

Catholic Charismatic Renewal SERVICE COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 102 • Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107 • (313) 761-8505

April 24, 1975

Most Reverend Leo Pursley
P.O. Box 390
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801

Dear Bishop Pursley,

As a result of a discussion we had at the recent meeting of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Committee, I would like to write you about the material Dr. Storey sent you earlier this month.

We are, of course, open to any investigation, theological or canonical, of the Catholic charismatic renewal. We encourage investigations and there have been a great many theological studies over the last few years on the Catholic charismatic renewal. One of the most competent ones was the one done at Malines this last year by a team of internationally known Catholic theologians under the presidency of Cardinal Suenens of Belgium, and that study treats most of the questions Dr. Storey mentioned. I believe we sent you a copy of that study, and we would be glad to send you as many more as would be helpful to you.

Dr. Storey does seem to have in mind some more formal kind of investigation by church authorities. It would seem that such an investigation ought to begin with a specified and documented list of errors, generally taught in the Catholic charismatic renewal. We, and other leaders in the renewal, feel a pastoral responsibility for sound teaching in the renewal, but we cannot be fairly held responsible for anything ever said. If there are things which are being generally taught which are errors or even harmful distortions, we would be very eager to know what those were and how they are being taught and would use what influence we have to change such teaching.

It is unfortunate that Dr. Storey used the materials which he did to try to establish a case for serious problems within the renewal. Josephine Ford, as you know, has been a difficulty for quite a while. Her latest statement is no more reliable than her earlier ones. I believe that you had a report submitted to you last year that described her behavior and answered her more serious charges. If you did not get the material or would like more copies or would like some kind of an updating or expansion, please let me know and I would be glad to see that you have whatever material you want.

The True House material is even more unfortunate. To my knowledge, it is an isolated case, and we handled it as well as we knew how. True House is no more and the leader involved is not functioning as a leader in the charismatic renewal. It is, indeed, a warning of how things could go badly, and we have tried to take it as such.

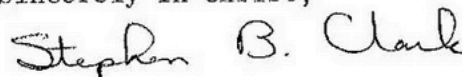
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You mentioned in a letter to Kevin Ranaghan that you felt it was not right that you had not been informed of the matter as the ordinary of the diocese and that that omission reflected on the operation of the charismatic renewal in your diocese. I asked Kevin to let me reply to your letter since the matter was handled by the national service committee (The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Committee), of which I am now chairman, and not by the local group.

When the matter came to our attention, we felt that we needed to do something, and we were also aware that since it was a matter of potentially scandalous nature, harmful to many people involved, we ought to do our best to handle it in a manner that would not cause any widespread knowledge of it. We did consult the bishop who we were in most contact with and who does regularly advise us as a committee. He was not, however, any more than an advisor--the matter was handled by ourselves without his being present at the times of decision. On the other hand, the spiritual director of the main person involved was present with us when we worked out an approach to caring for the situation. When we discussed who should be notified, he assured us that since it was a matter of internal forum and since he was the spiritual director of the person involved and also a priest who lives in your diocese, he could take responsibility for the situation and there was no need to notify the bishop. We accepted his advice.

As I hope is clear from my letter, our desire as a service committee is to be of service to the bishops in any way that we can. We are very eager to provide any information we can that would help you to understand how to respond to Dr. Storey's letter.

Sincerely in Christ,



Stephen B. Clark, Chairman
The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service
Committee

SBC:dc

cc: Archbishop Giovanni Benelli
Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin
Bishop Joseph P. Crowley
Dr. Bertil Ghezzi
Archbishop Jean Jadot
Father Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B.
Bishop Joseph McKinney
Dr. Kevin Ranaghan
Leo Josef Cardinal Suenens
John J. Cardinal Wright
Dr. William Storey