

NOTIFICATION ON VASSULA RYDEN (Dec 1996)

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

(This clarification of its original Notification on Vassula Ryden was released to the Press in December 1996)

I. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has received various questions about the value and authority of its Notification of 6 October 1995, published in *L'Osservatore Romano* on Monday/Tuesday, 23/24 October 1995, p. 2 (*L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 25 October 1995, p. 12), regarding the writings and messages of Mrs. Vassula Ryden attributed to alleged revelations and disseminated in Catholic circles throughout the world.

In this regard, the Congregation wishes to state:

1) The *Notification* addressed to the Pastors and faithful of the Catholic Church retains all its force. It was approved by the competent authorities and will be published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, the official organ of the Holy See, with the signatures of the Prefect and the Secretary of the Congregation. [*]

2) Regarding the reports circulated by some news media concerning a restrictive interpretation of this *Notification*, given by His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect in a private conversation with a group of people to whom he granted an audience in Guadalajara, Mexico, on 10 May 1996, the same Cardinal Prefect wishes to state:

a) as he said, the faithful are not to regard the messages of Vassula Ryden as divine revelations, but only as her personal meditations;

b) these meditations, as the *Notification* explained, include, along with positive aspects, elements that are negative in the light of Catholic doctrine;

c) therefore, Pastors and the faithful are asked to exercise serious spiritual discernment in this matter and to preserve the purity of the faith, morals and spiritual life, not by relying on alleged revelations but by following the revealed Word of God and the directives of the Church's Magisterium.

II. Regarding the circulation of texts of alleged private revelations, the Congregation states:

1) The interpretation given by some individuals to a Decision approved by Paul VI on 14 October 1966 and promulgated on 15 November of that year, in virtue of which writings and messages resulting from alleged revelations could be freely circulated in the Church, is absolutely groundless. This decision actually referred to the "Abolition of the Index of Forbidden Books", and determined that - after the relevant censures were lifted-the moral obligation still remained of not circulating or reading those writings which endanger faith and morals.

2) It should be recalled however that with regard to the circulation of texts of alleged private revelations, canon 823 §1 of the current Code remains in force: "the Pastors of the Church have the ... right to demand that writings to be published by the Christian faithful which touch upon faith or morals be submitted to their judgement".

3) Alleged supernatural revelations and writings concerning them are submitted in first instance to the judgement of the diocesan Bishop, and, in particular cases, to the judgement of the Episcopal Conference and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

*[EWTN: The notification was subsequently published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* [*Acts of the Apostolic See*] - AAS, vol. LXXXVIII, N. 12 (5 December 1996), 956-957.]

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