

To: "The Rt Rev William Downey" <Bshp052497@aol.com>, "The Rt Rev Robert McGinnis" <LMcgin6090@aol.com>, "The Rt Rev Lawrence Smith" <regionary@aol.com>, "The Rt Rev Joseph Tisch" <TischSaintpierre@aol.com>, "The Rt Rev Hein van Beusekom" <beusekom@jetlink.net>, "The Rt Rev Ruben Cabigting" <rubencab@concentric.net>
From: Maurice Warnon <maurice.warnon@kingsgarden.org>
Subject: Your Proposal to the GES.
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Dear Brother +William,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your proposal to the GES. I felt it necessary to provide my point of view to its members, and you have probably received a copy of my letter answering yours.

I am glad that my note to the Rev. James McGill arrived to you. It shows his loyalty to you and the Liberal Catholic Church, which is a great relief to me. I realize you don't count me among intelligent people, but I am not stupid enough, if I wanted to act in "secretive and subversive" manner, to make such communication in writing; a telephone conversation would have been a better choice.

As I indicated in my letter to the GES commenting on your proposal, I have received quite a number of requests to join the Dutch movement from American congregations, as well as from other Provinces. Probably because I speak Dutch fluently, and am known to have relatives in the Netherlands.

When I was contacted by members in Rev. James McGill's Congregation, as my note clear stated, I just contacted him in response to such approach, naming the source. Please read it carefully.
Your assumption that I initiated the contact is obviously incorrect.

From the various declarations and documents made by the Presiding Bishop, it is my understanding that it is his intention to have any congregation opposed to the decisions of the GES "leave the Church with his blessing" (his own words). Facilitating such departure doesn't seem to me to be in opposition with his directives.

I will indeed be in the Netherlands next month to visit my son, the Rev. Jean-Marc Warnon and his family. His wife Marina is expected to give birth to our fifth grand child in a week or two. This child will be baptized by his father in the Church of Saint Michael and All Angels, in Naarden, the Netherlands, where I received all my Orders and was elevated to the Episcopate.

I believe your forbidding me to assist at the Baptism of my grand son, through a statement of the Interim Committee, is out of line.

You can count on me being present, even if my participation at this particular service is contrary to your directives and gives you a much better reason for requesting my dismissal from the GES.

Taking, as I have done sometimes, a stand contrary to the positions of the Presiding Bishop is not disrespectful. It is often more difficult to point out mistakes made by our Executive Branch with the purpose of learning from them, than to sit down and do nothing. Such a position doesn't make anyone very popular, and requires often greater courage than to follow in submission. My remarks were never intended to be disrespectful to anyone, but to insist on accountability to the GES, when decisions were made in its name. Bp. Lawrence will certainly remember how hard I fought to keep the unity of our Church and the authority of the GES during the administration of Bp. Taylor, and especially during the meeting of the GES in Egham, although +Eric was a very dear friend of mine. He will also confirm that I will defend my ideas with vigor, but once the decisions of the GES are made, I remain in complete obedience.

I have served under many Presiding Bishops since Sir Hugh Sykes, and have seen how all of them took great care to report all their actions to the GES. Bp. Eric Taylor broke the rule when he declared: "The Liberal Catholic Church is a theocracy, and I am the Church" (his exact statement in 1988, during the GES meeting in Woudschoten, the Netherlands). In his words, "the Liberal Catholic Bishops are stupid", so he never felt accountable to the Synod. Unfortunately this concept survived him, all the way to Bp. Hooker... As an example, the last financial statement of the Presiding Bishop's funds was issued to the GES by Bp. van Krusenstierna! This absence of accountability opens the door to the appearance of impropriety, not necessarily to the Bishops, but to the membership and outsiders as well. It also shows disrespect towards the GES and its members.

As the most senior Bishop still holding jurisdiction I feel sometimes obligated to draw the attention of the Presiding Bishop on his accountability to the GES (even in financial matters). If my words are offensive, it is NOT my intention. I wonder how good you would express yourself in French or in Dutch, and if you wouldn't sometime make the wrong choice of word. I have always accepted gracefully reprimands for such mistakes and apologized when I was made aware of it. But on the other hand, I respect too much the authority of the GES as the supreme governing body of our Church to let even a Presiding Bishop exceed his authority and/or misrepresent his actions in his reports to the Synod.

I have spent some time in the Netherlands last Summer, and discovered SEVERAL grave cases of misconduct (at least one being a felony) by people acting under the authority of the Presiding Bishop during his visit to the Netherlands, most probably without him even being aware of such actions. I have seen police reports and affidavits confirming formal complaints. In order to protect the name of the Church and the Office

of the Presiding Bishop, I have decided not to communicate copies of these documents in my possession to the GES or anyone else. I also have convinced the victims in the Netherlands to keep silent and drop the charges. If I share this information with you today in confidence, it is just to show my respect for the Church, and to try to let you understand that there is nothing to be gained in opening a can of worms. It would be much better for the Church, for the GES and even for yourself, if you would ask for my dismissal on different grounds.

What regards our local congregation, which is still the largest in the North East of the United States, it will continue to survive outside your jurisdiction by your own decision, and I feel obligated to continue ministering it as part of my promise to be a servant of the servants of God. As a Chaplain in local hospitals, I minister non-members of the Liberal Catholic Church, giving them regularly healing services and the Holy Sacraments. I don't see why you condemn me when I minister my old friends here. I have tried very much to prevent my son to join his brother and place himself under the jurisdiction of the Liberal Catholic Church in the Netherlands, mainly because the entire congregation would follow him, and this move would create an impossible situation in your Province. Your recent attitude has made my job very, very difficult.

For one reason or another, you have kept the habit to use in your letters a language that is borderline offensive, and therefore that it sometimes exceeds your intent. I have a communication from the Presiding Bishop on file, also complaining about this. On the other hand, in conversations face to face, you are very friendly, pleasant, and eloquent. This comment is not intended to be disrespectful, but to let you know that I take your writings with a grain of salt. The tone of the last letter from the Interim Committee about intercommunion is obviously your style. It has generated strong reactions in the USA and abroad because of its intolerance. Some members of our Clergy are often invited in choir by the Roman Catholic and other Churches in the name of eucharism and the tolerance we preach, and participate in these services without prejudice, but today they cannot participate to some services of the Liberal Catholic Rite without risking to be expelled from our Church. Fortunately, as the French proverb says: "Le ridicule ne tue plus!"

I apologize for taking so much of your time, but as you took the time to criticize my actions, I feel I have the right to respond to you directly, and copy the Bishops supporting your proposal. Your comments will be greatly appreciated.

Be assured that I keep you and your family, all the Bishops of your Province, and their loved ones in my prayers. Regardless of the present difficulties, I still believe the Synod of the Liberal Catholic Church to be a brotherhood, and that quarrels among brothers are a sign of good health and mutual love.

In His service,

+Maurice.

