

THE FOLLOW-UP TO OUR OPEN LETTER
(Translation)

June 17, 2013

The Most Reverend Leo Jun Ikenaga S.J.,
Archbishop of Osaka
2-24-22, Tamatsukuri, Chuo-Ku,
Osaka 540-0004
Japan

Your Excellency,

Dated May 23, 2013, we wrote an Open Letter to Your Excellency on the subject of the article in the Yomiuri Shimbun of Feb. 21, 2013 and the one in the Catholic Weekly Online of Apr. 11, 2013, and has displayed the Open Letter on Website as of May 27, 2013.

That Open Letter clearly stated, "We are expecting to receive the responses to our 5 items of requests within 2 weeks after Your Excellency will have received this letter. In the case of no reaction, we would assume either that Your Excellency has deemed it unnecessary to respond or that Your Excellency has no proof to back up the veracity of the information provided with the invitation letter in question."

Now that, after more than 2 weeks since the Open Letter is supposed to be in the hands of Your Excellency, there is no reaction whatsoever on the part of Your Excellency, we thought it appropriate to take further actions allowable within the scope of our above mentioned statement with all due respect for Your Excellency. We would like to elucidate that statement of ours as follows:

(1) The reason why we set the time limit of 2 weeks.

We would like to draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that the documents and the proof requested by us are all "existing" ones, which need not to be drawn up or prepared by someone and should have already been made public.

In effect, the letter signed by Your Excellency appears to have been displayed on a website in the Netherlands. As Your Excellency may be well aware, the general public as well as well-known Catholics (including politicians) in Japan are scandalized by the affirmation made by Your Excellency of the alleged involvement of the Imperial Japanese Army in the martyrdom of Bishop Frans Schraven and companions in China in 1937, which, they suspect, may have been unfounded. Again, we would request Your Excellency to provide us with the documents and the proof in question for dealing with their suspicion.

(2) Your Excellency may have deemed it unnecessary to respond.

We take it for granted that the absence of response from Your Excellency should never be interpreted in this way since it is incompatible with our notion of the mandates of a Catholic bishop.

(3) Your Excellency may not be in possession of the proof.

Our subject does not concern any religious problem nor any problem with respect to ideology or belief. It concerns nothing other than the material evidence, and Your Excellency is supposed to be in one of the following three situations:

- 1) The material evidence for the allegation was available.
- 2) No material evidence for the allegation was available.
- 3) The material evidence was unknown to Your Excellency.

Although we are not going to request for any proof of no material evidence, it goes without saying that the accusing party should provide Your Excellency with the material evidence for its allegation. That Your Excellency extended a sincere apology to people in the Netherlands for this incident in China and other various unsettled misconducts by Japanese in our history means that the material evidence was available to Your Excellency. We do not wish to assume that Your Excellency willfully consented to the allegation without any material evidence. In these circumstances, we would request Your Excellency again to provide us with the “material evidence” in his possession unknown to us, since, by the very act of “extending a sincere apology”, Your Excellency has made the Catholic Church in Japan responsible for providing the material evidence.

