

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." Mark 12:8



Archdiocese of
Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Office of the Archbishop

November 23, 2004

Dear Pastors and Parish Life Administrators,

Enclosed here I am sending you a copy of a letter I recently sent to Father Anthony Bannon, L.C. I have been in communication with Father Bannon for several years, in an attempt to clarify the relationship between the Legionaries and this Archdiocese. Unfortunately, we have not been able to accomplish that goal satisfactorily.

Therefore, in my letter to Father Bannon, I told him that the Legionaries of Christ were not to be active in any way in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. I sincerely regret that it became necessary to take this step, but I am convinced that I needed to do so.

In addition, I informed Father Bannon that the activities of Regnum Christi (a movement under the sponsorship and direction of the Legionaries) were to be kept completely separate from all activities of the parishes and the Archdiocese. That is, they were not to be held on parish or diocesan property, nor promoted through any diocesan channels. Because some of these groups may be operating within your parish, I wanted you to have this information.

I invite you to read the enclosed letter itself, for a more complete explanation.

God bless you in your ministry to your people.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Harry J. Flynn

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

enclosure

COPY

October 22 2004

Rev. Anthony Bannon, L.C.
Territorial Director, Legionaries of Christ
195 Derby Avenue
Orange, CT 06477

Dear Father Bannon,

Over the course of the past several years, we have exchanged periodic correspondence, as well as meeting several times. In each of those instances, I have sought to gain a better understanding of the work of the Legionaries of Christ in general, the Legionaries' relationship to the Regnum Christi movement, and Regnum Christi and Legionary ministry within this Archdiocese.

In my judgment, these exchanges have tended to be vague and ambiguous, characterized by generalizations about intent and policy. They have left me with little actual clarity about the intent and practice of the ministry of these groups within the Archdiocese.

Your written materials make statements about cooperation within the local churches, providing assistance to them, etc. At least in this Archdiocese, however, practice has not seemed to match theory in that regard.

I feel very strongly that any group of religious who minister within this local Church needs to do so in a way which promotes unity and cooperation. Rather than experiencing such a spirit, our pastors continue to sense that a "parallel Church" is being encouraged, one that separates persons from the local parish and archdiocese, and creates competing structures.

That is simply unacceptable.

As a result, I have decided that Legionary of Christ priests are not to be active in any way in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

In addition, although individual members of the faithful have a canonical right to join associations of the faithful, such as Regnum Christi, not all such associations are officially approved or supported. Because the groups and programs sponsored by Regnum Christi operate outside the normal structures of the Catholic Church such as parishes, schools and diocesan programs, there is no opportunity for me to exercise appropriate vigilance in their regard. As a result, I also find it necessary to state clearly that the Archdiocese does not endorse or support Regnum Christi itself, or activities sponsored by that movement. Therefore, in order to prevent confusion, the activities of Regnum Christi must be completely separate from all activities of the parishes and the Archdiocese. They are not to be held on parish or diocesan property, nor promoted through any diocesan channels.

Although I regret that I have found it necessary to make these decisions, Father Bannon, I am convinced that it is important for me to do so.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis