctrinal talks proved a doctrinal agreement with Rome to be impossible.

What was Bishop Fellay and Frs. N. Pfluger and A.-M. Nély's response? In their letter they make these horrific statements:

We did not look for a practical agreement. That is false. All we have done is not refuse a priori, as you ask us to do, to consider the Pope's offer. For the common good of the Society, we would far prefer the present solution of the intermediary status quo but it is clear that Rome does not tolerate it any longer.

And then:

It is not realistic to require that everything be settled before arriving at what you call a practical agreement. (Response from Bishop Fellay to the three Bishops, 14 April 2012.)

Here Bishop Fellay not only rejects the warnings of the three bishops, but also those made by Archbishop Lefebvre made in 1988 and by the 2006 General Chapter, because these warnings follow the same prudential, practical line.

In the first paragraph, Bishop Fellay clearly sacrifices the common good of the Society so as to follow Rome's orders. The fact that "Rome does not tolerate it any longer" is not a valid argument, because we are not obligated to obey a pope's orders, which would harm the Society, as long as he has not converted.

Archbishop Lefebvre said (*Fideliter*, no. 66) that he would refuse to talk with Rome as long as they would not accept the encyclicals which condemn the modern errors. Therefore, as long as the Pope and the Curia are of bad will, we are not obliged to obey their orders to participate in talks and we are even less obliged to obey their orders to make a practical agreement, an agreement that Archbishop Lefebvre made dependent on the conversion of the Roman authorities.

This is particularly serious on Bishop Fellay's part, because his **first obligation** in the capacity of the Superior General of the Society, is to preserve and take care of the common good of the Society.
1

In the second paragraph, Bishop Fellay and his Assistants openly contradicted Archbishop Lefebvre, who, on the contrary, because of the failure of the practical agreement of 1988, learned his lesson and did not want to repeat the same errors.

Does Bishop Fellay think that he is more of a realist and wiser than Archbishop Lefebvre, the 2006 General Chapter and his brother Bishops? Why did Bishop Fellay not listen to these people who only wanted the good of the Society?

¹ There is no obligation of obedience to the Pope in these practical governing matters as long as he is not a good leader of the Church, that is, as long as he does not defend the true Faith. It would be foolish to compromise the common good, security and stability of those who have the Faith so as to satisfy the orders of a Pope who behaves as an enemy of the Church by making the members to lose their Faith.

One cannot help but notice in what a pitiful state Bp. Fellay and his Assistants have put the Society!

So, who has sinned by being “unrealistic” or rather by “idealism,” not to mention “irresponsibility,” if not Bp. Fellay and his Assistants?

4) Finally, Bishop Fellay has contradicted himself!

Just before the 2006 Chapter meeting, he was opposed to any practical agreement which would not resolve first the **doctrinal problem**:

In any event it is impossible and inconceivable to pass to the third stage before these discussions have succeeded in exposing and correcting the principles at the root of the crisis.

*However, it is obvious that we will not sign any agreements until such time as things are resolved on the level of principles . . . we cannot allow ambiguities . . . So in order to resolve the issue the Roman authorities would have to clearly and unambiguously manifest, for all the world to see, that there is only one way of coming out of the crisis, namely that of the Church fully rediscovering her own bi-millennium Tradition. The day when this conviction will be clear for the Roman authorities . . . will be the time when agreements can be very easily made. (Interview with Bishop Fellay by Fr. Grégoire Célier, *Fideliter*, May-June 2006)*

But unfortunately “Fellay 2” of 2011 prevailed over “Fellay 1” of 2006. Five years later he preferred to follow the agenda imposed by Cardinal Levada.

Bishop Fellay will pay dearly for this decision because, in the end, he will neither win his case in the **doctrinal domain, nor in the practical domain**.

In the **doctrinal domain**: instead of making Rome move back, it was he who stepped back, making serious concessions with his shameful Doctrinal Declaration.

In the **practical domain**: he ended up dividing the Society, alienating a large part of the Society, the friendly Traditional communities, and many of the faithful.

It is still a source of frustration for Bp. Fellay and his cohorts for not achieving the so much desired practical agreement; thus he would give **anything** now to get the negotiations back on the table! (See **response to objections**)

Therefore, this was the spirit that prevailed in the mind of Bishop Fellay when he received Cardinal Levada’s letter of 15 September 2011 with the new proposals.

Now let us consider the 14 September 2011 Preamble presented by Rome to Bishop Fellay, which it had agreed not to change its substance.

III. The First Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) of Rome, 14 September 2011

1. The “Preliminary Note.”

In the first Preamble, presented by Rome to Bp. Fellay, the accompanying **Preliminary Note** spoke of its contents which:

defined certain doctrinal principles and criteria for the interpretation of Catholic doctrine, which are necessary to ensure faithfulness to the Church's Magisterium and sentire cum Ecclesia, while leaving open to legitimate discussion the study and theological explication of expressions or particular formulations present in the texts of the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent Magisterium.

In reading the text of the Preamble of 14 December 2011, we notice that:

- “*The doctrinal principles,*” are none other than the most serious Conciliar errors such as collegiality, religious liberty, and the new ecclesiology!
- “*The interpretation criteria*” of these “principles” are none other than “the hermeneutic of continuity” which claims to reconcile these errors with Tradition!

Then, when this Preliminary Note speaks of “*faithfulness to the Church's Magisterium and sentire cum Ecclesia,*” we know that, since Vatican II, it refers to “the Conciliar Church,” which Abp. Lefebvre said was in an adulterous union with the Revolution!

Finally, when the cardinal speaks of leaving open “to legitimate discussion the study. . . of the texts of the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent Magisterium,” this is the “carrot” given to the superiors of the Society to make them believe that this could signify a questioning of the Council.

Conciliar Rome promised the same “legitimate discussion” to all the Ecclesia Dei communities since 1988, but one after the other, they have ceased criticizing and have even accepted the conciliar novelties (as Le Barroux has accepted religious liberty).

Then one must wonder: How can Bishop Fellay not see that this “legitimate discussion” authorized on paper is only a trap and indeed permits no real questioning of the Council?

One is thus surprised by the naiveté of Bishop Fellay when:

– in his response letter of 30 November 2011 he states that the Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 “eventually (?) leaves the door open for a further doctrinal discussion”; and

–he says even more enthusiastically in his letter of 12 January 2012 that “the preliminary note indicates a movement in our favor.”

We disagree with Bishop Fellay when he speaks of “a movement in our favor.” Where is it? It is clear that, from the first conversations between the Society and present-day Rome, the only “movement” that anyone could notice on their part is to lead us back to the Conciliar Church!

This is what Abp. Lefebvre said when he put an end to the 1988 discussions: “the goal of this reconciliation is not the same for the Holy See as it is for us.” (Letter to the Pope, 2 June 1988)

And, then, is it true, as Bishop Fellay affirms, that this Note to the Preamble casually “leaves the door open for a further doctrinal discussion”?

After having treated all the subjects upon which there was disagreement, were the 2009-2011 doctrinal discussions not enough? Was not the conclusion sufficiently clear? No doctrinal agreement possible!

What did remain then to “discuss” with modernist Rome, especially when the same Note says that the “*acceptance of the Doctrinal Preamble that follows is the principal foundation of full reconciliation with the Apostolic See.*”?

It is clear that there remained nothing of further importance to discuss with the Society.

But by September 2011 the time had come for Rome to submit Bishop Fellay to a test on doctrine...

2. The Doctrinal Preamble [DP1] of 14 September 2011.

A. The Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 in general.

This Preamble submitted by Modernist Rome is a “masterpiece” of cunning and ambiguity!

It is a “recycling” of the doctrinal propositions that had already been made to the Society in the past.

Its authors are probably the same Modernist theologians who participated in the recent theological discussions with the Society.

Yet Bishop Fellay was aware of the trap in this Roman Preamble, as shown by what he said in the *Cor Unum* of March 2012 in reference to these propositions:

*“Thus we have received a proposal that tried to make us enter into the scheme of the **hermeneutic of continuity.**”*

But we must call attention to the fact that in his Doctrinal Declaration of 15 April 2012, Bishop Fellay accepts **the most important parts** of this Preamble, of which he is so suspicious, by accepting the concept of “living Tradition,” which fits into the logic of “the hermeneutic of continuity”!

B. The Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 in particular.

It is composed of **five parts**:

- The **promise of fidelity** to the Church and to the Pope (I);
- The acceptance of the **teachings** of the Magisterium of the Church in matters of faith and morals, according to the doctrine of section no. 25 of *Lumen gentium* (II);
- The declaration of acceptance of the **conciliar doctrines** (III):
 - on the Pope and the college of bishops [**collegiality**];
 - on **ecumenism** and **religious liberty**;
 - on the **new notion of Tradition** and its development.
- The acceptance of the validity and legitimacy of the Traditional Mass and sacraments, as well as those of **the *editio typica* of Paul VI and John Paul II** (IV);

–The acceptance of the **new Code of Canon Law** (1983).

The text of the doctrinal Preamble is not surprising by its originality, because on the one side it took up again some elements from the 1988 Protocol, and on the other it only repeated what the conciliar Church has been demanding from the Society for more than 40 years: the doctrines of the Second Vatican Council, the new Mass and the new Code of Canon Law.

Rome reinforced its demands in affirming that it is the current Magisterium who decides what belongs to Tradition.

Therefore, the decision in the last instance about any controversy on the content of Tradition always comes back to the current authorities. Thus, according to “the hermeneutic of continuity” of Benedict XVI, it would be enough for the current Roman authorities to affirm that there is nothing contrary to Tradition in the Council and the conciliar reforms! *Roma locuta est. Causa finita est!*

It is relatively easy to answer this document, given that these themes have been studied and refuted a great deal by Abp. Lefebvre and traditional theologians for 50 years.

So then, what is Bishop Fellay going to do?

IV. The Double Response of the Society (30 November 2011 and 12 January 2012).

On 7 October 2011, Bishop Fellay, seeing the importance of the moment and wanting to obtain the Society’s general approval for his response to Cardinal Levada, decided to consult the major superiors and bishops during a meeting held in Albano-Laziale, Italy.

However, Bishop Fellay decided to unjustly exclude Bishop Williamson from this meeting, because he refused to promise to be silent about the content of the Roman text and he refused to stop the publication of his *Eleison Comments*. Actually the real reason is that he could be a major obstacle to a compromise with Rome. Furthermore, we wonder how Bishop Fellay succeeded in getting the support for this unjust exclusion...

The superiors attending, after familiarizing themselves with the text of the Preamble, decided to leave the task of responding to Cardinal Levada to Bishop Fellay.

Bishop de Galarreta gave us a good summary of what was discussed in this meeting, when he said that the offers from Rome were “for the most part, confusing, misleading, false, and essentially bad,” and that the Doctrinal Preamble was “worse than the 1988 Protocol, in particular in relation to the Council and the post-conciliar magisterium.” He also affirmed that to pursue the contacts “will necessarily bring about evils on the common good that we possess, namely, that of the Society and of the family of Tradition.” (7 October 2011).

But the content of Cardinal Levada’s Preamble and the response to it, were shrouded in so much “mystery,” that they were kept secret for more than a year to most of Society members, — which did not contribute to preserving confidence in the superiors.

Most of these documents (but not all) were at last published in *Cor Unum* no. 103 and 104 after the text of the Doctrinal Declaration of 15 April 2012 had been “leaked” on the Internet.²

The answer given by the Society was duplicitous:

–A first short response, dated 30 November 2011;

–A second longer response, dated 12 January 2012, following the request for “additional information” by Bishop Pozzo, Secretary for the Ecclesia Dei Commission. *Cor Unum* did not publish this letter from Bishop Pozzo.

1. The first response, dated 30 November 2011, with a proposition for a new Doctrinal Preamble [DP2].

This response contained two parts:

–a **Preliminary Note**;

–a **new Doctrinal Preamble**.

The Society’s response, dated 30 November 2011, mainly contained good passages in the spirit of Abp. Lefebvre after 1988, but also began to make concessions and contain ambiguities. We shall see that they lacked two important elements and that one unacceptable element was introduced therein.

A. The Preliminary Note.

After recalling the **theological discussions** with Rome that took place between 2009 and 2011, Bishop Fellay’s Note pointed out that these exchanges:

have highlighted important positional differences which concern the reception of the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar magisterium. These differences could not and cannot be overcome through the argument of the hermeneutic of continuity. There are some ruptures that are too obvious.

The Note then recalls that:

the Society of St. Pius X confesses the full Catholic faith and only aims to profess it integrally and to live it.

It also recalls the main conciliar errors: religious liberty, the negation of the unity and exclusivity of the Church, secularism, ecumenism, the universal priesthood of the faithful.

² We should point out that, contrary to Bishop Fellay’s actions, Abp. Lefebvre did not make a “mystery” about the documents he was exchanging with Rome. Sometimes he even opened them in front of the seminarians at Écône, as he did with a letter he had just received from Paul VI during a spiritual conference!

Later, the refusal of the new Code of Canon Law, is clearly expressed because of the “same ambiguities that are in the Council,” and they ask to keep the 1917 Code.

On the new Mass, after granting its “sacramental validity,” as was also asserted by Abp. Lefebvre, the Note affirms that in this Mass:

“We see there an evil behind its deficiencies which in themselves explain the liturgical disaster for the most part.”

All that is corroborated by a well known quotation from the *Brief Critical Examination* [the “Ottavani Intervention”] by cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci.

Concerning the possible canonical normalization of the Society:

“This must allow us without ambiguity to continue our life and our apostolate as we have done it up to the current time.”

The Note then adds a quotation from the famous 21 November 1974 *Declaration* of Archbishop Lefebvre.

In the conclusion of the response one finds in the fifth paragraph:

This is why it is impossible for us to accept the text of the Doctrinal preamble as it was sent to us. Its acceptance would have involved us in a harmful ambiguity and sown confusion among the members of the Society as well as among the faithful who are entrusted to it. We want to remain faithful to the charism of our foundation at any price, calling the errors by their name and preserving unity in our own ranks, so as to better serve the Church.

Thus Bishop Fellay openly rejected the DP1, because in conscience, it is gravely unacceptable in conscience.

Yet we note two omissions which create an ambiguity:

Bishop Fellay’s response only deals with the New Mass. He omits speaking about the new sacraments. Regarding the Mass, for him it is only a question about accepting its validity in its celebration. It avoids the important question about the legitimacy of its promulgation.

B. The Doctrinal Preamble 2 [DP2].

Therefore, Bishop Fellay proposes as an exchange for DP1, his own very short document, the **Doctrinal Preamble [DP2]**, consisting of:

(1) the Profession [of faith] of the Council of Trent;

or

(2) the Profession [of faith] of the Council of Trent and acceptance of the Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor aeternus* of the First Vatican Council together with no. 25 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*, with the indication that all the texts of the Second Vatican Council must be understood according to the antimodernist oath *eodem sensu eademque semper sententiam ab apostolis per orthodoxos patres ad nos usque transmissam* [transmitted even to us from the Apostles through the orthodox Fathers, always in the same sense and interpretation], which would require the reformulation of certain Vatican II texts.

a. The Profession of Faith of the Council of Trent (or of Pius IV, and later called ‘of the First Vatican Council’)

It was until 1989 the official Profession of Faith in the Church, therefore nothing could be more natural than to quote it.

b. The Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor Aeternus*

This essential document of the First Vatican Council is a good reference since it also specifies the limits and conditions of the infallibility of the pope.

c. No. 25 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*

This is the only quotation taken from Cardinal Levada’s Doctrinal Preamble [DP1].

This text from Vatican II’s *Lumen gentium*, taken from Chapter III, “On the Hierarchical Structure of the Church and in Particular on the Episcopate,” and treating about the “teaching function of the bishops,” says:

A religious submission of mind and will must be shown in a special way to the authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking ex cathedra; that is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to, according to his manifest mind and will. His mind and will in the matter may be known either from the character of the documents, from his frequent repetition of the same doctrine, or from his manner of speaking.

We will show later, in the Part II, why this passage from *Lumen gentium* is **unacceptable**.

2. The second response, dated 12 January 2012 to Cardinal Levada [addendum to DP2, dated 30 November 2011]

The *Ecclesia Dei* Commission, visibly dissatisfied by the first response dated 30 November 2011, asked Bishop Fellay, through the intermediary Bishop Pozzo, for “additional information” which would be remitted by Bishop Fellay on 12 January 2012.

This document, as submitted by Bishop Fellay, was intended “to clarify the reasons for our position and the scope of the document.”

It is composed of three parts:

(A) the Preamble in general,

(B) the Preamble in particular,

and **(C) its practical application.**

It is remarkable by its lucidity and its firmness in the analysis of the traps proposed by the Doctrinal Preamble 1 [DP1], and it refutes them in detail, point by point.³

A. On the subject of the Preamble in general.

The 12 January 2012 document affirms that “*the major problems uncovered by certain novelties of Vatican II . . . have not been resolved*” by the Roman Preamble, and that this one, instead of correcting them, asked the Society “to mend its ways”!

Even more, Bp. Fellay maintains:

The Preamble imposes on us all the novelties about which we have already shown the difficulties, the reluctances, the oppositions which remain” and these require “the pure and simple acceptance of a position contrary to our concerns and our authority.”

This analysis shows well that until that moment Bishop Fellay clearly saw the traps contained in the Roman Preamble, but at the same time, he became “myopic,” because he did not discern that the time for doctrinal discussions with Rome has ended!

In a way, Rome in saying: “we listened to you before, and during the doctrinal discussions; now it is time for you to submit to the novelties.”

This is why Cardinal Levada’s Note presenting the Roman Doctrinal Preamble specified, “*we take as a principal basis for a full reconciliation with the Apostolic See the acceptance of the Doctrinal Preamble which follows.*”

Thus, if there is a “full reconciliation” with the signing of the Preamble, there is nothing else to discuss...

B. On the subject of the Preamble in particular.

Then, the **12 January Letter** enumerated the specific problems that the conciliar novelties pose to Catholic Faith.

First, Bishop Fellay pointed out that the text that creates the most problems is in **paragraph III** of the Preamble. He raised the question of the “criteria for interpretation of the contentious texts,” and the notion of the “progress of Tradition,” subjects dear to the Modernists.

a. On the subject of “criteria of interpretation”:

³ Note: It is important to note here that at this time (January 2012) Bishop Fellay seemed to stand firm on the line drawn by Abp. Lefebvre and the Society, at least in terms of **public documents**. It is that “firm” bishop that we will call “Fellay 1,” because later we will see appear (or come to light?) a more ambiguous and accommodating “Fellay 2,” very different from the first.]

It is Rome's *a priori* justification for making changes with the post-conciliar magisterium in relation to Tradition.

For Rome, this “criteria of interpretation” means only the integration of Vatican II and the post-conciliar magisterium into the Tradition of the Church, by means of the “hermeneutic of continuity.” For them, considering Vatican II as being “in rupture,” is the error of both the “radical” conciliarists and of the Society of St. Pius X, with the difference that the first supports this rupture but the second in deplors it.

In the Hegelian mind of Benedict XVI, it is always possible to harmonize two ideas or positions which are objectively opposed, but subjectively “reconcilable” through reason. It is a risky bit of “mental gymnastics,” which openly contradicts factual reality. To deny that after Vatican II there was a rupture with the past, as Benedict XVI has done, is folly and blindness. It is evident, for example, that little or no reference is made in the conciliar or post-conciliar documents to the pre-John XXIII Magisterium.

The Society attempted to respond to this point by mentioning the famous interpretation of the Council “in the light of Tradition.” But this expression does not go very far, because it only puts forth an *ad hominem* argument and not an in-depth argument.

Indeed, the expression to interpret the Second Vatican Council “in the light of Tradition” signifies for the Society that one excludes the novelties of the Council which are clearly in a state of rupture or discontinuity with the Magisterium of all time, but today's Rome comes to the opposite conclusion in saying that there is no rupture!

This expression, “to accept the Council in the light of Tradition” is defective. Indeed, there are many passages in the Council that are totally unacceptable and, even with the best will in the world, they cannot be interpreted otherwise than by what they state. For example, accepting *Gaudium et spes* or *Dignitatis humanae* “in the light of Tradition” is totally impossible. Vatican II goes against Tradition in these documents and one cannot make them say the opposite of what they mean.

Therefore, accepting the Council “in the light of Tradition” also could mean recognizing that there exists a possible “traditional interpretation” of all the texts, which is precisely what affirms the doctrine of the “hermeneutic of continuity.”

It is true that Bishop Fellay said that he would reject certain unacceptable elements of the Council. But, he never sent a list of them in an official text to Rome or explained in detail those elements he would reject.

So, there are two speeches: one for us, one for Rome. The written documents that Bishop Fellay sent to Rome speak of a desire to accept the Council “in the light of Tradition.” That is, he intimates that he considers that all the Council could be read in a “traditional” way. Therefore, Bp. Fellay defends the hermeneutic of continuity without naming it but renaming it “light of Tradition.”

In addition, the word “Tradition” does not have the same meaning for us as for Rome. We consider that some of the Council or of the post-conciliar magisterium texts must be interpreted

according to St. Thomas Aquinas, while the Pope would impose upon us Karl Rahner's interpretation, for example, in considering that there is no rupture!

Finally, Bishop Fellay said in the letter dated 12 January 2012, that to commit himself "to go further, would be to build on uncertainty." Did he thus **reject** the text proposed by Rome? Is he finally going to stop everything? Surprisingly not, since Bishop Fellay refused to stop the negotiations with Rome, and **proposed a new Preamble [DP2]**, that of 30 November 2011, which we have quoted above.

With his DP2 of 30 November 2011, Bishop Fellay thought that it was still possible for him to present, like a "cunning student," another copy of the paper exam, which notably avoided mention of the controversial conciliar texts, but one could see that Cardinal Levada was **not** of the same mind.

b. On the subject of the "progress of Tradition"

This "progress" of tradition is the attempt to justify, *a posteriori*, by today's Rome, the changes made by the conciliar and post-conciliar magisterium regarding traditional doctrine. The idea of heterogeneous (in a different sense) "progress" of dogma has always been a banner dear to Modernists, who believe in the constant evolution of the truth. Therefore, it is not surprising that modernist Rome also wanted to justify the changes made by the Council as being the fruit of a normal, "dynamic" progress.

Against this heterogeneous progress, the Society responded to Rome by recalling what St. Vincent Lerins (†450) had taught on the homogeneous progress of doctrine in his *Commonitorium* (Aide-memoire), which was quoted by the First Vatican Council in the Constitution *Dei Filius*:

Therefore [...] let the understanding, the knowledge, and wisdom of individuals as of all, of one man as of the whole Church, grow and progress strongly with the passage of the ages and the centuries; but let it be solely in its own genus, namely in the same dogma, with the same sense and the same understanding.
[Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium*, §23:3] (Denz. 3020)

Next, Bishop Fellay's letter said that certain conciliar texts and post-conciliar reforms "*are not consistent with that doctrine*" [of continuity with Tradition], as he observed during the doctrinal discussions.⁴

Furthermore, the letter continues:

The crisis [of the Church] is directly tied to the reforms introduced in the name of the Council: New Mass, new ecumenical orientation, new exercise of authority by way of collegiality, new doctrine on religious

⁴ Bp. Fellay used an unfortunate expression when in a letter to Rome dated 12 January 2012 affirmed that the traditional Magisterium "promulgates several novelties," because, strictly speaking, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church never promulgates any "novelty," but, au contraire, before the proclamation of a dogma, the Church must be sure that this truth was always believed, at least implicitly.

liberty, etc. The bad fruits . . . which find their roots in the Council, more exactly in the silences and the equivocations of its texts, its open door, its displacement of accents or perspective, and even its errors against the doctrine of the faith.

c. On the subject of a practical application.

Bishop Fellay is realistic about the practical application of the Preamble, when he asks himself: How can they ask us for an adhesion to “always changing and badly explained theses”?

Furthermore, if the freedom to criticize which is promised to the Society radically excludes the possibility of criticizing new destructive acts towards the Church, then “*the new situation* [of an agreement] *would be worse than it is now.*”

He logically concludes in affirming that, “*we find ourselves faced with the incapacity to sign this Preamble, especially when it is about the substance of the text and not about simple details.*”

What can we **conclude** from these two responses of Bishop Fellay and of his 30 November 2011 Doctrinal Preamble [DP2]?

These two responses by Bishop Fellay to the Roman Preamble [DP1], despite several deficiencies, are still **somewhat correct**, at least in their conclusions.

But it is worth remembering that absolutely **all the criticisms** that Bishop Fellay had just made about the Roman Preamble in these two responses carry no weight, because, as we can see for ourselves, three months later on 15 April 2012, he redacted his own Doctrinal Declaration by taking 95% of the same Preamble he had just rejected!

PART II: THE 15 APRIL 2012 DOCTRINAL DECLARATION

I. The circumstances surrounding the declaration

Before moving on to the analysis of the Doctrinal Declaration [DD] given to Cardinal Levada by Bishop Fellay on 15 April 2012, let us recall the events which immediately preceded his composition:

- 16 March 2012, Cardinal Levada responded via a letter to Bishop Fellay refusing Bishop Fellay’s Doctrinal Preamble [DP2].
- 15 April 2012, Bishop Fellay sent his Doctrinal Declaration [DD];
- 13 June 2012, the Doctrinal Declaration [DD] was rejected by Rome, who presented a new Doctrinal Preamble [DP3].

1. Cardinal Levada’s Letter dated 16 March 2012.

In this letter, Cardinal Levada expressed to Bishop Fellay his “sadness” upon learning of his *“refusal to accept the text of the Preamble [of 14 September 2011] which [he] had been given.”*

The Cardinal began by rejecting what he called the *“alternative solutions”* proposed by the Society, that is, the Doctrinal Preamble [PD2] dated 30 November 2011, that was written entirely by the Society.

Afterwards, he affirmed that these solutions were *“not sufficient to solve the doctrinal issues that are at the root of the rupture between the Holy See and the Priestly Society of St. Pius X, because they do not directly address the controversial issues relating to certain doctrinal teachings of Vatican II and the Papal Magisterium that followed it.”*

He quoted Benedict XVI, at the time of the lifting of the “excommunications” in 2009, who reproached the Society, saying *“you cannot freeze the magisterial authority”* in the period before Vatican II [Council], which furthermore *“contains the entire doctrinal history of the Church.”*

He particularly referenced paragraph III of the Doctrinal Preamble, on “the unity of the Magisterium,” which, according to him, excludes all opposition between the present and the preceding Magisterium, because thinking otherwise “means objectively placing one’s own judgment above the Magisterium itself.”

Then the Cardinal became threatening:

To refuse the Doctrinal Preamble, expressly approved by the Holy Father, is de facto to refuse fidelity to the Roman Pontiff and the Magisterium of the Church today (cf. nn. I and II of the Doctrinal Preamble); this involves a rupture of communion with the Roman Pontiff and the canonical consequences that ensue, according to canons 751 and 1364 of the Code of Canon Law.

In other words, the Cardinal threatens to declare the Society as being “schismatic” and to inflict a new excommunication if Bishop Fellay does not return to the Preamble presented by Rome.

Finally, he invites Bishop Fellay to “*consider the serious consequences of the position that [he has] taken, if [he] decides to make it definitive,*” to “*reconsider*” his refusal of the Doctrinal Preamble [DP1], and gave him a one month delay to provide his definitive response.

To tell the truth, Cardinal Levada is right to ask Bishop Fellay to give his opinion on the “controversial points” which were the cause of the “break” between the Society and Rome about the Council and the post-conciliar Magisterium.

Indeed, these problems had not been mentioned in Bishop Fellay’s DP2.

2. Bishop Fellay’s reaction to Cardinal Levada’s Letter.

From that moment on, Bishop Fellay was torn apart between refusing to go any further, and the desire to be recognized by Rome.

a. An optimism without foundation: Rome has changed!

Bishop Fellay demonstrated a blissful optimism that appeared in his Editorial in ***Cor Unum* no. 101 in March 2012**, which merits a detailed review.

He begins with a retrospective of the events of the past few years, which should discourage any confidence in Rome.

About the 2009-2011 doctrinal discussions he is quite disillusioned:

The absence of evaluation by Rome on the doctrinal discussions . . . the discussions have ended, it is true, a bit abruptly.

And about the **contents** of the same discussions, he recognized that a doctrinal agreement with Rome is impossible:

Our experts have shown well the conflict existing between, on the one hand, the teaching of the Church before the Council and, on the other hand, that of the Second Vatican Council and of its consequences.

Then he mentions Rome’s new propositions (15 September 2011) and the Society’s responses:

*So, we have received a proposal [Doctrinal Preamble 1] that tried to make us enter into the scheme of the hermeneutic of continuity. . . the first time, on **December 1**, and a second time, on **January 12**; we communicated to Rome the fact that it is impossible for us to sign a document that contains such ambiguities.*

Nevertheless, Bishop Fellay seems unable to understand what Rome wants in practice:

The proposal made by that same Congregation: to recognize the Society by granting it a canonical status of a personal prelature, provided that we sign an ambiguous document, which we spoke about in the last issue of Cor unum [no. 100]. This is surprising, inasmuch as the discussions manifested a profound disagreement on almost all the points that were addressed.

“*This is surprising*”: Bishop Fellay has trouble seeing that if Rome agreed to the Society exposing its positions during the discussions, but no more, it is because they are simply waiting for a new phase, for new negotiations with a doctrinal Preamble ready to be signed in view of a juridical statute.

Then Bp. Fellay exposed a false argument (a sophism) in which he revealed his new strategy towards Rome.

After having reassured everyone that he is maintaining “*the Faith [which is] first and paramount*,” he stated that “*the situation in the Church may oblige us to perform acts of prudence in relation and corresponding to the concrete situation.*” In other words, if the “*concrete situation*” changes in Rome, we must change our attitude towards Rome. (*Cor unum*, March 2012)

He mentioned what the 2006 Chapter had said regarding future negotiations with Rome:

The Chapter in 2006 set forth a very clear line of conduct in matters concerning our situation with respect to Rome. We give priority to the faith, without seeking for our part a practical solution before the doctrinal question is resolved. (*Cor unum*, March 2012)

What is shocking here, is that he calls the *sine qua non* condition of the 2006 Chapter a simple “*line of conduct*,” not a principle, thus eventually modifiable according to circumstances. And he will do exactly the contrary of what the 2006 Chapter decided—he was going to look for “*a practical solution before the doctrinal question is resolved*”!

But in order to convince the SSPX that we must change our approach towards Rome, he tries to show that the “*concrete situation*” in Rome has changed for the better by making when he appeals to “*an historical observation concerning the present situation of the Church.*” (*Cor unum*, March 2012)

So he makes a parallel between the year 2006 (because of the Chapter) and the year 2012 to attempt to demonstrate that there has been a change in Rome which demands a change in us as well.

He offers as a “*proof*” of this change some “*facts*,” of which he himself does seem to be convinced when uses such expressions as being “*not very visible*,” “*timid*,” “*thwarted*,” “*placed under the bushel basket*,” “*even though their application leaves something to be desired*,” etc.

He speaks of a “*two opposed, unequal movements [in Rome]*,” which actually is only a battle between the conservatives and the extremists, but remark that all these people are conciliar!

He is sensitive to flattery by his “*new friends in Rome*,” and says that “*young bishops, some of whom clearly but discreetly express to us their sympathy . . . It may be in Rome that these things are more manifest! We now have friendly contacts in the most important Dicasteries, and also in the Pope’s entourage!*”

If we believe him, this description leads one to think mistakenly that the Conciliar Church is dying, is disintegrating! He even claims that “*the movement [of restoration] cannot be stopped.*”

And, to crown his illusions, he goes as far as to claim that “*Divine Providence is expressing through the reality of the events,*” (sic) that is, that he considers that Providence is behind all these small events, not at all convincing, that Rome is converting! As usual, he invokes a kind of “supernaturalism,” which manifests only his own illusions!

Thus he comes to his conclusion:

*If this is true, and I am convinced of it, this requires that **we take up a new position with respect to the official Church.** It is in this context that we must ask ourselves the question about the recognition of the Society by the official Church. Our new friends in Rome declare that the impact of such a recognition would be extremely powerful on the whole Church, as a confirmation of the importance of Tradition for the Church.*

Then, to calm down the ranks of those opposing an agreement, he reassuringly states:

However, such a concrete realization requires two absolutely necessary points in order to assure our survival: The first is that no concessions affecting the faith and what follows from it (liturgy, sacraments, morality, discipline) may be demanded of the Society. The second is that a real liberty and autonomy of action should be granted to the Society, and that these freedoms should allow it to live and to develop in concrete circumstances . . . The concrete circumstances will show when the time has arrived to “take the step” towards the official Church. Today, despite the Roman overture of 14 September, and because of the conditions that have been set, this still seems impossible.

But it is obvious that he is rather optimistic:

When the good Lord wills it, that time will come. But we cannot rule out the possibility that a swift resolution will be reached, because the Pope seems to be throwing all his weight into this matter.

Note that when Bishop Fellay speaks of having “*a new position in relation to the official Church,*” what does he want to say if not that he is ready to change the position of the Society?

He is satisfied with asking for only two conditions to assure our “survival,” no more: (1) no doctrinal concessions on our part, and (2) the freedom to live and grow. One wonders what happened to our criticism of the Conciliar errors?

We will see further on that even these two conditions could not be fulfilled, because Bishop Fellay, in his Doctrinal Declaration, will make major doctrinal concessions, and the “freedom of action” that he dreamed of would be seriously compromised by his acceptance of the new Code.

Next, he repeats that the “favorable conditions” are given in order to respond favorably to Rome:

if there was a change in the situation of the Church with respect to Tradition, then that might necessitate a corresponding modification of the conclusion, [look for an agreement] without any change whatsoever in

our principles! . . . Now there is no doubt that since 2006 we have witnessed a development in the Church, an important and extremely interesting development, although it is not very visible.

The phrase “*if there was a change,*” is ambiguous . . . because it could signify either that this change is still awaited, or that it has already happened.

But after having seen the enumeration by Bishop Fellay of the “positive changes” that have taken place, one cannot help but conclude that, for him, the “change” awaited from Rome has already happened!

What is this “change”? For Bishop Fellay, it is only a change in Rome’s attitude towards us, and not a change of Rome itself!

Certainly, present-day Rome can have a change of “attitude” towards the Society, but this change is purely **political and diplomatic, not doctrinal**, and their goal is still to lead us to accept the conciliar reforms.

Bishop Fellay cannot mention any major doctrinal change in Rome because no one would believe him! Here lies the fundamental difference between Bishop Fellay and the 2006 General Chapter: **which kind of change** we have to expect from Rome before working on a practical accord.: a change of attitude towards us, or a doctrinal change of Rome?

So, it is clear that for Bishop Fellay the doctrinal change expected from Rome cannot be expected now and must be set aside; maybe resolved later... but certainly only after a practical agreement.

b. The dilemma of making the good choice.

Bishop Fellay now finds himself facing the **dilemma** of having to choose between, on one side, to maintain his **refusal** of Rome’s Preamble, and on the other side, the option of **continuing** the negotiations, and presenting a new doctrinal document to Rome, but Cardinal Levada required from him to keep the substance of the ideas contained in the Roman Preamble of 14 September 2011.

To break off the negotiations at this point would require from Bishop Fellay nothing less than a **heroic act, perhaps difficult to do, but still possible.**⁵

One would think that if Bishop Fellay were asking us to pray for protection from a “grave danger,” it was because he was ready to refuse the Roman Doctrinal Preamble and consequentially, and he judged that the Society might be exposing itself to possible sanctions. At least that is the impression one would have at that moment.

So what was Bishop Fellay to do?

He has to options:

⁵ We remember that at this crucial moment, Bishop Fellay asked the Society to pray in order to be protected from “a grave danger.”

–If he confirmed his refusal of the Roman Doctrinal Preamble, he could be confronted with possible “sanctions” from modernist Rome, as Cardinal Levada had threatened;

–If he “revised his copy,” by presenting a new, sufficiently ambiguous document, which might please Rome and his own people at the same time, then the canonical recognition would only be a one-step away.

But one thing was sure, Bishop Fellay’s ultimate decision would depend on his most profound motivations.

(a) The option to reject.

If he chooses the first option, that of rejecting the Preamble presented by Rome, it would be because he considered any doctrinal concession to be impossible.

After all, in acting this way he would only confirm the serious criticisms that he had expressed against Rome’s Preamble in his second letter of 12 January 2012, where he had exposed, point by point, the serious doctrinal problems of this document. To act otherwise would be to contradict himself! Thus, he would not make any doctrinal compromise and he would save the unity of the Society and of Tradition.

Truly, this refusal would expose the Society to new “excommunications” and being declared “schismatic” . . . But Bishop Fellay should not worry about new “condemnations” by modernist Rome, since they would only be apparent, because of invalidity.

Here is what Archbishop Lefebvre thought about the “sanctions” coming from modernist Rome, as he expressed in his press conference the evening before the episcopal consecrations in 1988:

The Osservatore Romano will publish the excommunication, evidently a declaration of “schism.” What does it all mean?

Excommunication by whom? By modernist Rome, by a Rome that most certainly no longer has the Catholic faith. (...)

So we are [to be] excommunicated by Modernists, by people who have been condemned by previous popes. So what can that really do? We are condemned by men who are themselves condemned, and who would be publicly condemned. That leaves us indifferent. Evidently that has no value. A declaration of schism; schism with what, with the Pope who is the successor of Peter? No, schism with the modernist Pope, yes, schism with the ideas that the Pope spreads, above all, the Revolutionary ideas, the modern ideas, yes. We are in schism with them. (Archbishop Lefebvre, Press conference, Ecône, June 15 1988)

In 2012 Rome continued to be occupied by modernists and liberals as in 1988, and Bishop Fellay wanted us “to believe the unbelievable,” namely that the situation has changed for the good! Actually, we will see later that it is not Rome who has changed, but that it is Bishop Fellay, himself, who has changed.

Because the stakes are truly there: what Rome promised with these negotiations, at the end of the practical agreement is the “carrot”, but the “stick” is now the threat of new sanctions if the Society does not accept their Doctrinal Preamble.

And so, if Bishop Fellay continues in the same old doctrinal position, that is, Archbishop Lefebvre's position which used to be at least somewhat his own position (at least in the conclusions) in January 2012, the Society would be assured of continuing to defend Tradition and fight against the conciliar errors with real freedom.

(b) The option to continue.

If Bishop Fellay goes back to the canonical recognition process, by the same token, he accepts setting himself up as a petitioner: he would be appealing for a favor from Rome. Thus, he would be in an inferior position in relation to his interlocutors, and, consequently, sooner or later he would have to succumb to the demands of modernist Rome, and not his own!⁶

This second option, of continuing, implies that the Superior General necessarily must present a new doctrinal document to Rome.

Indeed, if he wanted to obtain the long desired canonical regularization at any price, he must proceed as Cardinal Levada asked him, that is, to accept the substance of the Roman Preamble dated 14 September 2011, a document he had already rejected!

Since he had officially declared that this 2011 document from Rome was unacceptable, for the time being, he could no longer honestly and openly take it back.

Therefore the only solution that would please Rome would be to rewrite the same thing, but in a disguised and ambiguous manner, so that everyone, i.e. Rome and the members of the Society, would be satisfied. In other words, he would have to rewrite a new doctrinal declaration but containing the erroneous principles of the 14 September 2011 Preamble which would be reformulated in a way that would make it appear to be more traditional.

Did not Bishop Fellay know that modernist Rome would demand some doctrinal concessions from him, if he expected a canonical recognition from them? It is difficult to believe that Bishop Fellay did not foresee this.

Especially since there was not a doctrinal agreement at the end of the theological discussions with Rome. Truly for Rome these discussions had no other end but "to clarify the respective positions and their motivations," (Cf. Preliminary Note) and nothing more.

Actually Rome waited for the end of the doctrinal discussions to introduce the doctrinal demands. Sooner or later, it was inevitable that the Roman authorities would ask for doctrinal concessions from the Society.⁷

⁶ If we compare Bishop Fellay's situation in 2012 to that of Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988, we can see that Archbishop Lefebvre was in a superior position during his negotiations with Rome because of his threat to consecrate a bishop, which made the Pope and Cardinal Ratzinger move.

⁷ Let us remark that it has been always easy for Rome to grant a canonical recognition of the Society, (which would not cost them much...) provided that the Society would accept the Council and its reforms, which are not negotiable.

But, has also Bishop Fellay, like Rome, non-negotiable doctrinal points? What is more important for him: a canonical recognition or the fidelity to doctrine?

(c) The decision is made: let's continue!

We know how the final decision was taken by Bishop Fellay:

- he put aside his Doctrinal Preamble (DP2) dated 31 November 2011;
- he presented his **Doctrinal Declaration (DD) dated 15 April 2012** to Rome, which was only a slightly modified and “revised edition” of the Roman Preamble of 14 September 2011!⁸

We must keep in mind that Rome's first public reaction to Bishop Fellay's Doctrinal Declaration was rather favorable.

Indeed, Fr. Lombardi, the head of the Vatican Press Office, commented the following on Radio Vatican on April 18 2012:

According to witnesses who have read it, this response is very different from the preceding one . . . You could say that they took a step forward, that is to say that the new response is very encouraging.

Note that Fr. Lombardi had certainly seen Bp. Fellay's Declaration, and this means his testimony has an official character, and that he mentions three times his positive opinion about the document.

Thus, two elements officially motivated Bishop Fellay's decision to give a favorable response to Rome in presenting his Doctrinal Declaration date 15 April 2012:

– One “positive” element: Bishop Fellay affirms (mistakenly) that there is “a change in the situation of the Church regarding Tradition”. This is actually the first argument he uses to justify the request for a canonical recognition by Rome and the continuation of the discussions to this effect. Basically: if Rome has “changed,” we too must change! The Society must put into practice the “new position towards the official Church.”

– A “negative” element: the fear of possible sanctions by Rome. This is an example of a typical manipulation. Bishop Fellay dramatizes the situation and exaggerates the danger of sanctions from Rome to justify his choice. (We will return to this later)

We must question the seriousness of these official reasons as advanced by Bp. Fellay to go ahead with an agreement with Rome.

The so-called “improvement” of the situation in Rome is clearly nonexistent.

⁸ We will see that Bishop Fellay, in this new document, made serious concessions concerning the Catholic faith. We will see that this text, initially accepted by Rome, was the basis to prepare the signature of the agreement with Bishop Fellay on 13 June 2012. The agreement, however, was not signed at the last minute for some reasons we will analyse later on.

As for the fear of sanctions from Rome: since 1988 they have had no effect on the Society. Are we to fear for sanctions we did not care about?

Therefore, Menzinger's two reasons to compromise are false.

One thing is sure: Bishop Fellay wants, at any price, to make a practical agreement with Rome and he is trying to justify it any way he can, tactlessly. For him, despite his denials, it is clear that from now on, the practical agreement comes before the defense of the faith. This explains why he will make serious doctrinal concessions in his 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration.

As a consequence, the Society will pay dearly for the decision taken by Bishop Fellay to present his **Doctrinal Declaration**.

II. The 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration (DD) of Bishop Fellay

A. Analysis of the Declaration in general.

Less than a month after receiving the threatening letter from Cardinal Levada, Bishop Fellay, on 15 April 2012, presented his Doctrinal Declaration (DD) to Rome.⁹

It is very important to notice that this new document was no longer, as it was the Doctrinal Preamble of 30 November 2011 (DP2), a document entirely conceived by Bishop Fellay and replacing the Roman Preamble.

Bishop Fellay, in front of Rome's refusal of his DP2, just decided to take back the Roman Doctrinal Preamble (DP1), modifying it slightly.

Nevertheless, Bishop Fellay remains the true author of the 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration, even if for its composition he was largely inspired by the unacceptable 2011 Roman Preamble.

He began by giving it a new name: **"Doctrinal Declaration."** But, make no mistake: it represents about 95% of the Cardinal Levada's Preamble dated 14 September 2011!¹⁰

Besides, it should be noted that, contrary to Bishop Fellay's recent explanations seeking to minimize the impact of his Declaration, the choice of the title "Declaration" gives more importance

⁹ Let us remark that this Declaration was accompanied by no additional explanations. One would suppose that it was because the DD appeared to its author to be sufficiently "clear" and that it needed no any clarification . . . It is dated 15 April, but it was sent to Rome on April 17th.

¹⁰ Bishop Fellay said in his introductory note to this document in *Cor Unum* no. 104, that the **choice** of the "*title 'Doctrinal Declaration' is borrowed from Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988, since we did not want to take back the title 'Doctrinal Preamble,' which contents we had rejected in our response dated January 12.*" Frankly, these two declarations have very little in common . . . because their content is totally different! (Cf. responses to objections).

and a more definitive character to the document, unlike the term “Preamble,” which implies the opening to other texts which will come afterward.

1. Bishop Fellay’s Introductory Note in *Cor Unum* No. 104.

The magazine *Cor Unum* (no. 104, March 2013) published an introductory note by Bishop Fellay in which he tries to explain to the members of the Society the “context” in which he wrote the 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration.

He began by recalling the refusal by Cardinal Levada (a letter of 16 March 2012) of his Doctrinal Preamble (DP2) presented on 30 November 2011, as a replacement for the Roman Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) of 14 September 2011.

It is clear that for Cardinal Levada, the Society’s rejection of the Doctrinal Preamble (approved by Benedict XVI), was “*tantamount to a rupture in the communion with the Roman Pontiff, which would lead to canonical sanctions incurred for schism.*”

Why did Bishop Fellay not refute the Cardinal’s fallacious argument? Did he feel “guilty” of rejecting Rome’s Preamble?

Nevertheless it’s easy to answer the Cardinal’s argument. If the Society rejected the Roman Preamble, it is because of serious doctrinal reasons. Bishop Fellay could not go back and accept it now without contradicting himself and making a serious mistake, no matter the risk of the threats from Rome! To be “in communion” with Benedict XVI’s Preamble, would be tantamount to not being in communion with all the Popes before Vatican II, nor with the Catholic Church.

Then, in the same *Cor Unum* text, Bishop Fellay attempts to appear “firm” when he states that it was “*the principle of faith*” which guided his relations with Rome. He added, “*we have always ruled out weighing the pros and cons of this principle in view of obtaining . . . a canonical recognition*” and that “*no practical agreement would ever be accepted unless it met the sine qua non conditions we have often expressed, whether in several positions taken or in the second response to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (January 12, 2011).*”

It is easy for him to affirm that now . . . but to believe what Bishop Fellay says here, we must judge him by his actions, and not by his words. Maybe the conditions *sine qua non* have been stated on several occasions, but Bishop Fellay’s Doctrinal Declaration, as we can see, will ignore these conditions.

And what did he do about the *sine qua non* condition stated by the 2006 General Chapter which demanded to avoid any “*merely practical impossible agreement*”? The 2006 Chapter also stated, by quoting Archbishop Lefebvre, that “*the day when Tradition will regain all its rights [to Rome], the reconciliation will no longer be a problem, and the Church will find again a new youth.*” [Abp. Lefebvre]”

As we have seen, Bishop Fellay discarded this important condition in a stroke of his pen by labeling it “*impractical.*”

According to him, Cardinal Levada accused the Society of rejecting “*all the acts of the Magisterium since 1962,*” an accusation which Bishop Fellay considers to be “*false.*” (sic)¹¹

Further on, Bp. Fellay speaks about his “*line of demarcation [ligne de crête]*” through which, he says, he wants to avoid the extreme positions of compromise with Rome, and sedevacantism, because one does not want to be “*either heretic or schismatic.*”

Then he wanted to minimize the impact of his Declaration by stating that “*even if the document given in April [2012] had been accepted [by Rome], that alone would not have been sufficient to arrive at a canonical regularization . . . This context shows that the Doctrinal Declaration did not claim to be the full expression of our thinking about the Council and the current Magisterium,*” and that by the Declaration he only wanted to complete the doctrinal meetings of 2010-2011 on a particular point: “*the accusation of schism.*”

We have already seen what Archbishop Lefebvre thought of such supposed accusations of “schism” brought against us by modernist Rome, but one could say that Bishop Fellay is truly affected by this false accusation, because he seems to take it seriously . . . Does he really believe what is only “apparent” schism?

Later he explains that these “*examples of our submission to the magisterial authority in itself*” do not exclude his “*opposition to many of the acts being performed by it currently.*” We will see later, in the analysis of the Declaration, that Bishop Fellay’s unrealistic explanation does not hold up.

He puts himself on the defensive against some attacks in the Society, when he states that “*our thought was not understood in this sense by some eminent members of the Society, who saw in it an ambiguity, or else an alignment with the thesis of the hermeneutic of continuity.*”

If anyone takes these words literally, he must believe that these “*eminent members*” in the Society are ignorant regarding theological matters . . . The fact is that never before in the Society have we seen so many priests and faithful so seriously opposed to the Superior General because of his wrongdoings. Is this not a proof that behind their reaction is more than a simple misunderstanding, but a real doctrinal problem with the Superior General?

The Superior General of the Society is trying to convince the priests that the rejection by Rome of this Declaration, in 13 June 2012, was the proof that his document was not “*an alignment with the thesis of the hermeneutic of continuity.*” But he “forgot” to mention that his Declaration was originally approved by Rome, from April 2012 to the beginning of June 2012, and that the practical agreement was about to be signed on 13 June 2012, when at the last-minute, some events changed the Pope’s mind. (We will treat further on this “rejection” from Rome)

Bishop Fellay then tried to deflect attention by speaking of the rearrangements, modifications and additions in the new Roman Declaration presented to him on 13 June 2012, while what matters

¹¹ If truth be told, it is difficult to find a single document of the conciliar or post-conciliar “magisterium” which is totally orthodox and on which one would not have some reservations . . . *Humanae vitae* is perhaps the only one! One would like to know what Bishop Fellay thinks of this subject.

is the internal analysis of his own Declaration, that of 15 April 2012, in order to see if it corresponded or not to the constant position of the Society.

(We will respond to the falsity of this statement at the end of **PART TWO**)

Finally Bishop Fellay concluded by “exclusively” revealing that he informed Bishop Di Noia, on 28 August 2012, that he “*was withdrawing*” his proposal of April 2012, “*which could no longer serve as a basis to work in the future.*”

What is the point to say it now when, according to him, the Declaration has been “rejected” by Rome?

And independently of the fact that it was rejected as a basis to work, Bishop Fellay must answer for its contents. He must explain to everyone how he could present such a heterodox document as representing the doctrinal position of the Society!

He concludes his *Cor Unum* introductory Note by saying that only the following documents represent the Society’s position:

- the two letters sent to Rome on 30 November 2011, and 12 January 2012;
- the declaration of the General Chapter dated 14 July 2012;
- the Six Conditions, voted by the 2012 General Chapter, required before any canonical recognition by Rome.

(We will analyze this statement by Bishop Fellay later.)

2. The Ambiguity of the Doctrinal Declaration

One has the right to ask two questions concerning Bishop Fellay’s decision to present the Doctrinal Declaration:

A.) Why did bishop Fellay abandon the 30 November 2011 Doctrinal Preamble (DP2) which was a little shaky, but correct in its conclusions, and replace it with the 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration (DD) which was much worse and full of ambiguities?

B.) Could Cardinal Levada’s Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) be modified to the point of making it “acceptable” in Bishop Fellay’s 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration?

From the answers to these two questions and the detailed analysis of the Doctrinal Declaration will come the evidence of a serious betrayal of our doctrinal positions and evidence of our duty to condemn the modernist errors.

a.) To respond to the **first question**, we cannot but notice that Bishop Fellay’s abandonment of his 30 November 2011 Preamble (PD2) shows a serious concession in the face of Tradition’s enemies.

The PD2, even though containing two omissions and an unacceptable reference to *Lumen Gentium*, nevertheless, was mostly based on traditional documents. In it Bp. Fellay wanted to take the

initiative, to change the strategy, and to pass from being the accused one, to be the accuser of the innovators in Rome.

But then, with his DD, Bp. Fellay completely changed his position: he preferred to follow another path, the path of compromise and concession.

He simply returned to the Roman Preamble of September 2011 proposed by Card. Levada and will try to modify it.

This is how Bishop Fellay explains his strategy—so full of ambiguity and equivocation, more worthy of a politician than a man of the Church—when he speaks of his Doctrinal Declaration:

Concerning the reply I sent to Rome just after Quisimodo Sunday on 17 April [2012] . . . there are (in this document) expressions or declarations which are so very much on the line of demarcation [Fr.: la ligne de crête] that if you are ill-disposed or are wearing dark- or rose-colored glasses, you will see it as this or that. . . . But, if one wants to read it the wrong way [Fr.: de travers],¹² one will succeed in understanding it the wrong way. (Nouvelles de Chrétienté, no. 135)

We are very far from the clear language of Our Lord, of Catholicism and of our Founder!

In other words, if Bishop Fellay affirms that his whole Declaration can be understood “*the wrong way*,” with “dark glasses,” it is because his document is considered ambiguous. And he confirms this ambiguity when he says that, “*if one wants to read it the wrong way, one will succeed in understanding it the wrong way.*”

Does not Scripture tell us: “*Let your speech be yea, yea: no, no: and that which is over and above these, is of evil.*” (Matt. 5:37) and also, “*Os bilingue detesto – I hate . . . a mouth with a double tongue.*” (Prov. 8:13)? God hates double speak, ambiguity, double meaning. Because ambiguity is precisely that: it is an expression that has two interpretations, one good and one evil. An ambiguous text in thus unacceptable, because one does not have the right to favor error by allowing for a double interpretation. And what is worse, this ambiguity here is intentional, by the will of its author.

This ambiguity is all the more condemnable when it is a question about Catholic doctrine, which is always uncompromising. How can one want ambiguity when it is a question of matters pertaining to the Faith and the salvation of souls? Because these matters imply serious consequences, one cannot permit oneself to offer a text full of double meanings.

This is why the Church gravely condemns not only openly erroneous expressions, such as heresies, but also ambiguous expressions, like “close to heresy,” “favoring heresy,” or “smelling heresy,” such as those condemning the *Synod of Pistoia* (1786).

Can we ever imagine the documents of the Traditional Magisterium being filled with ambiguities?¹³

¹² The French word “*de travers*” could be translated into English: *the wrong way, crooked, askew, sideways*. Is it not the precise definition of ambiguity: to favor a wrong interpretation?

¹³ The same principle can be applied to the New Mass: its authors designed it precisely to be ambiguous, so that it could have the meaning of a Protestant meal. On the other hand, this would be

The ambiguity is all the more condemnable when there is a serious obligation to make a profession of our faith, as it is precisely the case here with Bishop Fellay's "Doctrinal Declaration." Did he not imply so in "declaring" our faith and not hiding it or favoring error?

b.) To respond to the **second question**, it is evident that Cardinal Levada's 14 September 2011 Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) cannot to be modified to the point of making it "acceptable."¹⁴

The primary reason that makes us think that the Roman Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) could not be modified is that Bishop Fellay himself thinks so!

If this Preamble were "changeable," why did not the Society do it on 30 November 2011 or in January 2012 when they answered Rome?

Did not Bishop Fellay reject this Preamble in his letter dated 30 November 2011?

He refuted it POINT BY POINT in his letter of 12 January 2012, in which he said that his acceptance would have represented a "*harmful ambiguity and sowed confusion*" because it would "*impose upon us all the novelties about which we had pointed out our difficulties, reluctance, and opposition and to which our objections still remain.*"

Unless one disregards the principle of non-contradiction, by which a statement and its contrary cannot be true at the same time, Bishop Fellay contradicts himself and loses his credibility if he accepts most of a document which he himself has refuted, point by point, using very strong arguments!

Which "Bishop Fellay" should we believe? The one of November 2011 and January 2012 with his DP1, or the one of April 2012 with his DD?

Someone may object that Bishop Fellay has removed the harmful elements in Rome's Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) and so he has transformed it in his Doctrinal Declaration, which would be acceptable to Rome and the Society at the same time.

We will respond to that charge later in detail by showing, point by point, that Bishop Fellay has not substantially modified the Roman Preamble in his Declaration; he only made some minor changes.

unimaginable with the traditional Mass which does not contain this ambiguity and which can have only a Catholic meaning. It is true as well about certain Vatican II documents, which are evil and unacceptable because of their ambiguity.

¹⁴ This error is similar to the one concerning the Second Vatican Council documents, of which some say that it would be enough to "correct" them so as to make them "acceptable." Common sense shows us that most of the conciliar documents are so corrupt that one cannot correct them and make them "good." They must simply be rejected.

Our **second reason** for thinking that the Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) was not amendable is that it was written by our **enemies** in Rome. Its neo-Modernist authors clearly wanted to lead the Society, through ambiguity and cunning, to accept the conciliar reforms via the “hermeneutic of continuity.”

Its language is only more “refined” than in other documents presented to the Society in the past in order to better seduce, but all the **neo-modernist poison** is really there.

It is difficult to believe that Bishop Fellay did not see the poison lurking in the Roman Preamble, which he used later to construct his DD. Not only is he intelligent, but if we take into account his theological formation at Ecône and his experience acquired studying the modern errors, he could not ignore this problem.

So, Bishop Fellay’s **unforgivable fault** is that he thinks he could “transform” the Roman Preamble into his own Declaration, without changing the “substance” of the former, as Cardinal Levada asked him!

The **a posteriori** proof that this Declaration was not good is that it created a **reaction of opposition** never before seen in the Traditional world, which was not the case with his Doctrinal Preamble of 30 November 2011 (DP2)! If Bp. Fellay claims that the “tree,” viz. his DD, was good, why did it produce such violent “fruits” of opposition in his own ranks?

Bishop Fellay and his advisors had difficulty “taking the temperature” of this internal opposition to his Doctrinal Declaration, because they never understood that this reaction within Tradition came, not from “bias,” but from the refusal of many to adhere to a text which “smelled” Modernism. Menzinger refused to recognize that its contents were unacceptable in conscience to many.

And still today, despite several “strategic” steps back, Bishop Fellay persists in saying that there is nothing wrong with the contents of his Declaration, but he affirms that he decided to “withdraw” it, but not to “retract” it, and only because of the negative reaction it received in the Traditional world.

3. Bishop Fellay’s Reasons Advanced to Justify This Declaration

Ignoring what is in someone’s conscience, we cannot know with certainty what were Bishop Fellay’s **internal motivations** at the time he wrote his unacceptable Doctrinal Declaration. But we can study the **official reasons** he gave in explanation to justify it. We can also find some clarification through the **public actions** of the Superior General of the Society.

In the explanatory note presenting his Doctrinal Declaration in *Cor Unum* no. 104, Bishop Fellay advanced **two reasons** to justify his decision to replace the DP2 of 30 November 2011 with a totally ambiguous and equivocal Declaration in order to please Rome:

- the fear of possible sanctions from Rome, and
- the desire to join the official Church.

a.) The fear of possible sanctions from Rome.

We have already spoken of the threat of possible “sanctions” coming from Rome that Cardinal Levada spoke of in his letter dated 16 March 2012 if the Society does not go back to the 14 September 2012 Roman Preamble.

If we judge by the reaction of Bp. Fellay to this threat, we cannot help to see that this intimidation by modernist Rome worked! Fear, especially when is “imminent,” often causes men to yield...¹⁵

Why were Bishop Fellay and his assistants so afraid when faced with these possible “sanctions” from Rome?

Maybe it is due to the fact that since the lifting of the "excommunications" in 2009, Bishop Fellay started to feel more in the “legality” of the Church, and became “terrified” at the prospect of finding himself once again “condemned” by Rome. Bishop Fellay wanted so much to be recognized by the official Church that he could not stand his “reconciliation” being jeopardized by new sanctions.

Unlike Archbishop Lefebvre, who was indifferent to the “excommunication” by Rome in 1988, Bp. Fellay gives too much importance to being “condemned” by Rome in 2012.

If his inveterate “legalism” leads Bp. Fellay to feel “guilty” about finding himself on the borders of the official Church, all the more he wanted to avoid being officially “condemned” once again by the same Church!

Did he consider that the possible new “sanctions” were valid if he refuses to go back to the Roman Preamble? He must believe so, judging by his statements taken from the introductory Note of his Doctrinal Declaration in *Cor Unum* no. 104:

Cardinal Levada adds that our rejection of the Doctrinal Preamble approved by Benedict XVI is equivalent to a breach of communion with the Roman Pontiff, which entails the canonical sanctions incurred by schism . . . It [the DD] was not a substitute for our doctrinal position as set forth during the two years of doctrinal discussions; it only intended to add to them on a particular point: the accusation of schism.

In any case, his right hand man, Fr. Pfluger is more explicit on this sentiment of the “culpability” of the Society because of its lack of recognition by the conciliar Church.

*For our part, we suffer also from a defect: the fact of our canonical irregularity. It is not only the status of the post-conciliar Church which is imperfect, it is also ours. . . There is no denying the obligation to take an active part in overcoming the crisis. And this combat begins with us, by desiring to overcome our abnormal canonical status. (DICI no. 263: 16 October 2012, Interview with *Kirchliche Umschau*)*

These feelings of culpability are far from the excellent analysis made by Fr. Regis de Cacqueray (District Superior of France) on the “threats” by Rome:

¹⁵ Can we excuse Bishop Fellay for having acted in such a way, giving way his convictions for fear of sanctions?

Fear does not always excuse moral responsibility, especially when it is a question about a public profession of faith, as was the case here, otherwise, there would never be martyrs!

Consequently, one understand that this interminable comedy [of Rome] will finish by leaving us indifferent and by discrediting in our eyes those who use with so much ease the carrot and the stick. . . to be excommunicated, then “un-excommunicated,” to be threatened again with being excommunicated, one finishes by hardly being impressed by these dramatic turns of events and all these flip-flops.

We have so many reasons to consider these unjust punishments as being null and void! They have been discredited in our eyes. First, we look to the memory of 1988. It is the excommunication that rewarded the singular service made by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre to the Holy Church in providing it with four excellent Catholic bishops, thanks to whom the transmission of the Catholic priesthood is being strengthened. On that occasion we stated how, through the mystery of iniquity, the best servants of the Church find themselves being mistreated. (Fideliter, no. 208, July-August 2012)

Here is what Archbishop Lefebvre said on June 29, 1976 in Ecône about the conciliar Church:

The Church that affirms such errors (liberty of conscience, etc.) is at once schismatic and heretical. This Conciliar Church is, therefore, not Catholic. To whatever extent the Pope, bishops, priests, or faithful adhere to this new Church, they separate themselves from the Catholic Church.

It is sad to state that Bishop Fellay, instead of choosing the intransigence of the faith and the eventuality of apparent but void “condemnations,” he prefers to search for a visible “legality” and finishes by giving way to fear. And what is more serious is that in responding “favorably” to Rome, as we are going to see, he gives up on fundamental questions of doctrine.

All this betrays in him a lack of conviction in our doctrinal positions, because he accepts “under condition” in his Doctrinal Declaration, the three pillars of the “conciliar Church”: the Second Vatican Council, the new Mass, and the new Code of Canon Law!

b.) A false notion about the nature of the Church.

If Bishop Fellay agrees to favorably answer Rome with his Doctrinal Declaration it is because there is a “doctrinal” reason behind this decision: for him, the conciliar church is the Catholic Church—it is the same Mystical Body of Christ!

This is an extremely vast subject which would merit a longer refutation, but it will suffice here to briefly present this false reasoning and then refute it.

The problem is that Bishop Fellay identifies the churchmen, the palaces, the church buildings, the external ceremonials of the “conciliar church” with the Catholic Church . . . He often calls “the conciliar church” (an expression he no longer uses) the “concrete” Church, the “real” Church.

These expressions of Bishop Fellay are not theological at all, and what is more, signify nothing, because we could also say that all false churches are “concrete” or “real”!¹⁶

The expression “conciliar church,” conceived by Cardinal Benelli in a letter to Archbishop Lefebvre on 25 June 1976, betrays the modernist and freemasonic project of creating a truly “new church” which is not the Catholic Church.

Has Bishop Fellay forgotten what are the visible theological marks of the Church which identify the Catholic Church and not the purely external ceremonies? Bishop Fellay explicitly affirmed it in a conference at the St. Curé d’Ars Seminary in Flavigny, France, on 16 February 2009,

¹⁶ These expressions of Bp. Fellay about the Church **are not at all theological**, and besides they mean nothing, because we could also affirm that the false “churches” are “concrete” or “real”...!

The identification between the official Church and the modernist Church is an error because we are speaking of a concrete reality.

Archbishop Lefebvre had quite a different position at Ecône during a conference given to priests on 9 September 1988:

The visible church is recognized by the marks that have always been given to visibility: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. I ask: Where are the true marks of the Church? Are they more evident in the official Church (this is not the visible Church, it is the official Church) or in us, in what we represent, what we are? Clearly we are the ones who preserve the unity of the Faith, which has disappeared from the official Church. These signs can no longer be found in the others . . . It is not us who leave the Church, but the modernists. To say “to leave the visible Church,” is wrong in identifying the official Church with the visible Church. We belong to the visible Church, to the society of the faithful under the authority of the Pope, because we do not reject the authority of the Pope, but rather what he does . . . Therefore, is it necessary to leave the official Church? To some extent, yes, obviously.

*It is we who are the visible Church . . . It is the others who are no longer a part of it. (Interview in *Le Choc*, no. 6, Paris, France, 1989)*

And so, if we follow the “logic” of Bishop Fellay, if the “conciliar church” and the Catholic Church are “identical,” we must look for the “reconciliation” with current day Rome; we must join it.

Bishop Fellay even gave to this “reconciliation” two motives: one “dogmatic” (it’s the true Church) and the other moral (of conscience). Otherwise, according to him, if we do not re-join the official church we would be committing a serious sin.

B. Analysis of the Doctrinal Declaration in Particular:

1. The text of the Doctrinal Declaration.

In order to make a quick comparison between the Doctrinal Declaration of 15 April 2012 (DD) and the Roman Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 (DP1), we will underline the text added by Bishop Fellay.

We will also be pointing out later what Bishop Fellay removed from the Roman Doctrinal Preamble from which, we must recall, he drew up his Declaration.

Here is the integral text of the **Doctrinal Declaration** (DD) as presented to Rome by Bishop Fellay on 15 April 2012:

DOCTRINAL DECLARATION

I. We promise always to be faithful to the Catholic Church and to the Roman Pontiff, her Supreme Pastor, Vicar of Christ, successor of Peter and head of the Episcopal Corps.

II. We declare that we accept the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church in matters of faith and morals, giving to each doctrinal statement the requisite degree of adherence, according to the teaching contained in no.25 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican Council II. (Cf. also the new formula of the Profession of

Faith and of the Oath of Fidelity on Assuming an Office to be exercised in the Name of the Church, 1989: cf. CIC canons 749; 750 §1 and §2: 752: CCEO canons 597: 598 §1 and §2; 599.)

III. In particular:

1. We declare that we accept the doctrine on the Roman Pontiff and the College of Bishops, with its head, the Pope, taught by the Dogmatic Constitution Pastor Aeternus of Vatican Council I and the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium of Vatican Council II, chapter III (De constitutione hierarchica Ecclesiae et in specie de Episcopatu), as explained and interpreted by the Nota explicativa praevia of that same chapter.

2. We acknowledge the authority of the Magisterium, to which alone has been entrusted the task of interpreting authentically the Word of God, whether written or handed down, (Cf. Pius XII. Encyclical Letter Humani Generis, Denz. 3886.) in fidelity to Tradition, recalling that “The Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that they might, by his revelation, make known some new doctrine, but that by his assistance, they might religiously guard and faithfully expound the revelation transmitted by the apostles, i.e., the deposit of faith.” (Vatican I. Dogmatic Constitution Pastor Aeternus, Denz. 3070.)

3. Tradition is the living transmission of Revelation “usque ad nos” (Council of Trent. Denz. 1501: “This truth and instruction [which] are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the apostles themselves, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have come down even to us.”) and the Church in her doctrine, life, and worship, perpetuates and transmits to all generations all that she is and all that she believes. Tradition progresses in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, (Cf. Vatican Council II. Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum, 8 and 10; Denz. 4209-4210.) not by some contrary innovation (Vatican I. Dogmatic Constitution Del Filius. Denz. 3020: “Hence, also, that understanding of its sacred dogmas must be perpetually retained, which Holy Mother Church has once declared; and there must never be recession from that meaning under the specious name of a deeper understanding. ‘Therefore... let the understanding, the knowledge, and wisdom of individuals as of all, of one man as of the whole Church grow and progress strongly with the passage of the ages and the centuries: but let it be solely in its own genus, namely in the same dogma with the same sense and the same understanding.’ (St. Vincent of Lerins. Commonitorium. 23.3 [n. 28]) but by a better understanding of the depositum Fidei. (Cf. Vatican I. Dogmatic Constitution Dei Filius. Denz. 3011; Antimodernist Oath, no. 4; Pius XII. Encyclical Letter Humani Generis. Denz. 3886; Vatican Council II. Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum. 10. Denz. 4213)

4. The entire Tradition of the Catholic faith must be the criterion and guide for understanding the teachings of Vatican Council II which Council in turn clarifies—i.e., deepens and makes more explicit over time—certain aspects of the life and doctrine of the Church that are implicitly present in them or not yet formulated conceptually. (As for example the teaching on the sacramentality of the episcopate in Lumen Gentium, 21.)

5. The statements of Vatican Council II and of the subsequent papal Magisterium relative to the relation of the Catholic Church to the non-Catholic Christian confessions, and also to the civic duty of religion and to the right to religious liberty, whose formulation is difficult to reconcile with the preceding doctrinal statements of the Magisterium, must be understood in the light of the whole and uninterrupted Tradition, in a way consistent with the truths previously taught by the Magisterium of the Church, without accepting any interpretation of these statements that might lead to a presentation of Catholic doctrine that is opposed to or breaks with Tradition and with that Magisterium.

6. For this reason it is legitimate to promote, through a legitimate discussion, the study and theological explanation of expressions or formulations of Vatican Council II and of the subsequent Magisterium, should they seem irreconcilable with the previous Magisterium of the Church. (We find a parallel in history with the Decree of the Armenians of the Council of Florence, in which the presentation or the instruments was indicated as the matter of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Nevertheless, even after that Decree theologians legitimately discussed the exactitude of such an assertion; finally the question was resolved in another way by Pope Pius XII.)

7. We declare that we acknowledge the validity of the Sacrifice of the Mass and of the Sacraments when celebrated with the intention of doing what the Church does according to the rites indicated in the typical editions of the Roman Missal and of the Rituals of the Sacraments legitimately promulgated by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II.

Following the criteria spelled out above (III,5), as well as canon 21 of the Code, we promise to respect the common discipline of the Church and the ecclesiastical laws, especially those contained in the Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II (1983) and in the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches promulgated by the same Pontiff (1990), without prejudice to the discipline to be granted to the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X by a particular law.

2. Suppressions and additions in Bishop Fellay's Doctrinal Declaration (DD).

a. Suppressions compared to the Doctrinal Preamble (DP1) proposed by Rome.

In his Doctrinal Declaration (DD), Bishop Fellay removed only one passage and one note, from Paragraph III, no. 2, of Cardinal Levada's Doctrinal Preamble (DP1):

- the text: “such as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* shows it (cf. nn. 813-822; 2104-2109).
- the note at the end of the paragraph drawn from Paul VI's letter *Cum Jam*, dated 21 September 1966, in AAS 58 (1966) 879 in which the Pope called for viewing the doctrine of the Second Vatican Council in continuity with the preceding Magisterium.

Apart from that, **all the rest of the text of Cardinal Levada's Preamble was retained!**

The fact that certain passages were moved and rearranged by Bp. Fellay gives the false impression that the two documents differ substantially.

b. Additions in comparison with the Doctrinal Preamble of 14 September 2011 (DP1) proposed by Rome.

The additions are as follows:

– In III.2 concerning the authority of the Magisterium, Bishop Fellay added, ***“recalling that The Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that they might, by his revelation, make known some new doctrine, but that by his assistance, they might religiously guard and faithfully expound the revelation transmitted by the apostles, i.e., the deposit of faith.” (Vatican Council I, dogmatic constitution Pastor aeternus, Dz. 3070.)***

– In III.3, concerning the transmission of Tradition, to the sentence *“Tradition progresses in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit,”* Bishop Fellay added, ***“not by some contrary innovation, but by a better understanding of the depositum Fidei,”*** with notes.

– In III.6, Bishop Fellay added **a note** referring to the Council of Florence concerning the matter of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

One can notice without difficulty that the single deleted passage and the three mentioned additions made by Bp. Fellay did not change the SUBSTANCE of the Preamble proposed initially by Rome.

In this, Bishop Fellay complied with what Cardinal Levada had asked him in his letter accompanying the Doctrinal Preamble:

“The Congregation remains willing to consider requests for clarification or suggestions to improve the quality of these texts, without prejudice to their substance.”

This verifiable fact contradicts what Bishop Fellay and his defenders have been saying, that the Doctrinal Declaration was “substantially different” from the Roman Preamble.

We are going to prove this contradiction with a point-by-point analysis of the Declaration.

3. Internal analysis of the 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration.

We will now proceed to a detailed examination of the text of Bishop Fellay’s 15 April 2012 Doctrinal Declaration (DD).

In each point, in order to show the flagrant contradiction between “Fellay1” and “Fellay2,” we will add the criticisms that Bishop Fellay himself made (on 30 November 2011 and 12 January 2012) of the initial Roman Preamble (DP1), while retaining most of it in his DD.

A.) Paragraph I, speaks about the fidelity to the Church and to the Pope:

“We promise always to be faithful to the Catholic Church and to the Roman Pontiff, her Supreme Pastor, Vicar of Christ, successor of Peter and head of the Episcopal Corps.”

Paragraphs I and II of the Declaration are very important because they define, so to speak, the doctrinal principles of the Declaration, while in paragraph III we find the practical application of these principles.

This text does not pose a problem in itself, that is, in normal times.

We will respond later, in the Responses to objections, to those who try to justify the DD in saying that certain passages, such as this one, can be found in the Protocol of the agreement signed and then retracted by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988.

First, can one speak of being ***“faithful to the Church and to the Pope”*** without any restriction, distinction, or precision?

To the contrary, as we see in the text, it is said that this fidelity is promised to the Popes ***“always.”*** One does not promise fidelity to persons or institutions in the abstract, but under definite terms. And here it is a question of promising to always be faithful to a “conciliar pope” who, although he is the head of the Catholic Church, is also the *de facto* head of the “conciliar church”! In other words, one cannot promise to be faithful to persons who are not themselves faithful to the Catholic Church and their predecessors!

The reason of making this restrictive condition is the fact that this profession of fidelity situates itself in a very concrete context: the crisis of the Church in 2012, and those who are responsible for this crisis are the same authorities to whom Bishop Fellay promises to submit himself.

Archbishop Lefebvre expressed this distinction between the Pope, as the true successor of the Apostles, and also as a head of the line of a neo-modernist and neo-protestant church as he wrote in his famous Declaration of 21 November 1974:

We hold fast, with all our heart and with all our soul, to Catholic Rome, Guardian of the Catholic faith and of the traditions necessary to preserve this faith, to Eternal Rome, Teacher of wisdom and truth.

We refuse, on the other hand, and have always refused to follow the Rome of neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies which were clearly evident in the Second Vatican Council and, after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it.

Archbishop Lefebvre also expressed the same distinction at the beginning of his letter to future bishops in 1987 in saying that,

“the Chair of Peter and the positions in Rome are being occupied by antichrists.”

It is hard to see the Society of St. Pius X making this promise of fidelity to an authority “in itself,” when in fact we are dealing with authorities who are working to destroy what we want to build!

Finally, the term ***“always”*** in this formula is out of place and excessive because our fidelity to the current popes is conditioned to their fidelity to God, to his predecessors, and to the Church of all time.

Bp. Fellay should have added this condition for our obedience to the post-conciliar Popes.

Actually, how can one promise to be “always” faithful to popes who habitually separate from their fidelity to God, to their predecessors, and to the Church of all time?

So, Bishop Fellay is ambiguous in this **Paragraph I** because he fails to make the necessary distinction between the Pope as the visible head of the Catholic Church and as a head of the “conciliar church.”

B.) Paragraph II speaks of submission to the teachings of the Magisterium, according to the conciliar doctrine of number 25 of *Lumen gentium*:

We declare that we accept the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church in matters of faith and morals, giving to each doctrinal statement the requisite degree of adherence, according to the teaching contained in no.25 of the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium of Vatican Council II.

[Cf. also the new formula of the Profession of Faith and of the Oath of Fidelity on Assuming an Office to be exercised in the Name of the Church, 1989: cf. CIC canons 749; 750 §1 and §2; 752: CCEO canons 597; 598 §1 and §2; 599.]

This text poses two problems:

- **First**, the text itself;
- **Second**, the note at the bottom of the page concerning the acceptance of the Profession of Faith and of the Oath of Fidelity of 1989, as well as the citations from the new Code of Canon Law.

a.) No. 25 of *Lumen gentium*.

Some justify the appeal to the passage of no. 25 of *Lumen gentium*, because it was used by Abp. Lefebvre in the Protocol agreement of 1988. (Cf. Objections)

In itself, the sole text of no. 25 of *Lumen gentium* does not pose any problems, because, for the most part, it is based on passages taken from the councils of Trent and Vatican I.

But in context it remains, nevertheless, a text that should be rejected because it eases the way into conciliar doctrine.

The reproach made against this text of *Lumen gentium* is well put by Fr. Alvaro Calderon, a professor at the SSPX seminary in Argentina in *La Lampara Bajo del Celemin (The Light under the Bushel)*:

Can we at least rescue this text? Certainly not, since in the preceding chapter of this same document the hierarchical office is subordinated to the sensus fidei, which obliges [one] to understand the doctrine of no. 25 in a very different manner from what was taught by Vatican I.

But this text also carries a serious problem in its practical application. During normal times in the Church, it is perfectly acceptable (it is even a duty) to submit ourselves to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church. But in the current abnormal situation in the Church, where the post-conciliar popes no longer teach sound doctrine, this principle can no longer apply, because that would amount to submitting to the “conciliar and post-conciliar magisterium” and thereby giving them a “blank check”!

Furthermore, this is precisely what is going to be requested in Paragraph III.

b.) The new Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity of 1989.

It is not useless to recall the importance and seriousness of making a profession of Faith and making an oath of fidelity. These two public acts, often made with great solemnity, and sometimes

before the Blessed Sacrament, carry serious obligations in conscience and under pain of mortal sin, because one takes God, and not only man, as a witness to what is being said.

And since these statements are public expressions of our Faith and of our obedience to the legitimate authorities of the Church, they cannot involve any ambiguity or equivocation because these statements have as their ultimate object, either the Truthfulness of God (in whom resides the motive for our faith), or our obedience due to men because they share on the Authority of God.

That being said, let's begin by recalling that this new **“Profession of Faith”** replaced the traditional Profession of Faith of the Council of Trent or Pius IV!

One should remember that Bishop Fellay, in his 30 November 2011 Doctrinal Preamble (DP2), had chosen the **Profession of Faith of Trent**. Here, with his Doctrinal Declaration, he did the opposite by accepting the new Profession of Faith (of 1989)!

What is said in this new profession of Faith of 1989?

The text introducing this new Profession indicates the sense to give it:

Therefore it became necessary to prepare suitable texts for the purpose of updating them as regards style and contents to bring them more into line with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and subsequent documents.

But above all, it is the last paragraph of the new Profession that poses the problem:

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.

This last text poses a problem in its concrete application to the crisis in the Church which we are living.

The conciliar authorities, being unable to prove that the documents of Vatican II belong to the infallible magisterium of Church, make instead an appeal to the “authentic magisterium” which, they say, also demands an internal assent of the will and of the intellect.

It is true that in normal times the Church has always asked the faithful to adhere to the authentic Magisterium because we owe internal submission to it as well, as to that which is not infallibly taught by the Church, but binding in conscience.

But today the “conciliar Church” abuses its power by appealing to this “submission” to their authority with the clear purpose of imposing all conciliar and post-conciliar teachings arguing that Vatican II belongs to the “authentic Magisterium,” even though there is a serious rupture with the Traditional authentic Magisterium.

Thus, to accept our “submission” to this new Profession of Faith is equivalent to handing over a “blank check” to the destroyers of the Church!

How can the Society continue to oppose the conciliar reforms if Bishop Fellay accepts, through this new Profession, a submission to the “current magisterium” which has no other goal than to “put itself more in line with the teachings of Vatican II.”

On the other hand, Archbishop Lefebvre expressly condemned several times this new Profession of Faith, which author is none other than Cardinal Ratzinger:

The new Profession of Faith which was written by Cardinal Ratzinger explicitly contains the acceptance of the Council and its consequences . . . How can we accept it? (Le Bourget, 19 Nov. 1989)

The errors of the Council and its reforms remain the official norm consecrated by Cardinal Ratzinger’s March 1989 Profession of Faith. (Spiritual Journey, p.10-11)

That is what creates a conflict for us because, for example, at the same time that Rome gives the authorization to say the Mass of all time to the Fraternity of St. Peter or to the Abbey of Barroux and the other groups, they ask the young priests to sign a profession of faith through which they must accept the spirit of the Council. It is a contradiction.” (Friedrichshafen, 29 April 1990)

It is a very grave act. Because it asks all those who have rejoined, or who could do so, to make a profession of faith in the Council documents and in the post-conciliar reforms. For us, it is impossible. (Fideliter, no. 79, January 1991, p.4)

This formula [of the profession of faith], such as it is, is dangerous. This well demonstrates the spirit of this people with whom it is impossible to agree. (Fideliter, no. 70, July 1989, p.16; no. 73, p.12 and no. 76, p. 11)

Thus, to accept this new Profession of Faith and to want to remain faithful to Tradition, as Archbishop Lefebvre said, is a contradiction, because the Profession supposes the acceptance of the Council and its reforms.

In addition, Bishop Fellay, in the Note joined to the quoted text, also accepts the **1989 “Oath of Fidelity,”** which in turn has officially replaced the Anti-modernist Oath in the conciliar Church!

One should recall that in his DP2 of 30 November 2011, Bishop Fellay had chosen **the Anti-modernist Oath** in place of the 1989 Oath of Fidelity . . . but in April 2012 he again made a complete *volte-face!*

Thus, if Bishop Fellay put aside the Anti-modernist Oath, which is one of our best weapons against the neo-modernists, to accept the new Oath of Fidelity of 1989, which precisely favors the modernist errors, that represents a considerable step backwards in the resistance of the Society against modern errors.

Remember what Bishop Fellay wrote in his 24 January 2009 “Letter to Friends and Benefactors” where he quotes his own letter to Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos after the lifting of the “excommunications”:

We are ready to write the Creed with our blood, to sign the anti-modernist oath, the profession of faith of Pius IV; we accept and make our own all the councils up to and including Vatican II, about which we voice reservations.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that Bishop Fellay has held contradictory points. Sometimes he thinks traditionally, sometimes he accepts the formulas of the conciliar church; and, what is even more ambiguous, sometimes he accepts both in the same document!

Furthermore, in the same Note to paragraph II, we find citations to **canons 749 and 750 of the New Code of Canon Law**, which deal with the magisterium and the adherence due to its teaching, either infallible or authentic.

We have already exposed the fact that the current authorities consider the conciliar and post-conciliar teachings as being part of the “authentic magisterium” of the Church. Thus, in practice, the Society could no longer be able to attack it. So there is nothing left for them other than the possibility of accepting them, tacitly at first, then more and more explicitly, as the rallied communities to Modernist Rome have already done, one after the other since 1988. The Benedictine Monastery of Le Barroux, in France, is a good example of this evolution.

So when one sees the serious concessions made by Bishop Fellay in **paragraph II**, one has the right to ask: **where are the doctrinal firmness and supernatural prudence that we have the right to expect from the Superior General of the Society?**

Where are these so-called “graces of state” that he and his defenders have invoked when demanding submission from the members of the Society?

But, it gets worse. If Bishop Fellay accepted in **paragraph II** the question of principle on the submission to the current “magisterium,” he will accept in **paragraph III** the practical applications of these same false principles.

C. Paragraph III is indisputably the worst part of the whole document.

This **paragraph III**, the longest in the Doctrinal Declaration, treats the practical applications concerning the controversial questions on the exercise of **authority** by the pope and bishops, and in particular, on the authority of the conciliar and post-conciliar Magisterium in relations with **Tradition**.

It was to this compromise that Cardinal Levada’s theologians wanted to bring Bishop Fellay, because this paragraph treats precisely about the most controversial points between the Society and conciliar Rome.

A few months before the DD, Bishop Fellay had already underlined the perfidy of paragraph III of the Roman Preamble in his letter of 12 January 2013:

The point that is causing the most difficulty is paragraph III . . . this paragraph III of the Preamble would like to oblige us to accept all the difficult points.

So Bishop Fellay was well aware of the serious danger this paragraph presented. If it was so dangerous, it should have been totally rejected.

At first look, one has the false impression that Bishop Fellay had radically “transformed” Cardinal Lavada’s paragraph III in a totally new way, with traditional assertions. But, this is only the appearance...

In fact, when one compares Bishop Fellay’s paragraph III with Cardinal Levada’s text in DP1, one notices that there are only a few changes and these changes are of no real importance.

Bishop Fellay divided paragraph III into **seven points** by adding a separate question on the new Mass and the new sacraments.

Let us now examine **in detail** the different points of this **paragraph III**.

○ **No. 1: The Authority of the Pope and the Bishops**

Bishop Fellay here copied, word for word, what was in the Roman DP1:

We declare that we accept the doctrine on the Roman Pontiff and the College of Bishops, with its head, the Pope, taught by the Dogmatic Constitution Pastor Aeternus of Vatican Council I and the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium of Vatican Council II, chapter III (De constitutione hierarchica Ecclesiae et in specie de Episcopatu), as explained and interpreted by the Nota explicativa praevia of that same chapter.

We have already commented above on the problems posed by **no. 25 of *Lumen gentium*** which makes up part of chapter III, which contains numbers 18-29 inclusive.

Number 25 of *Lumen gentium* asks for adherence to the ordinary magisterium of the bishops, which is in itself consistent with the spirit of Vatican I (1870), but impossible to accept it today as a consequence of the current crisis in the Church, with all bishops corrupted with a conciliar spirit. By contrast, in the **second passage** of chapter III, there is a veritable contradiction between the false notion of collegiality and the traditional teaching of the Church on Church authority.

What is very grave here is that Bishop Fellay accepts that the doctrine on such an important point as the authority of the Pope and the bishops, could have as reference Vatican I and Vatican II at the same time! This fact does not make this document “better,” but, to the contrary, more dangerous, by spreading confusion, because these documents are openly in contradiction. In fact, this text causes confusion because one does not know if the doctrine on the Roman Pontiff and the bishops of which it is speaking about comes from Vatican I or from Vatican II!

Therefore, in case of a disagreement between these two texts, it will be the teaching of Vatican II that will be retained, because it is the current Conciliar authority which exercises the “living” Magisterium.

If there is a point upon which Vatican II has broken with Tradition, it is precisely the new “democratic” notion of authority in the Church, the error of “collegiality.”¹⁷

The most serious application of collegiality of Council Vatican II is the establishment of two supreme powers in the Church: one of the Pope alone, the other of the Pope with the “college” of

¹⁷ The Church always traditionally taught that the authority of the Pope is **monarchial**, and the Church hierarchy is “pyramidal,” with the Pope at the top point, below are the bishops, then the priests, etc. Vatican II, on the contrary, inspired by **modern democracy**, allows “consultative and deliberative” power of governing on all the levels of the Church, diminishing or destroying the personal authority of the Pope for the whole Church, the bishops in their dioceses, and even the priests in their parishes.

bishops, and this in an ordinary, permanent manner, and not extraordinary, as it is the case during ecumenical councils.

Thus, the doctrine of chapter III of *Lumen gentium* mentioned here clearly contradicts the traditional teaching on the subject of the supreme authority in the Church.

The *Nota praevia*, which was added to *Lumen gentium* so as to try to clarify the question of the supreme authority in the Church in a more traditional sense and to reassure the conservative bishops of the Council, does not have any effect today, because it is no longer mentioned in the new Code of Canon Law, as Archbishop Lefebvre pointed out:

In the new Code of Canon Law, there are two supreme powers in the Church: there is the power of the pope, who has the supreme power, and then the pope with the bishops . . . This has never been seen in the Church . . . It is there to limit the power of the pope. Then, the explanatory note [nota praevia] of the Council, practically, does not take into account the new Code of Canon Law. (Spiritual Conference at Écône, 100A, 20 May 1983.)

Therefore, the new Code only renders into “canonical language” the error of collegiality taught by *Lumen gentium*. Herein lies, in chapter III of *Lumen gentium*, at a highest level of the Church, the conciliar error of collegiality, and Bishop Fellay accepts it, though it is openly in opposition to the doctrine of *Pastor aeternus* of Council **Vatican I!**

Yet here is what Bishop Fellay himself said on this point in his 12 January 2012 letter to Cardinal Levada, a few months before his DD:

*We stumbled over . . . collegiality, of which the ‘subiectum quoque’ remains an ambiguous term, even when clarified by the *Nota praevia* (LG22).*

Thus, three months earlier Bishop Fellay recognized that even with the *Nota praevia* this passage no. 25 of *Lumen gentium* on collegiality was unacceptable, because it is ambiguous, and now in his DD he finds it acceptable!

This is one more example of “Fellay 1” against “Fellay 2”!

○ **No. 2: The Authority of the Magisterium of the Church**

In particular, in the role of interpreting the Deposit of Revelation (Holy Scripture and Tradition):

*We acknowledge the authority of the Magisterium, to which alone has been entrusted the task of interpreting authentically the Word of God, whether written or handed down,(Cf. Pius XII. Encyclical Letter *Humani generis*. Denz. 3886) in fidelity to Tradition, recalling that "The Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that they might, by his revelation, make known some new doctrine, but that by his assistance, they might religiously guard and faithfully expound the revelation transmitted by the apostles, i.e., the deposit of faith."(VATICAN I. Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor aeternus*. Denz. 3070.)*

The first part, taken from DP1, is traditional and makes reference to the encyclical *Humani generis* of Pius XII.

Then Bishop Fellay adds (“recalling . . .”) a well known quotation from *Pastor aeternus* of Vatican I on the limits of the Magisterium of the Church, which reminds us that this teaching authority cannot teach “a new doctrine.”

We should note that in the Doctrinal Preamble (DP3) of 13 June 2012 presented by Rome, Cardinal Levada accepted this addition, and even completed the rest of the quotation from *Pastor aeternus* concerning the promise that the Apostolic See will remain “***unimpaired by any error.***” (Denz. 1836)

This text does not pose a doctrinal problem in itself because it appeals to two traditional texts.

But all the same, it remains a dangerous ambiguity. By accepting this magisterial authority, despite the limitations mentioned of *Pastor aeternus*, under the current conditions is tantamount to accept leaving on the hands of the current “magisterium” the interpretation of Holy Scripture and Tradition. This text implies that the SSPX has confidence in the current “magisterium” and that we are ready to submit to it. Thus this statement leaves an open door to the conciliar novelties the new “magisterium” would like to impose upon us, with the false assertion that they are “in continuity” with the Traditional magisterium of the Church.

What do we see about this “magisterium” since Vatican II? Can we say that since that council Holy Scripture and Tradition have been correctly interpreted? Can we hope that this is going to change under the current circumstances?

Certainly not! Evidence shows us that it will not and that this will continue so long as the current “magisterium” continues on the same erroneous path since Vatican II.

○ **No. 3: The “Progress” of Tradition:**

In particular, in being “the living transmission of Revelation” to us:

Tradition is the living transmission of Revelation "usque ad nos"[1] and the Church. in her doctrine, life, and worship, perpetuates and transmits to all generations all that she is and all that she believes. Tradition progresses in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit,[2] not by some contrary innovation [3] but by a better understanding of the depositum Fidei.I [4]

[1] COUNCIL OF TRENT. Denz. 1501: "...This truth and instruction [which] are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the apostles themselves, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have come down even to us,"

[2] Cf. VATICAN COUNCIL II. Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum, 8 and 10; Denz. 4209-4210.

[3] VATICAN I. Dogmatic Constitution Dei Filius. Denz. 3020: "thence, also. that understanding of its sacred dogmas must be perpetually retained, which Holy Mother Church has once declared; and there must never be recession from that meaning under the specious name of a deeper understanding. Therefore... let the understanding, the knowledge, and wisdom of individuals as of all, of one man as of the whole Church grow and progress strongly with the passage of the ages and the centuries: but let it be solely in its own

genus, namely in the same dogma with the same sense and the same understanding. (ST. VINCENT OF LERINS. Commonitorium. 23.3 [n. 28])"

[4] Cf. VATICAN I. Dogmatic Constitution Dei Filius. Denz. 3011; Antimodernist Oath. no. 4; Pros XII. Encyclical Letter Humani Generis. Denz. 3886; VATICAN COUNCIL II. Dogmatic Constitution Del Verbum. 10. Denz. 4213.

Once again we find ambiguity here because two conflicting texts are placed side by side. The first text is from the Council of Trent, at least for what concerns Tradition as being transmitted “to us,” but the word “**living**” was added by Rome in DP1 of 2011. The other text is from Vatican II, teaching that “*Tradition progresses in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit.*”

Bishop Fellay borrowed this text from DP1, but he added, “*not by some contrary innovation but by a better understanding of the depositum Fidei.*” This addition was accepted by Rome in their response of 13 June 2012, but Rome added “*under the supervision of the Magisterium, ‘whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.’*” (*Die verbum*, 10.)

There are two problems here: **(1)** the erroneous Modernist notion of a “*living*” Tradition which “*progresses,*” and **(2)** the fact that, as a last resort, it is the current Magisterium (post-Conciliar) which is the “*witness*” authorized by this transmission.

(1) The notions of the “*living*” transmission of Revelation and Tradition by the “*progress*” of dogma are typically grave Modernist errors.

Here is what Pope St. Pius X said in *Pascendi*, in quoting the Modernists themselves:

Dogma is not only able, but ought to evolve and to be changed . . . For among the chief points of their teaching is the following, which they deduce from the principle of vital immanence, namely, that religious formulas if they are to be really religious and not merely intellectual speculations, ought to be living and to live the life of the religious sense. (no. 13)

The addition of Bp. Fellay pointing out that the progress of Tradition excludes all “*contrary innovation*” did not make the text “*orthodox*” for two reasons:

- first, because this addition is ineffective, as we will see in (2) because in the last instance it will be the current post-Conciliar Magisterium who decides if the conciliar or post-conciliar doctrines represent any “*contrary innovation*” or not;
- then, because Rome accepted this addition in its response of 13 June 2012, even though they hold to the Modernist notion of evolution and the progress of dogma.

(2) Thus, nothing can prevent the current “*magisterium*” (whose authority is accepted by Bishop Fellay, cf. no.2) from declaring, according to the “*hermeneutic of continuity,*” that the conciliar doctrines, e.g. religious liberty, represent a homogenous progress with regard to Tradition.

This is why, without a clear rejection of conciliar errors, it is impossible and extremely imprudent to recognize *a priori* the authority of their “*magisterium.*”

But, let’s again quote “*Fellay 1*” against “*Fellay 2,*” who contradicts himself one more time. In the 12 January 2012 letter, about the homogenous progress of Tradition, he said this:

It is the magisterium’s practice, when it promulgates some innovation, to prove its continuity with Tradition, as in when it proclaims a new dogma. Now the problem here is not so much the doctrine as the deed: some of the Second Vatican Council texts and some subsequent reforms are not consistent with this doctrine.

The contradiction between these two positions of Bp. Fellay is flagrant, because in January 2012 he professed the Catholic doctrine, but the following April he professed the conciliar doctrine!

So, which is the true “Bishop Fellay”? Without a doubt, the one of the DD, because it is his most recent position, therefore the final one (because Bishop has not condemned the DD since he signed it. To the contrary, he happily presented it in the explicative note of *Cor unum* 104).

○ **No. 4: The criteria of interpretation between Tradition and the Second Vatican Council texts in general.**

The entire Tradition of the Catholic faith must be the criterion and guide for understanding the teachings of Vatican Council II which Council in turn clarifies—i.e., deepens and makes more explicit over time—certain aspects of the life and doctrine of the Church that are implicitly present in them or not yet formulated conceptually.

Bishop Fellay has taken this text from the Preamble presented to him by Rome without making any modification, and puts aside a note he added concerning the sacramentality of the episcopacy as taught by Vatican II. In the response of 13 June 2012, Rome had no objection to anything in this text.

The stakes here are very high: how should we understand this statement saying that the “*entirety*” of Tradition is the criteria for the interpretation of the Second Vatican Council?

And vice-versa, is it true that the same Council Vatican II “*deepens and explains*” what has not been implicitly contained in Tradition?

So it is a question here about “the council in the light of Tradition,” as well as “Tradition in the light of the council”!

In this fourth paragraph of the Doctrinal Declaration, this question is treated in general, that is, as a question of principle concerning this double relationship. In the following (fifth) paragraph it will be more specifically about the doctrines taught by the council.

Now, let us analyze in detail paragraph four.

The first part of the text (Tradition as criteria for interpreting Vatican II) would be true if one understood it from a traditional point of view, that is, Tradition judging the erroneous teachings of the Second Vatican Council and condemning them. But the text is ambiguous, because it is not what the conciliar authors meant to say in this passage. Indeed, Bishop Fellay borrowed these lines from the Roman Preamble.

To start with, why to speak of “*the entire Tradition*”? This is not a traditional theological expression, because it would lead to the understanding that it applies not only to Tradition before Vatican II, but also during and after the council, so as to understand it these days.

It appears clear now why Benedict XVI, in his decree lifting the “excommunications” of the SSPX bishops in 2009 stated that the Second Vatican Council: “*contains the entire doctrinal history of the Church.*”

Because, as we have seen in paragraph no. 3, according to the Modernist concept, “Tradition” is “living” and continually “in progress”; it did not stop before Vatican II, so it continues to progress today.

Therefore, to speak of Vatican II as belonging to **“the entire Tradition,”** is only a disguised way of accepting the “hermeneutic of continuity.”

One can see here that Bishop Fellay contradicts himself once again. In his letter of 12 January 2012 to Rome, rejecting their Preamble, he said that he had a problem with “the application of this principle [the criteria for interpreting the Second Vatican Council] to the novelties of the Council which are clearly in rupture or discontinuity with the Magisterium of all time,” but since 15 April 2012 he has implicitly stated in the DD that the novelties of the Council are part of the “entire Tradition.”

The **second part** is overtly false and pernicious.

How can Bishop Fellay state that the Second Vatican Council is a **“light which illuminates the life and doctrine of the Church,”** even though for 50 years the council have been the source of destruction of the state of grace in many souls, because of its serious contradictions with Church doctrine?

The council in this point attacks two visible marks of the Catholic Church: **the holiness and the unity of the faith.**

Vatican II’s doctrines are a rather liberal and modernist cloud of darkness that obscures the light of Catholic Tradition!

In addition, putting aside the question on the sacramentality of the episcopacy (which was not a common doctrine), Vatican II has done nothing beneficial for the Church! This Council is rather a real “tumorous cancer” which is trying to destroy the Church.

In addition, we cannot say that the council **“deepens and explains”** the **“implicitly present”** concepts of the Church!

The three principal errors of the Council: religious liberty, collegiality, and ecumenism are neither contained in Holy Scripture and in Tradition. They rather find their inspiration in the French Revolution with the triple slogan of “liberty, equality and fraternity”! This was explicitly admitted by Cardinal Suenens, who called the Council “the 1789 of the Church.”

If we study closely the Modernist schemas discussed during Vatican II, we notice that they totally lack any support in the Traditional Magisterium.

Cardinal Ratzinger, in his book *The Principles of Catholic Theology* said, regarding *Gaudium et spes*:

“It suffices to say that the text serves as a counter-syllabus and, as such, represents, on the part of the Church, an attempt at an official reconciliation with the new era inaugurated in 1789 [by the French Revolution]” (Ignatius Press, 1987, pp. 381-2)

○ **No. 5: The Criteria of Interpretation Between Tradition and the Second Vatican Council Texts on Ecumenism and Religious Liberty**

The statements of Vatican Council II and of the subsequent papal Magisterium relative to the relation of the Catholic Church to the non-Catholic Christian confessions, and also to the civic duty of religion and to the right to religious liberty, whose formulation is difficult to reconcile with the preceding doctrinal statements of the Magisterium, must be understood in the light of the whole and uninterrupted Tradition, in a way consistent with the truths previously taught by the Magisterium of the Church, without accepting any interpretation of these statements that might lead to a presentation of Catholic doctrine that is opposed to or breaks with Tradition and with that Magisterium.

Here we are in front of **the worst part of the worst paragraph** of the Doctrinal Declaration, because it makes serious doctrinal concessions to the two great conciliar errors: ecumenism and religious liberty.

Bishop Fellay's text is taken almost entirely from no. 3 of the Roman Preamble of 14 September 2011, with the exception he added the expression *“whose formulation is difficult to reconcile”* in place of *“would appear to be certain.”*

Bishop Fellay thus accepts a text written by neo-modernists, who have only one intention, clearly different from ours: to integrate the conciliar documents into Tradition, through the “hermeneutic of continuity.”

In the 13 June 2012 version corrected by Rome, Cardinal Levada reestablished the original text of 2011.

Paragraph No. 5 is the logical consequence of the concessions made in **paragraph No. 4**, where Bishop Fellay accepted “Tradition in the light of the Council”!

In other words, if Bishop Fellay accepted in paragraph 4 of the DD that the council expounds doctrines not yet formulated by the Church, paragraph no. 5 is only its explicit application: ecumenism and religious liberty!

What renders this paragraph no. 5 totally unacceptable is that it is all about very grave conciliar errors like of ecumenism and religious liberty; collegiality having been already accepted in paragraph no. 1.

First, we remark here that Bishop Fellay speaks only about the *“formulation”* of the conciliar doctrines of ecumenism and religious liberty, and not with **the doctrines themselves**, which are erroneous. By saying that he suggests that it would be enough to “clarify” or “formulate” them differently, and in this way they would be acceptable.

Then, the expression to accept the interpretation of the council and the later Magisterium *“in the light of Tradition,”* admittedly used by Archbishop Lefebvre, is not a good argument. Here is how this subject was explained in the March-April 2002 issue no. 73 of *Nouvelles de Chrétienté* [a SSPX publication] (p.4):

Some object that Archbishop Lefebvre himself said this phrase, *“I accept the Council, interpreted in the light of Tradition.”* It is true that Archbishop Lefebvre expressed that before pope John-Paul II in October 1978. Firstly, **it was not he who conceived it, but Cardinal Ratzinger**. Note, however, that he did not subsequently return to it and it was not in the Protocol of 5 May 1988.

Indeed, Archbishop Lefebvre reported that **it did not have the same meaning for modernist Rome as for us**. The answer given by Cardinal Ratzinger to the “Dubia” on religious liberty as well as the interviews that Archbishop Lefebvre had with the aforesaid Cardinal before the 1988 consecrations thoroughly proved it: *“There is only one Church; it is the Church of Vatican II. Vatican II represents Tradition.”* (The words of Cardinal Ratzinger as quoted by Archbishop Lefebvre in the press conference on 15 June 1988.)

But it is dangerous to quote John-Paul II in this area, and to want to adopt his words, “This was the criterion used by Pope John-Paul II when he spoke of the *‘integral doctrine of the Council,’* that means, as he explained, that *‘doctrine must be understood in the light of Sacred Tradition and brought back to the constant Magisterium of the Holy Church’*” (John Paul II, discourse at the First Plenary Meeting of the Sacred College of Cardinals, 5 November 1979.)

[“Clarifications about the Fathers of Campos on Their Recognition by the Holy See – 18 January 2002” at laportelatine.org.]

So Bishop Fellay accepted in 2012 what *Nouvelles de Chrétienté* considered to be dangerous in 2002. Recognizing Vatican II “in the light of Tradition” is an argument that is ambiguous, relative, subjective, and used to convince the traditionally minded representatives to accept the Second Vatican Council, even though its doctrine and its interpretation of words are entirely different for conciliar Rome!

Thus it is a dangerous argument (to borrow the expression quoted in *Nouvelles de Chrétienté* No. 73), because “to accept” these affirmations “in the light of Tradition” does not mean the same thing for Rome as it does for us.

Bishop Williamson makes the point on **Paragraph No. 5**:

The first part here [must be understood, etc.] is perfectly true, so long as it means that any Conciliar novelty “difficult to reconcile” will be flatly rejected if it objectively contradicts previous Church teaching. (Eleison Comments No. 300, 13 April 2013.)

Thus, this **first part** leads to the understanding that a contradiction would be possible between the Council and Tradition, but in the **second part**, we will see that they have excluded precisely this possibility.

The poison is thus more evident in the **second part**, starting from the words **“without accepting.”**

Here again are Bishop Williamson’s excellent remarks on this text:

But [the first part] is directly contradicted . . . when [it] says that no Conciliar novelty may be “interpreted” as being [opposed to or] in rupture with Tradition. (Eleison Comments No. 300, 13 April 2013.)

By the words **“without accepting any interpretation, etc.”** Bishop Fellay makes explicit in a modernist way what he means by **“must be understood, etc.”** He forbids rejecting anything of the Council as being a rupture with Tradition. So he validates here, implicitly but very clearly, the hermeneutic of continuity of Benedict XVI.

One could sum up so as to refute this major concession by Bishop Fellay to **religious liberty**, by recalling the importance of the fight that led Archbishop Lefebvre against this error during and after the Council. It was against this error in particular that he wrote the book ***They Have Uncrowned Him***, on Christ the King; a book written exclusively to refute precisely this error of the Council: religious liberty!

And on **ecumenism**? With Bp. Fellay's DD we are a long way from the firmness of the excellent study made by the Society in 2004 titled *From Ecumenism to Silent Apostasy*.

One can well see once again that the liberal "Fellay 2" has prevailed over the traditional "Fellay 1."

○ **No. 6: The Opportuneness of the Doctrinal Discussions.**

This point treats the **controversial expressions** of the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar Magisterium:

For this reason it is legitimate to promote, through a legitimate discussion, the study and the theological explanation of expressions or formulations of Vatican Council II and of the subsequent Magisterium, should they seem irreconcilable with the previous Magisterium of the Church.

Note that Bishop Fellay used the term "**legitimate**" twice. Why did he not use the word "**necessary**" instead of the weaker expression "**legitimate**"? Because the first implies a **duty** of the two parties, while the second implies only convenience or opportunity for the discussions which will only be granted if Rome wishes it.

Let us recall that Modernist Rome, since 1988, has always promised to have "legitimate discussions" with all who rejoined Rome, but no formal discussions have ever been established between these communities and Rome.

Anyway, the discussions do not risk going very far, because Rome only accepts discussion on insignificant points, always leaving the "orthodoxy" of the council and the "post-conciliar magisterium" untouched. So what hope is there for any "legitimate discussions"?

The text confirms its ambiguities through the use of such words as "**expressions or formulations,**" which imply that what is wrong in the formulas of Vatican II are not their content and heart of doctrine, but only the way in which they are expressed. So, it is, in the end, an "accidental" difficulty which does not question at all the conciliar doctrine itself.

Bishop Fellay wrote this on 12 January 2012, when he rejected the DP1 that "*the [doctrinal] problem not being resolved, to want to go any further would be to build on an equivocation*" and also, "*what remains of the legitimate freedom to discuss some points of the council granted in the preliminary Note? It seems to us that they no longer leave us any room for discussion.*" Now it seems that everything has been "solved", and that the Bishop can continue, to use his former words, to "*build on equivocation*" and opening the way "*for discussion*"!

Bishop Fellay's note referring to the Council of Florence, inserted in paragraph no. 6, reveals in him a lack of contact with reality if he hopes to obtain anything from any hypothetical new doctrinal discussions with Rome, even though they demonstrated in 2011 that a doctrinal agreement was

impossible. Much more, once the Society return “to the conciliar fold,” the authorities would have no interest in keeping the “debate” going on, at least on the essential points.

○ **No. 7 : On the “Validity” and the “Legitimacy” of the New Mass and the New Sacraments**

We declare that we acknowledge the validity of the Sacrifice of the Mass and of the Sacraments when celebrated with the intention of doing what the Church does according to the rites indicated in the typical editions of the Roman Missal and of the Rituals of the Sacraments legitimately promulgated by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II.

This paragraph is taken nearly word for word from Archbishop Lefebvre’s 1988 Protocol, except for the mention of the new Mass and new sacraments being **“legitimately promulgated”!**

In this passage from Bishop Fellay’s Doctrinal Declaration, there is a major concession to those most destructive instruments against Catholic piety—the **new rites!**

Let us recall what Bishop Fellay said on the same crucial question on the new Mass only five months earlier, on 30 November 2011, in the Preliminary to his DP2:

On the subject of the [new] Mass, we recognize that the Holy Ghost can legitimately take part in these rites, but “the Novus Ordo represents, both as a whole and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass as it was formulated in Session XXII of the Council of Trent. The “canons” of the rite definitively fixed at that time provided an insurmountable barrier to any heresy directed against the integrity of the Mystery.” (“A Brief Critical Study of the New Order of Mass” by Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani) We recognize the sacramental validity of it, but we see there an evil by its deficiencies that largely explain in themselves the liturgical disaster.

This was orthodox, but the contradiction is flagrant between what Bishop Fellay wrote then and what he later wrote in the DD of 15 April 2012.

What are we to think about the validity and legitimacy of the new Mass and new sacraments?

Archbishop Lefebvre had always granted that the essential conditions for the integrity of the sacraments being satisfied, it is possible that the new Mass and the new sacraments are valid in general, although on a case-by-case basis, there are more and more invalid new rites.

But it is another thing to admit that these rites are legitimate, because affirming, like Bishop Fellay, that they are **“legitimately promulgated”** is tantamount to accepting that these rites are “good”!

Here is what Archbishop Lefebvre said on the question about the legitimacy of the new Mass:

We are not saying that the new Mass is heretical, nor that it is invalid, but we refuse to say that it is legitimate, that it is perfectly orthodox. (Communicantes, August 1985)

Since many excellent theological studies have been written demonstrating the serious deficiencies of the new rites, we will not bother repeating them here.

It is enough for us to examine this question of the “legitimacy” of the new rites, because recently Bishop Fellay and his defenders have been trying to play with words in claiming that to affirm that these new rites are “**legitimately**” promulgated is not implying that they are “**licit, lawful.**”

Unless one has fallen into Nominalism and thinks that words do not have precise meanings, we will begin by quoting the definition “**legitimacy**” given in *The Oxford English Dictionary*: “Conformity to rule or principle; lawfulness.”

Therefore, if legitimacy is the quality of what is in conformity with the law, a thing is also “**lawful**” when it is in conformity with the law. In other words, the expressions **legitimate, lawful and licit** are synonyms.

If we move into **canonical** language, as is the case here, we see that there is no difference in the meanings of “legitimate” and “licit,” because the “licity” of a sacramental act is based on the “legitimacy” of the liturgical law which promulgates it. Thus, one time admitting, as Bishop Fellay has done, that the new rites have been “legitimately promulgated,” thereby implies that the laws which have “promulgated” them are good, because in Canon Law for a law to be legitimate it must be good! And if their promulgation is “legitimate,” nothing prevents their celebration from being licit and good as well.

In that case, one can truly ask Bishop Fellay: if the “promulgation” of the laws establishing the new rites is legitimate, and thus good, why does he not celebrate the new Mass or dispense the new sacraments?

Actually, on the subject of the liceity of the new rites, Bishop Fellay has been himself trapped because of a major concession he made to Rome—by accepting the new Code of Canon Law! That being the case, he is forced to be “logical” with himself. It would be “illogical” to accept the new Code and then to refuse to recognize as legitimate the promulgation of the new rites which are legitimized in the new code!

All the Traditional communities which have rejoined Modernist Rome have passed that way . . . they began by recognizing the “legitimacy” of the promulgation of the new rites, then their superiors did not hesitate to concelebrate the new Mass with the Pope, as Dom Gérard, Bishop Rifan, Fr. Wach, and others have done publicly.

So when will Bishop Fellay concelebrate the new rite with the Pope, if he asks him to do so?

○ **No. 8 : The Acceptance of the New Code of Canon Law.**

Following the criteria spelled out above (III.5), as well as canon 21 of the Code, we promise to respect the common discipline of the Church and the ecclesiastical laws, especially those contained in the Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II (1983) and in the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches promulgated by the same Pontiff (1990), without prejudice to the discipline to be granted to the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X by a particular law.

Bishop Fellay, as usual, borrows here almost all of the wording from the Roman DP1, excepting when he added at the beginning, ***“Following the criteria spelled out above (III.5), as well as canon 21 of the Code.”***

Does this addition “neutralize” the text that follows?

We think **not**, because we have already shown that point III.5 is the worst part of the worst paragraph!

Here is what **Canon 21** (that Bishop Fellay quotes in his favor) of the new Code (1983) says:

In doubt, the revocation of a previous law is not presumed; rather, later laws are to be related to earlier ones and, as far as possible, harmonized with them.

In other words, in cases of doubt on the revocation of a law of the old Code [1917], the new Code [1983] should “relate to” or “harmonize” the two laws.¹⁸

It is a vain hope to think that Bishop Fellay, in accepting the new Code, will obtain the possibility of keeping certain laws of the old Code.

The **first reason** is that the new Code says this:

Canon 6 §1 When this Code comes into force, the following are abrogated:
 1. *The Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1917;*
 2. *Other laws, whether universal or particular, which are contrary to the provisions of this Code, unless it is otherwise expressly provided in respect of particular laws.*

Thus one can clearly see that in §1.1, the old Code is explicitly abrogated, that is, suppressed.

Could Bishop Fellay, thanks to §1.2, obtain several dispensations or exemptions concerning, for example, the minor orders, or the sub-deaconate, or some purely disciplinary laws?

Perhaps, but these exemptions do not compensate his acceptance of the many provisions of the new Code that are gravely contrary to the Faith and the traditional practices of the Church (as mentioned by Archbishop Lefebvre).

And more concretely, in case of a conflict between the two laws, the last word will come from conciliar Rome preferring the new law!

Is Bishop Fellay dreaming that the Society would be able to continue to use the old and new Codes “in parallel”? The reality is that the new Code is not a good instrument to guard Tradition but it has been made precisely to implement the conciliar doctrines. Have those who rejoined Rome obtained the favor of using the Code of 1917? Never!

¹⁸ An “**exemption**” is the partial revocation of a law, but an “abrogation” is the total revocation or abolition of a law. Here Bp. Fellay is asking Rome for the **former**, not the latter.

There again is a new “reversal” for Bishop Fellay: he changes his mind on an important point.

Here is what he said previously about the new Code in the Preliminary note to Rome in the DP2 on 30 November 2011:

. . . finding in Canon Law of 1983 the same ambiguities that are in the Council, we express the same reservations and ask for the power to remain with the Canon Law of 1917, with the disciplinary adaptations which go with it.

And in another letter to Rome dated 12 January 2012, with additional information, Bishop Fellay was again very critical on the subject of the new Code:

The Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1983 which, in the measure where it takes up the novelties of the Council, presents the same difficulties” as the conciliar errors and the new Mass.

In these two texts Bishop Fellay maintained at that time the invariably firm position of the Society concerning the new Code since 1983: we keep the old Code of 1917. But, now, with the DD, he has totally changed his mind! It is no longer a question about “ambiguities” or “reservations” concerning the new Code.

To adopt Bp. Fellay’s new strategy it only remains for us to ask for “crumbs” from our enemies with some dispensations, but swallowing all the poison of the new Code.

Now we see why, in conscience, we cannot accept the new Code, even with the “restrictions” proposed by Bishop Fellay.

Bishop Fellay is not ignoring the noxiousness of the new Code, because not only has he studied it, but he has seen, as we all have, its harmful effects.

The new Code is putting into “legal” language all the conciliar errors. It would be a contradiction to claim that one rejects the Council and at the same time one accepts the “legislation” that puts in place the conciliar errors! In this sense, the new Code is more dangerous than the Council itself.

Here is what Archbishop Lefebvre said numerous times about the perversity of the new Code:

“So, what are we supposed to think about this? Well, it’s that this [new] canon law is unacceptable.”
(Spiritual Conference given at Ecône, 99B, 14 March 1983)

The new code no longer asks a married Protestant/Catholic couple to sign a commitment to baptize the children Catholic. It is a serious violation of the faith, a serious violation of the faith . . . In the new code of canon law, there are two supreme powers of the Church: there is the power of the Pope who has the supreme power and then the pope with the bishops . . . That has never been seen in the Church . . . It is thus to limit the power of the pope. So, the explanatory note of the Council, practically, has no effect under the new canon law.” (Spiritual Conference given at Ecône, 100A, 20 May 1983)

“The Apostolic Constitution introducing the new Canon Law explicitly says on page xi of the Vatican edition: ‘The work, namely the Code, is in perfect accord with the nature of the Church, especially as has been proposed by the Second Vatican Council. Moreover, this new Code can be conceived as an effort to expose this

doctrine, i.e., conciliar Ecclesiology, in canonical language.’ . . . It is the authority of the Pope and of the Bishops which is going to suffer; the distinction between the clergy and the laity will also diminish; the absolute and necessary character of the Catholic faith will also be extenuated to the profit of heresy and schism; and the fundamental realities of sin and grace will be worn down.” (Letter to Friends and Benefactors, no. 24, March 1983)

“However, when one reads this new code of Canon Law one discovers an entirely new concept of the Church . . . This is the definition of the Church (Canon 204): ‘The faithful are those who, inasmuch as they are incorporated in Christ by baptism are constituted as the people of God, and who for this reason, having been made partakers in their manner in the priestly, prophetic and royal functions of Christ, are called to exercise the mission that God entrusted to the Church to accomplish in the world’ . . . There is no longer any clergy. What, then, happens to the clergy? . . . It is consequently easy to understand that this is the ruin of the priesthood and the laicization of the Church. . . This is precisely what Luther and the protestants did, laicizing the priesthood. It is consequently very grave . . . You know that the new Code of Canon Law [Canon 844] permits a priest to give Communion to a protestant. It is what they call Eucharistic hospitality. These are protestants who remain protestant and do not convert. This is directly opposed to the Faith.” (Conference at Turin, 24 March 1984)

“We find this doctrine already suggested in the Council document Lumen Gentium, according to which the College of Bishops, together with the pope, exercises supreme power in the Church in habitual and constant manner.” (Open Letter to Confused Catholics, Angelus Press, 1985, ch. 12)

“Our cry of alarm was rendered even more urgent by the errors in the new Code of Canon Law, not to say its heresies . . .” (Open Letter to Confused Catholics, Angelus Press, 1985, ch. 21)

Therefore, by accepting the new Code of Canon Law, Bishop Fellay implicitly accepts all its **errors and deviations** concerning:

- a Protestant concept of the Church defined as “the People of God”;
- two supreme universal powers in the Church;
- collegiality at all levels;
- a laicization of the Church;
- ecumenical practices, in particular “Eucharistic hospitality”;
- new causes for nullity of marriages;
- new regulations in contracting marriages;
- easy granting of annulments in Marriage Tribunals;
- suppression of the Major Order of Sub-Deaconate, the minor orders and tonsure;
- new “canonizations”;
- relaxing of disciplinary laws;
- etc., etc.

Thus, Bishop Fellay’s acceptance of submitting to the new Code of Canon Law will be the greatest practical obstacle for the Society if it wants to continue to fulfill its function of preserving Tradition and fighting against the conciliar errors.

CONCLUSION OF PART TWO

After having analyzed the contents of the Doctrinal Declaration, we are dumbfounded to observe that Bishop Fellay, through this document, officially accepts all that we have always been fighting against: the Council, the new Mass and the new Code of Canon Law.

Here is the summary of the different points upon which he has yielded:

In paragraph I, he promises fidelity to “the conciliar church,” and to the pope, head of this same “church.”

In paragraph II, he accepts submission to the teachings of the conciliar and post-conciliar “magisterium,” according to the doctrine of no. 25 of *Lumen gentium*.

In paragraph III, he accepts all of the major points of controversy:

- the collegial authority of the pope and the bishops;
- the authority of the “magisterium” and the “conciliar church”;
- the “progress” of Tradition according to the neo-modernists;
- the criteria for interpreting between Tradition and the texts of the Second Vatican Council in general, i.e. the “hermeneutic of continuity”;
- the “hermeneutic of continuity” as criteria for interpreting between Tradition and the texts of the Council on ecumenism and religious liberty;
- postponing the doctrinal discussions until later;
- accepting the “validity” and the “legitimacy” of the new Mass and the new sacraments; and
- Acceptation of the new Code of Canon Law (1983).

Bp. Fellay **gave up on every point** Rome was expecting from him! Anything goes!

We can truly see that Bishop Fellay has done his best to satisfy the demands of Cardinal Levada, who in his letter of 16 March 2012 invited him to “*consider the serious consequences of the position you have taken, if you decide to make it definitive*” and to “*reconsider your position.*”

Bishop Fellay thus confirms his “*new position with respect to the official Church*” as he wrote in *Cor Unum* no. 101 of March 2012.

Through the DD we see a serious doctrinal compromise and all the bastions of Tradition are falling . . . This is betrayal by the one who, in the first place, was supposed to defend it.

It is no surprise that such a document has caused and still continues to cause such strong reactions among those who do not want to compromise with modernist Rome.

We will see in **PART THREE** what have been the immediate and long-term consequences caused by the Doctrinal Declaration of April 15, 2014.

Then, before concluding, we will answer the **objections** of those who defend the Declaration and the actions of Bishop Fellay.

[PART THREE PENDING]