

Bishop Louis Vezelis, O.F.M. D.D.

April 23, 1983

Bishop's House

Dear Dr. Heller,

You asked me to make a comment on J. Card. Ratzinger's edict of excommunication against Archbishop Ngo-Dinh-Thuc and the Bishops he has recently consecrated.

My comment is very short and simple: "NEMO DAT QUOD NON HABET" You cannot give what you do not have. If Cardinal Ratzinger is himself outside the Roman Catholic Church (which I believe he is) then he is not in a position to excommunicate anyone. It is for him to seek ways and means to return to the Catholic Church which he has abandoned together with the papal pretender, John Paul II.

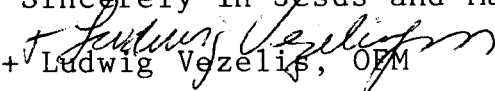
Neither I nor those bishops associated with me, as well as all priests and Faithful have any desire, intention, design or determination to separate ourselves from the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by Jesus Christ. It is to remain faithful and loyal to Jesus Christ and His Church that we have been forced to follow a course of action distasteful to us.

I and those with whom I am associated have pledged our lives and sacred honor to uphold the unbroken and essential bond between the Apostles and the present which is a guarantee of Catholic orthodoxy. Our only consolation is in the conviction that we obey the demands of our Church and are willing to sacrifice everything rather than be disloyal to Her.

I have spoken with Archbishop Ngo, and he tells me that much of what has appeared in the press is not true. Especially, when the press quotes him as having said things, all this is not true.

I am sorry to be so late with this material. Unexpected difficulties had arisen which made it impossible to send this out as I had promised. You may blame me for any delay in your work and I shall humbly ask your forgiveness.

My warmest greetings to your wife and children. I send you all my blessing.

Sincerely In Jesus and Mary,

+ Ludwig Vezelis, OFM