

Statement by Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on the occasion of the death of Cardinal Karl Lehmann

The news of Cardinal Karl Lehmann's death has touched me deeply. He was a real friend, both to me and to Europe. Throughout his life Cardinal Lehmann built bridges of humanity and solidarity in and for Europe. In doing so, he helped to bring East and West together, not only in Germany, but also in the dialogue with Poland.

Cardinal Lehmann always invested in Europe's future. He acted as a moral compass, showing us the way and reminding us of the values that make Europe special. Solidarity and loving one's neighbour were always more to him than theoretical concepts; they were instructions on which to act. This is why, in response to the refugee issue, among other things, he would call on us all to remember the European strength of working together and to act with humanity. His words, often to the point but always in a spirit of reconciliation, will remain for us an inspiration and an instruction to stand up for Europe and its values.

My thoughts are with him and all those who were close to him.