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November 7, 1973

Dear Bert:

After reading your letter of October 10th., 1973, I was stunned by the content thereof. I personally feel you used poor judgment in expressing your opinion in writing. You used poorer judgment in sending a copy to Jim. If the man needed psychiatric assistance, the contents of your letter could cause a damaging set-back to his recovery. I deeply regret that you did not have the courtesy to discuss this matter personally with me when you were in my home. If you came here to judge Jim and Maria, your judgment was erroneous and underhanded. I also did not appreciate your advise to my son Michael, advocating a policy different than what we as parents determine at this time best for Michael, age 17.

Edith and I are sound and mature people. Edith is highly qualified in the works of the Lord, in dealing with social problems, in dealing with individual emotional problems and has the knowledge and experience to determine an individual's stability. As a Certified Public Accountant, an officer of my company, member of the board of directors and past president of a large country club, and particularly a father, I certainly feel that I have some qualifications in judging people.

Jim and Maria's decision to marry was their own. They both stated that they had cared for each other for a long time. Due to the lifestyle of True House, each one did not discuss their feelings for the other for fear of causing difficulties to the other or to the community. Edith and I knew of this in March. Their decision to marry in November was not hasty. They considered the advantages of this wedding date rather than a later date. They discussed all facets among themselves and with others. Their future plans are excellent and will be successful.

Jim asked our permission to marry Maria. Maria did likewise. Do you think that Edith and I would permit our daughter to marry someone who is incompetent, immoral, unfit and ill?

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Jim has been a member of my "family" for approximately six weeks. During this time he was treated as one of my sons. During this period, as a father and mother show concern for their children, we thoroughly discussed his past, present and future. As we do for our own children, we directed and recommended what medical, dental and other assistance Jim would need. We thoroughly discussed his future plans. Jim and Maria are intelligent adults. I was proud to meet Jim's parents. I know that they reared Jim in a manner as good if not better than the ways Edith and I reared our own children.

I do not believe that either you or the "Committee" thoroughly knew Jim. He has several characteristics that I possess. We are restless. We cannot seem to relax. We must "get the job done". We must have something challenging us. We seek new goals. God in His judgment gave us this energy.

Jim proved this to the Charismatic Movement. He was one of the men responsible for it's growth. The financial success of the Communication Center, the growth of True House, the success of the annual conference at Notre Dame are due primarily to his leadership and energies. I visited True House and made a study of the business at the Communication Center. I was very impressed with what I saw. The quality of management was excellent in making the center a successful operation. Jim and I had many meetings and telephone conversations during the past few years. He sought my advice as an accountant and businessman. He enquired what steps to take to obtain some of the following employee benefits: employee wages, hospitalization, pension etc. Jim did obtain some of these for his employees. He knew that his personnel were underpaid, and he tried to obtain for them a living wage. He continually gave them his time and help. He also sought my advice as to what steps to take to obtain a non-profit status.

MEMO: The committee should thoroughly review all matters applicable to employee wages and benefits. (Sorry for going off on a tangent).

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Jim has had a thorough physical. The physicians report was very satisfactory. Jim is undergoing complete, intensive dental treatment. JIM IS WELL !

Bert, I somehow feel that the actions of the Service Committee hurt Jim tremendously. I may not have all of the facts. From the information that I obtained, I drew my own conclusions. The committee was not 100% loyal to Jim. They did not back him up and support him properly. They failed to realize that Jim gave over eight years of his life to the Charismatic Renewal. He was a leader! A successful board does not back off and then recommend "solitary confinement" for one of its officers. They should squash any rumors! They should advise all others of the wonderful works their associate has performed! They should encourage him to new goals by intelligent understanding. They should not lose him! Such an asset will be hard to replace. The committee seems to lack experience and was hasty in their conclusions. Perhaps I do not have all of the facts. Perhaps I am wrong. If so, please accept my apologies.

As you know, I am not active in the Charismatic Renewal. I do assist Edith, my family and the Potomac Community wherever I can or am asked to do so. Somehow I feel that the Holy Spirit has moved me to write from my heart this letter. I sincerely cannot thank you and the Service Committee for your letter. I have no ill feelings to you or the committee. I know that none of you meant any harm. God bless you and the committee. May He always give each of you the love, energies, experience and direction to continue the wonderful work all of you are performing.

Sincerely,


Michael A. Difato

MAD/md

CC:

Dear Bert:

Edith and I have decided to forward copies of this letter to the Service Committee, Fr. O'Connor and Bishop McKinney. We are doing this for Jim and Maria. It is important that the others become aware of what we have shared about them.