Diplomatic Note from Cardinal Pacelli, Vatican Secretary of State, to German Government, May 14, 1934

Source: Dieter Albrecht, ed., *Der Notenwechsel Zwischen dem Heiligen Stuhl und der Deutschen Reichsregierung* [Diplomatic Note Exchange Between the Holy See and the German Reich Government] (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1965-1980), vol. 1, pp. 138-139.

Translation from German original:

. . .

The Promemoria maintains that the scruples of the bishops against the hoisting of the swastika flag on the churches should be seen as ‘a deplorable lack of sympathy’ with the new reality of the nation. Anyone familiar with the many un-Christian or even anti-Christian meanings that often have been and are being given to this symbol by National Socialists, will be able to understand that the bishops’ scruples were and are justified. To see in this any kind of hostile attitude toward the state is false. Beginning on the day when the swastika is no longer connected by its partisan champions with meanings and missions whose anti-Christian tendency offends the faithful, the resistance based on religious considerations will diminish of its own accord. It should also be considered that in other countries where relations between Church and State are amicable – countries with no less claim to be “authoritarian” states – the display of national flags on the churches has never been demanded, as for example in Italy. Anyone who appreciates the character of the Catholic Church as house of God and abode of the eucharistic presence and the liturgical sacrifice will understand the reasons why the truly religiously sensitive person must wish that this realm, dedicated to the eternal, not be dragged into the din and conflict of the day. A Catholic way of expressing solidarity with the people on patriotic holidays will never be rejected if the bishops are allowed freedom to find the forms that they consider appropriate. . . .