

TRUE HOUSE, INC.

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August 13, 1973

Dear Brother or Sister,

May the Peace and Love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

I am sure that you recall from the True House Weekend how since the outset of the charismatic renewal here at the University of Notre Dame Jim Byrne has been working long and hard for the kingdom of the Lord. After the outbreak of the renewal in 1967 Jim experienced difficult years of poverty, hardship and that continued as he and Peter worked to minister to the students at the University in whatever way they could. By the summer of 1971 there were a handfull of students who had remained faithful to the Lord and were interested in community. Jim was called on again at this time to use all of his vital energies to encourage these young Christians and help them come to an understanding of community. In the Fall of 1971 after much talking and many tears- 22 brothers and sisters were able to come to an agreement on the covenant of True House. This milestone did not cause Jim's work to end but it increased his responsibilities as he became a Coordinator of the community.

Gradually as the years have gone on Jim's responsibilities have increased to the point where at the beginning of last fall he was the head of two not-for-profit corporations (True House and Charismatic Renewal Services). He was very active in the Service Committee and still a Coordinator of our community which was doubling in size each semester. Jim has been working at full steam on all of these areas for well over a year. Many people have been acutely aware of the strain that Jim has been undergoing for these last six years and the toll they were taking on him. Many of us hoped that he would find time for a rest but there has never been an opportunity for him to get the rest that he needs.

In talking with Peter and myself over the last two months the solution that Jim reached for this situation was that it would be good for him to take an extended vacation from the community and his responsibilities on the Service Committee and as president of Charismatic Renewal Services. After consulting his spiritual advisor and others Jim has decided to go for several months on an extended vacation, resigning from the Service Committee and Charismatic Renewal Services. The vacation will give him a chance to receive medical attention and also will give him a chance to let the Lord restore his spiritual life.

Peter and I were concerned that you would hear about this from one of us before the community retreat. The rest of the community here in South Bend was informed of Jim's decision this last Wednesday night. All of us agreed that it would not be in charity to spend time talking idly about Jim's leaving. It would be important that this necessary step not become a source of panic for brothers and sisters around the country so I would ask you not to spend time talking about this with others either. Please write to Peter or me with questions.

I want to assure you that the Lord is not leaving us in chaos but there will be a real direction and care for the community in Jim's absence. Before Jim left he met with Peter and me to discuss the care of the community. The three of us decided that until the retreat in the Fall that Peter and I along with the Pastoral Council of Jim Burke, Maria Difato, Don Reed, and Paul Schenerman will head the community.

Jim asked me to share with you how he himself would have liked to remain around until the Fall retreat so that he could talk with you before he left. The fatigue that Jim has undergone will prevent him from doing that, and he has asked me to write this letter for him because of the press of affairs that had to be handled before he could leave. He sends you his love and asks for your prayers.

Along with his love, I send mine. I think that the words of Paul to the Thessalonians are for all of the community now; "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thess 5:16-18). It is a time to pray for one another, for Jim and for the whole community.

Looking forward to seeing you in the Fall.

Your Brothers

Joel and Peter