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Locust Grove, VA 22508
February 15, 1991

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One of the most vivid memories of my boyhood in New York City was the sheer joy and exhilaration I felt when riding my bike at breakneck speed down a long hill. I would throw my head back and my arms wide and shout for joy as I zipped through intersections and dodged traffic until the land flattened and there was no more danger.

Another vivid memory, a very painful one, occurred the day a neighborhood kid stood in my path and threw a large rock at me with all his might. It hit me full force in the stomach as I flashed by. My speed in one direction on the bike, and the rock's equally high speed coming in the opposite direction produced a dramatic result. The bike kept going as I flew through the air, fell to the ground and skidded and rolled a long distance, clutching my stomach. The worst part of this painful episode was that the rock was thrown by someone I thought was a friend.

It has been an exhilarating time in recent months. There was the pain of being thrown out of the community. The most painful moment was when Clem Walters said as he dismissed me, acting as agent for Paul DeCelles, "You have done nothing wrong. Let's go before I start to cry." It seemed like a bad dream.

But there were many consolations. Our house sold in 1 1/2 weeks for cash, in a very depressed market. The Paulist Fathers rented us a wonderful office location right next door to the U.S. Bishops headquarters.

Laurette and I purchased a piece of land on which to build a house on the highest ground in this beautiful part of Virginia. I really look forward to building our house. I love to work with my hands. From our large family room windows we will be able to see the Blue Ridge Mountains. The land is located at the corner of Liberty Boulevard and Freedom Road! I have found a small airport nearby where I can continue to fly and to soar sailplanes on the ridges of the Shenandoah Valley.

The Lord has also blessed the NSC financially. We received a gift of over \$150,000 to make the move and set up new offices. Our NSC income for Christmas and January was 100 percent greater than any time in our history. I received an invitation to give the annual retreat to the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor! The Heart of the Church document has just been published. New doors are opening everywhere.

There isn't time to tell of all the wonderful things the Lord is doing. It is just like riding my bike down the hill full speed, head back, arms wide, shouting for joy!

But then I received a tape of Kevin Ranaghan's and Paul DeCelles' defamation of me before the South Bend Branch on January 25. The only thing I can compare it to is the rock thrown by that boyhood, supposed, friend. It hit me in the stomach without warning. I must admit that it produced the same effect. The bike kept going (it's the Lord's bike). I flew through the air and rolled and skidded, clutching my stomach. But then I dusted myself off, stopped the bleeding and decided to do something about what had happened to me.

Listen to me, please. I have been hit and bloodied, but I am back on my feet, and now I am angry, righteously angry, and I am going to do something about it. I have tried to work behind the scenes for over four years as my wife and my employees have been attacked and abused by community leaders. I was too embarrassed and ashamed for the good name of the People of Praise Community to tell the NSC. I said nothing because I found the behavior of CRS and Paul so disgusting, so scandalous that I didn't want to hurt innocent people by telling them about it. The NSC was quietly handling Paul's cancellation of our insurance on March 22 by appealing to the Bishops for binding arbitration. Kevin's and Paul's presentation on January 25 has changed all that. It was a rock in the stomach.

When I listened to the tape a community member sent me, I felt heart-sick. I felt worse than I did when that rock hit me in the stomach years ago. I just listened in disbelieving shock as trusted founders of the People of Praise stood before the people they claim to serve and love and for three hours knowingly, deliberately, and repeatedly lied, used half-truths, innuendo and omission to destroy my reputation and the reputations of Laurette, of a bishop of the Catholic Church, and of all the members of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Yes, I know this sounds unbelievable. It is shocking, but is true. Your founders have knowingly, carefully, systematically lied to you. They have betrayed the trust of those the Lord has called them to serve. It is shocking and tragic that your trusted founders would deliberately use calumny and slander to preserve their power, but we should rejoice that the Lord is bringing the problem at the heart of the People of Praise into the light.

This is the most serious crisis the People of Praise has ever faced. The outcome will determine whether the Church will permit the community to survive.

This is the beginning of what may be a protracted and

powerful struggle probably involving a thorough investigation by Church authorities and possibly by civil authorities.

It will take real courage and perseverance to save the People of Praise. Many more persons may be summarily dismissed for displeasing the overall coordinator before the necessary changes in leadership and structure can be won.

Saving the People of Praise is worth fighting for, worth sacrificing for, worth taking risks for, even worth being thrown out of the community and being slandered for.

The People of Praise is a precious and wonderful work of the Holy Spirit. It deserves to be saved from the now publicly exposed and corrupt leaders who will continue to destroy the community if they remain unchallenged and free to use secrecy, control, manipulation, fear, disapproval, intimidation, lies, half-truths and innuendo to prevent reform from within or from without.

I think most of you know at a gut level that there is something seriously wrong at the heart of the community. I did too for years. But until it began to hurt my wife who was fighting for her life going through chemotherapy and numerous surgeries, I didn't resist it. Instead I said things like:

"It's not perfect but it's the best act in town."

"There's a good tension between Kevin and Paul, it will work out."

"They balance things like Steve and Ralph."

"Kevin is a churchman to his toenails. When it gets right down to it he will dig in and fight Paul."

"The teaching on roles of men and women doesn't square up with John Paul II's teaching "On the Dignity and Vocation of Women" but it will change."

"It's absurd for a group which is 98% Catholic to have no relationship with the Church, but give it time. But it sure looks like a scam to avoid Church oversight."

"People who could be living a rich eucharistic life, are living an impoverished non-denominational spiritual life. Maybe that's the price we have to pay for unity."

"As soon as Laurette is well I will begin to work for the necessary reforms in the community leadership and structure."

I closed my eyes to the underlying reality. I have

asked the Lord's forgiveness. I ask your forgiveness. I repent of keeping silent about the shredders in the waste baskets, about the paranoia about tapped phones, about the secret covenants with the Word of God and the Gulf Coast Fellowship, about secret hotel meetings, about the anti-clericalism, about the acquisition of the True House assets, about the vicious defamation of John Ferrone and Tony Rowland and the terrible treatment of Jack Brombach and many others, about the attempts to control and manipulate the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the North American Renewal Service Committee, about the control and manipulation and use of fear and disapproval and exclusion to control the leadership and members of the People of Praise, about the gradual, careful structuring of a community which makes Paul DeCelles as overall coordinator personal head of everyone in the community, personally empowered to transfer any member or dismiss any member. He has more power and less accountability than Pope John Paul II! Elected for 12 years, renewable for 6 more - 18 years with no opposition possible - a closed power loop with absolutely no outside oversight. Since Bob Mumford displeased Paul (by encouraging us to continue to discern our leaders) in a talk he gave in South Bend over 12 years ago, not a single person from outside the community has taught the South Bend Branch.

Brothers and sisters you have a right to the truth. You have not heard it.

Laurette and I have a right to defend and restore our good names. We have not been given the opportunity.

Our right to defend ourselves from slander and your right to the truth arise from justice not charity. Kevin and Paul must not be permitted to deny it.

Bishop John D'Arcy has a right to know that two of his permanent deacons are grieving the Lord by abusing their sacred office and are knowingly and publicly using lies, half-truths and innuendo to destroy the good names of fellow Catholics including a Bishop of the Catholic Church in a desperate attempt to prevent an expose of their systematic abuse of authority for many years.

Laurette and I demand equal time (three hours) before the same audience before which we were slandered and we insist that a tape of our response be sent to Bishop D'Arcy and to all those in the People of Praise who have been provided with the calumny and slander contained in the tape of the January 25 meeting.

Here is just one small sample of the outright lies that were knowingly, deliberately spoken by Kevin and Paul on January 25th. And here is just one sample of the kind of point by point refutation we will make when we receive the

opportunity to answer:

On January 25th Kevin Ranaghan stated to the South Bend Branch without any qualification, "the National Service Committee chose to enter the CRS self insurance plan."

Kevin's statement is a calculated, cynical lie. Here is the truth:

In the fall of 1982 while Associate Director of the NSC, I learned that CRS was planning to drop CNA to enter a self-insuring plan. I studied the insurance market and obtained a proposal for an excellent Blue Cross Blue Shield Small Employer Plan, which included dental benefits.

I presented it to Kevin Ranaghan and was directed by Kevin, Executive Director of the NSC, to drop the Blue Cross Blue Shield proposal and to place all the NSC employees in the CRS plan (which had fewer benefits, no dental coverage, and higher premiums.) I did as directed by Kevin even though it would cost my family and the other NSC employee's families a lot of money each year for medical and dental benefits not covered in the CRS plan, and it would cost the NSC more for higher premiums.

Now here is where "the plot thickens." Kevin Ranaghan, Executive Director of the NSC, was also a member of the CRS Board of Directors which was proceeding to become self-insured despite the objections of insurance experts such as Rich Preuss who told CRS that their risk pool (number of community people insured) was too small.

Thus Kevin knew as a Board member of CRS that CRS needed to add as many premium paying persons as possible. Kevin was in a clear conflict of interest since he was a member of both boards. His action in ordering me to enter the CRS plan was clearly unethical and possibly illegal. Kevin did not get approval from the NSC Board of Directors. He acted alone in ordering the NSC employees into the CRS plan. It was not an NSC decision as Kevin told you it was.

An insurance expert I met with told me that many firms go to self-insurance for two reasons. The first is to have access to the large reserves for unpaid claims, and, second, for the "float" available from slow paying claims. He said that if the number in the risk pool is too small (he refused to design plans for companies with less than 1000 employees) costs become prohibitive and the only way out is by dropping employees or dependents with high expenses or high risks. I have documented evidence of CRS' slow payment of my claims and of CRS' many efforts to remove Laurette from the insurance plan.

When Kevin, Executive Director of the NSC and member of

the CRS Board of Directors ordered me to drop superior, less expensive Blue Cross Blue Shield coverage, the result was that People of Praise persons who worked for the NSC paid higher personal medical costs and received fewer benefits. Kevin also incurred a moral and legal obligation on behalf of CRS to the persons who were impacted by this decision.

Thus, Kevin and CRS incurred a moral and legal obligation to continue to insure Laurette even when she developed a stage III cancer and needed massive surgery and chemotherapy, and two years later when she needed more massive surgery and extensive reconstruction.

When CRS tried repeatedly to force Laurette out of the CRS self-insuring plan ("just a business decision") I remember verbally and in writing constantly telling them of the legal and moral obligation they had incurred because of Kevin's actions.

I have made this point many, many, many times to Kevin Ranaghan, Paul DeCelles, Dick Keusch, Bob McDonough, Pat Rath, Rich Preuss, Randy Raciti, Andrew Plodowski, Russ Sanford, Dan DeCelles, Louis Grams, Kerry Koller, Clem Walters, and Charlie Fraga.

Thus, on the evening of January 25th, Kevin and Paul were deeply, personally aware of the moral and legal implications of Kevin's actions. Bishop Jacobs had repeatedly challenged them on this.

Yet Kevin stood before you the branch and simply said, "the NSC chose to enter the CRS plan."

This was a knowingly, carefully considered, premeditated deliberate lie designed to deceive the People of Praise South Bend Branch into believing the NSC had no legitimate grievance. It was a lie, a deliberate lie, and Kevin knows it. So does Paul DeCelles; and so do many of the leaders and branch members who were present who know the true facts. I pray for all those who remained silent and condoned those lies.

A leader of another community told me recently that cowardice was the biggest problem preventing reform of the communities. So many of us have tolerated the gradual, incredible concentration and abuse of power by our silence. Some of us have actively cooperated despite our growing concerns. Some of us cooperated because we had also become financially dependent on Paul's continued approval.

This leader further stunned me when he said that it was only after Laurette was being injured by this abuse of authority that I was jolted into action. He is right. I repent for all the times I permitted the current problems to

grow by my silence and by my moral cowardice.

It is time to take a stand. It may not seem like the best time or the best place to take stand, but I believe that the Lord wants to rescue the People of Praise. This is the Lord's time and place. It will take real courage and a willingness to suffer and to follow the Lord as he rescues His people.

If there is anything I can do to help you take a courageous stand, please ask. Comfort and encourage one another. Fight for and demand the truth, freedom, and dignity that is yours as children of God. Don't settle for a flashlight: demand a floodlight. You are only as sick as your secrets. This is true for a person or for a community.

Don't be afraid of the light. Laurette and I have nothing in our life that we are not willing to put in the light. If we have done anything wrong we will immediately repent and be reconciled. Paul and Kevin should be willing to do the same and allow us three hours to defend our good names. They should not be afraid of the light. If they refuse us equal time, they must be afraid of something that is in the dark.

One man, Paul DeCelles, has amassed an incredible amount of power, which is unchecked by any Church authority. He has successfully devised a structure and government which permits him to destroy at will any attempt at reform from within the community. I know it resulted in my being thrown out by him, and the same has happened to Walter and Claire Matthews and many others.

Paul is surrounded by six men of his choosing who are unwilling, afraid, or financially unable to check his continued abuse of authority and his refusal to accept meaningful Church oversight.

You must believe it is not impossible to bring about the necessary reform of the People of Praise. Nothing is impossible with God. Ask the Lord for the strength and courage you need. Be courageous. Come into the freedom and dignity that is yours as sons and daughters of God.

Do not be intimidated by lies or innuendoes or by the threat of disapproval or exclusion. Band together for strength. Know that the same work of the Holy Spirit that is bringing freedom in Eastern Europe is blowing on Ann Arbor and Steubenville setting captives free. It is now blowing on South Bend.

Insist that everything come into the light. Remember, any person or institution is only as sick as its secrets. For example, ask for a full and completely detailed briefing

on:

1. The exact relationship that the People of Praise has with Bishop D'Arcy and the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese, including meeting dates and topics discussed. Ask Bishop D'Arcy for his response to the report.
2. People of Praise, CRS and LaSalle Company income and expense budgets and financial statements including the CRS health insurance plans. Ask the outside auditors for their comments on the report.
3. What the CRS and NSC attorneys say regarding the NSC claims concerning health insurance, the national conference and the NSC office move. Ask the attorneys directly.
4. What Russ Sanford, Rich Preuss, and Randy Raciti say about the NSC position in these areas. Ask these brothers directly.
5. Any secret agreements formed by People of Praise leaders with other groups. Ask if there have been any, and, if so, what they are.
6. The relationship between the People of Praise and the Saskatoon Diocese and its Bishop. Ask the Bishop of Saskatoon for a report.
7. The acquisition and disposition of True House assets. Ask Jim Byrne and all the principals involved.
8. Any other area that you are concerned about. You have a right to know. It is your community and all its affairs should be fully in the light.

If you find the old pattern of secrecy, control, manipulation, etc. continues and you can't get this information, vote with your pocket book and your feet until you do receive it.

Summing up:

1. Whether you are Catholic or Protestant, write or call Bishop John D'Arcy today.

Address: Most Reverend John M. D'Arcy
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend
P.O. Box 390
Fort Wayne, IN 46801

Phone: (219) 422 - 4611

Express to him any concerns you may have about past or present actions of the People of Praise including the dismissal of Bill Beatty and Walter and Claire Matthews by Paul DeCelles and the calumny and slander of January 25th.

2. Write or call Paul DeCelles (send a copy to Bishop D'Arcy) insisting that Bill and Laurette Beatty receive equal time (three hours) before the South Bend Branch members before March 15th.

3. Place your community support payments into a savings account until the equal time meeting for the Beattys is scheduled and held.

4. Boycott all community meetings and services until the equal time meeting for the Beattys is scheduled and held.

5. If you are a Catholic member of the community, and if you are confronted or threatened or intimidated or shamed or pressured in any way for doing any of the above, immediately pick up the phone and call your shepherd, Bishop John D'Arcy. Tell him that two of his permanent deacons or those acting on their behalf are again abusing their sacred office. Ask him to intervene to protect you and your family.

6. If you are a Protestant member of the People of Praise, contact your bishop or appropriate church authority and encourage them to meet in a joint session with Paul DeCelles and Kevin Ranaghan and Bishop D'Arcy.

7. Demand equal time before the South Bend Branch for every single person in the future who is publicly slandered in their absence by your leaders. Insist that they have the God-given right to face their accusers.

8. Write a letter to Paul DeCelles today insisting that the following people receive an unedited, full tape of the slander and calumny of January 25th:

Bill and Laurette Beatty
 Walter and Claire Matthews
 Bishop Sam Jacobs
 Bishop John D'Arcy
 Bishop Paul Cordes
 Bishop Joseph McKinney
 John Mooney, City of the Lord Community
 Dennis McBride, Alleluia Community
 The key pastors of all other churches represented in the South Bend Branch.

You are at a critical point in your history. You can continue as is, and not deal with your gut instinct-your discernment-that something is seriously wrong at the heart of the community. If you don't deal with it you will continue

to drift into becoming just another tragic wreck on the landscape of Church history.

Don't wait until you or a loved one gets hit with a rock in the stomach like I did, before you stand up tall in the freedom and dignity that is yours as a child of God. Oppose the suffocating control and manipulation that is destroying what could be something great for Christ, a light to the nations, a sign of hope and a place to live in righteousness, peace, and joy.

It is time to rescue the People of Praise. It is no time for cowards. It is time to be courageous.

"For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid; instead His Spirit fills us with power, love, and self-control." 2 Tim. 1:7

Your brother in Christ,

Bill Beatty
Bill Beatty

*P.S.
The attached news article
should give us courage. Things
can really change. Nothing is
impossible for God!*