
Dialogue between Vassula Rydén and the CDF

Introduction

Between 2001 and 2004, Mrs. Vassula Rydén had an official dialogue with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in the Vatican that was requested by the then Prefect of the CDF, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI.

The purpose of this report is not to provide cheap propaganda for Mrs. Rydén, but rather to offer some balanced and detailed insight into the progression and outcome of this dialogue.

It must be emphasized here that the dialogue did take place and that it reached a cautious but positive conclusion. The entire dialogue between Mrs. Rydén and the CDF was published in the form of a booklet in 2004 and - at the specific request of Cardinal Ratzinger - in all subsequent versions of Mrs. Rydén's books entitled *True Life in God* (TLIG), reminiscent of other cases of CDF critique that were clarified through dialogue. As it will become clear in this report, Cardinal Ratzinger had first declined when asked in 1999 to meet Mrs. Rydén because of "the situation with the Notification", as he put it. However, what he did offer was an official dialogue with the CDF. It was this dialogue and its positive outcome that made it possible for Cardinal Ratzinger to receive Mrs. Rydén, along with myself, in private audience in November 2004 during which I took the picture below.



It must be understood that the dialogue in itself entails no official "approval" of the *True Life in God* messages experienced by Mrs. Rydén. The Notification of 1995 with some critical comments on Mrs. Rydén's experience remains formally in effect. Only the publication of a new Notification could "cancel" the former of 1995, and such publication will most likely not occur during Mrs. Rydén's lifetime, given the Vatican's always careful stance on alleged mystics still living.

When Mrs. Rydén asked Cardinal Ratzinger during this audience what the CDF would reply when asked about her status, he answered: "Well, we would say that there have been modifications in the sense that we have written to the interested bishops that one

should now read the Notification in the context of your preface and with the new comments that you have made." (See below in *Dialogue*)

There are at least three reasons why I take it as my duty to relate the facts of this dialogue:

1. I first requested the dialogue of the then Cardinal Ratzinger following an interview with him published in *Communio* in 1999 and elsewhere.

2. From 1997 to 2001 I wrote my doctoral degree on the issue of Christian Prophecy at the Pontifical Gregorian University. It contains a paragraph on the case of Mrs. Rydén as a possible historical example of an experience seen by many as prophetic. It was published by Oxford University Press in 2007, with the Foreword written by the then Cardinal Ratzinger (see www.christian-prophecy.org). After the said doctoral studies, I taught theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University and, thus, I lived in Rome from 1997 to 2004 and was able to closely follow and engage in the dialogue. Hence, I am a witness to all that occurred.

3. Some people have raised doubts concerning the legitimacy or positive nature of the dialogue, partly because of a somewhat enigmatic letter from Cardinal William Levada, the present Prefect of the CDF, dated January 2007, that I will put into perspective below. Thus, with this report, I wish to dispel possible doubts concerning the legitimacy and positive outcome of the dialogue.

This report covers the following:

[The preamble of the dialogue from 1995-1999](#)

[The dialogue itself from 1999-2004](#) that was concluded with the aforementioned meeting between Cardinal Ratzinger and Mrs. Rydén.

The subsequent developments arising from Cardinal Levada's letter of January 2007.

All letters mentioned in this report are on file with the author. For important purposes, copies can be obtained by contacting me at: n.c@hvidt.com.

Best regards,

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Preamble

In 1995, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) issued a [Notification of 1995](#) regarding Mrs. Vassula Rydén. The Notification was sent to all Catholic Bishops' Conferences in the world. As stated in the Notification, the investigation leading up to its publication "brought out - in addition to positive aspects - a number of basic elements that must be considered negative in the light of Catholic doctrine."

The Notification of 1995 was confirmed in a [second Notification](#) a year later that addressed some confusion due to the fact that the first Notification had not been signed.

This was the situation regarding Mrs. Rydén and her books, entitled *True Life in God* (TLIG), when I arrived in Rome in late August 1997. I had taken my master's degree in

theology at the Theological Faculty of the University of Copenhagen, a state university almost entirely informed by a Lutheran theological heritage. Hence, as a Roman Catholic it was only natural for me to pursue graduate work in Rome.

I was inscribed at the Pontifical Gregorian University, and there I continued my research on the theology of Christian Prophecy under the direction of Fr. Prof. Elmar Salmann of the Pontifical Institute of Sant'Anselmo.

Having read works of the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, I ventured to ask him for an interview on the topic of Christian Prophecy. I first asked him after one of the Thursday morning Masses in the German Seminary, Campo Santo, inside the Vatican. Cardinal Ratzinger was present at most of these morning Masses, and I attended many of them, because they were in my mother tongue, German, and beautifully celebrated. During periods when there were many pilgrims - the church would be full, but outside of the peak months we would have only the seminarians and a couple of German residents in Rome. At this particular celebration I was with Professor Yvonne Maria Werner of the University of Lund of Sweden who has translated books written by Cardinal Ratzinger and is very well versed in his theology. Together, we approached and asked him for an interview. He kindly replied that I should write to the CDF for this request, which I did.

19.02.98 The above-mentioned letter requesting the interview with Cardinal Ratzinger was sent on 19.02.98. I received a positive reply from Cardinal Ratzinger's personal secretary at the time, Mons. Joseph Clemens.

16.03.98 The interview took place one month later in Cardinal Ratzinger's audience hall in the CDF. Professor Werner was present during the interview. Before the interview I had sent my questions to Cardinal Ratzinger and he had prepared himself beautifully. The interview lasted 50 minutes and the Cardinal was very eloquent and produced a level of reflection that was ready for print almost to the letter. After transcription and editing, I sent the text to the CDF for approval and received it back with minor edits some weeks later.

As I asked Cardinal Ratzinger the last question regarding Mrs. Rydén (see interview [here](#)), his voice suddenly changed, he raised his arms up high, and exclaimed: "Oh, that is a large and problematical issue. Perhaps it would be best to leave this for now!" I allowed myself to insist, asking him: "People have said that Mrs. Rydén has been condemned by the Vatican. Is this true?"

His reply was prompt: "You have touched on a very problematical issue. No, the Notification is a warning, not a condemnation. From the strictly procedural point of view, no person may be condemned without a trial and without being given the opportunity to air their views first. What we say is that there are many things which are not clear. There are some debatable apocalyptic elements and ecclesiological aspects which are not clear. Her writings contain many good things but the grain and the chaff are mixed up. That is why we invited Catholic faithful to view it all with a prudent eye and to measure it by the yardstick of the constant faith of the Church."

I asked: "Is the procedure to clarify the question continuing?"

Cardinal Ratzinger answered: "Yes, and during the clarification process the faithful must be prudent, maintaining a discerning attitude. There is no doubt that there is an evolution in the writings which does not yet seem to have concluded. We must remember that being able to set oneself up as the word and image of interior contact with God, even in the case of authentic mysticism, always depends on the possibilities of the human soul and its limitations. Unlimited trust should only be placed in the real Word of the Revelation that we encounter in the faith transmitted by the Church."

29.05.98 On 29.05.98 I sent a letter to Cardinal Ratzinger asking him for permission to publish the interview in the Scandinavian journals *Signum* and *AC Revue*, once I received the CDF's edits. Later, I received permission to have it published elsewhere: *Communio*, *30Giorni*, and other publications.

23.01.99 On 23.01.99 I sent a letter to Cardinal Ratzinger in which I expressed concern

about the harsh words ("the grain and the chaff are mixed up") spoken of Mrs. Rydén. Later, I met him again in Campo Santo and talked with him about it. At that time, he was adamant about the said critique. When I asked him to reconsider the words concerning Mrs. Rydén that "the grain and the chaff are mixed up", he quickly replied: "Well they are!" End of story. At the time, Cardinal Ratzinger was still convinced that there were unhealthy elements in Mrs. Rydén's writings.

This was the situation when I spoke with Mrs. Rydén about the possibility of a formal dialogue with the CDF. Mrs. Rydén knew that the outcome could be worse than the 1995 Notification. The Notification had only been a warning, as Cardinal Ratzinger said during the interview. However, a formal dialogue could result in a condemnation if the CDF would deem the writings heretical after the dialogue. Since Mrs. Rydén is entirely convinced that they originate in Christ himself, she did not seem to hesitate for one second to take that risk and thus was willing to engage in dialogue with the CDF.

Actual Dialogue

01.06.99 On 01.06.99 I asked the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger at a morning Mass whether he would be willing to meet Mrs. Vassula Rydén. He very calmly replied that this would not be possible at the time because of the situation that followed with the 1995 Notification. Nevertheless, he said that he would like her to meet his secretary, the then Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B., now Cardinal and Secretary of State in the Vatican. I was to meet the "sottosegretario", the undersecretary at the time, Fr. Gianfranco Girotti, number three in rank in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) to make the arrangements.

This meeting took place a few weeks later. To my surprise, not only Fr. Girotti, but also Archbishop Bertone was present. We discussed the situation with the Notification. Archbishop Bertone underlined that the Vatican was always interested in dialogue and that this applied as well for Mrs. Rydén. He asked that the details of a possible meeting with Mrs. Rydén be kept confidential for the time being.

06.07.00 On the basis of this initial meeting, Mrs. Rydén sent an official request to the CDF for a dialogue on 06.07.00.

14.02.01 The first informal meeting between Mrs. Rydén and Vatican officials took place on 14.02.01. Archbishop Bertone, Fr. Girotti, Mrs. Rydén and myself were present. The conversation was cordial and informal. Archbishop Bertone asked Mrs. Rydén about her background, her husband's work at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and, of course, about her experience.

At this meeting it was agreed that Mrs. Rydén should enter into a formal dialogue with the CDF. For this, consultants would be appointed to read and evaluate Mrs. Rydén's writings, entitled *True Life in God* (TLIG), and any subsequent course of action would be based on their conclusion. One of Archbishop Bertone's concerns was that there were errors in the Italian translation and that these should be amended, to which Mrs. Rydén agreed.

An informal discussion then followed about Mrs. Rydén's apostolate. Archbishop Bertone seemed impressed saying that it sounded like a mission to him and that Mrs. Rydén was "an apostle" in the diplomatic circles. Mrs. Rydén told him about the way she received the messages as locutions.

20.03.01 On 20.03.01 I sent a letter to Archbishop Bertone, with greetings from Mrs. Rydén assuring him that the Italian translation would be checked.

01.12.01 I received a phone call from Fr. Girotti in December 2001 requesting three copies of all the TLIG books published in English to that date, for the consultants. I delivered these books to Fr. Girotti a few days later and as many videos from her talks as possible.

04.04.02 On 04.04.02 Mrs. Rydén received a letter from Fr. Prospero Grech, renowned professor of Biblical theology at the Pontifical Institute Augustinianum. Mrs. Rydén and I had met him at a meeting where Mrs. Rydén had spoken to priests at the *Dehoniane Publishers* in Rome some months earlier. He was interested in Mrs. Rydén's experience, partly because he had studied the theology of prophecy in the New Testament. Fr. Prospero wrote that he had been commissioned by Cardinal Ratzinger to ask Mrs. Rydén five questions to give her "the opportunity to clarify the meaning of some assertions contained" in the TLIG writings. Mrs. Rydén met Fr. Grech and I to further determine how the CDF would like her to reply.

Mrs. Rydén then set to work on the replies. She was asked in the letter by Fr. Grech to consult theologians to help her formulate her thoughts, and so she asked myself along with the late Mons. Eleuterio Fortino of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and Bishop Teran Dutari of Quito, Ecuador.

26.06.02 Mrs. Rydén's replies to the CDF were submitted in the form of a letter of 6th July 2002. Fr. Grech was allowed to see her answers before they were submitted. He called them "excellent".

September '02 After the summer had passed and I was back in Rome, I once again went to morning Mass in Campo Santo. Here I met Cardinal Ratzinger. He came to me spontaneously and exclaimed in German: "Ah! Die Vassula hat ja sehr gut geantwortet". In English: "Ah, Vassula has replied very well!" He was clearly very content with her replies and did not abstain from expressing this contentment. Nevertheless, nothing happened until 2003, when Mrs. Rydén again wrote to Cardinal Ratzinger.

15.01.03 On 16.01.03 I met Cardinal Ratzinger after Holy Mass in Campo Santo. I brought him a letter from Mrs. Rydén dated 15.01.03, in which she expressed regret that there had been no response to her reply. She also mentioned the calumny that continued to haunt her; for instance a recent letter in the Italian Catholic newspaper *Avvenire* containing an interview with Fr. François Dermine, who had earlier discredited her, writing that she had been "condemned" by the Vatican.

07.04.03 A letter went out from the CDF to all Bishops' Conferences in the world. It contained a request for information on Mrs. Rydén and her activities since the Notification of 1995: "Now that some years have passed, the Congregation would be grateful if you might provide - in a confidential manner - information, and possibly evaluation, concerning the present influence of Mrs. Rydén among Catholics in the world."

At the same time, Cardinal Ratzinger, through Fr. Grech, requested of Mrs. Rydén that the dialogue (the CDF's questions and Mrs. Rydén's answers) be included in the next published volume of TLIG. The purpose of this request was so that the world would be informed of the dialogue but, apparently, it was also a test to make sure that Mrs. Rydén's answers were truly her own. The dialogue was printed in Volume 12 and in subsequent republications of *True Life in God*.

The months passed. I often met Cardinal Ratzinger, Mons. Clemens, and later Mons. Georg Gänswein, who took over the role as Cardinal Ratzinger's secretary after Mons. Clemens, and others familiar with the process, and they always repeated: "The millstones grind slowly in the Vatican." Mons. Gänswein told me that we needed to have patience, in order not to provoke anyone involved in the process, and Cardinal Ratzinger himself told me that, although he would like to see a new Notification, he had to "obey the cardinals". I gathered from this statement that some cardinals were against the prospect of a distinctly positive outcome to a dialogue with a contemporary mystic that could result in a new Notification rendering the former Notification obsolete.

May 2004 Fr. Grech confirmed that the response to Mrs. Rydén's answers had indeed been very positive. Despite this, however, the CDF would not issue a "new" Notification that would abolish the first one of 1995. Rather, the positive response would be "kept low-key".

He had a meeting with Archbishop Angelo Amato during which he asked when the

process with Mrs. Rydén would be completed. Mons. Amato told him rather abruptly that there would be no reply and that the Notification would stay. However, we learned that the CDF was considering writing again to those Bishops' Conferences that had replied negatively to Cardinal Ratzinger's letter concerning Mrs. Rydén, mentioned above.

Mrs. Rydén was very disappointed by this information. Her sincere conviction was that if the outcome to the dialogue had been negative, the CDF would have proclaimed it publicly and perhaps even condemned her formally. But now that the conclusion was rather positive, the response would be "kept low-key".

29.06.04 On 29.06.04 Mrs. Rydén therefore wrote a letter to Cardinal Ratzinger, expressing her disappointment by the lack of reply:

You must understand me if I now ask myself: What then was the whole purpose with the procedure? You had said in the 30 Giorni Interview with Niels Christian Hvidt that a person could not be condemned without a process. Am I condemned, or am I acquitted and not found guilty? A judge and the jury in any court, would declare the verdict. But here, the judge and the jury seemed to have abandoned their seats. Nobody in the whole world will know that you have written to a few Bishops' Conferences... Working for Christ has its sufferings as well as its graces, but augmenting unnecessarily my trials I believe it irritates God.

I therefore in the same trust I have had in Your Eminence all along ask you earnestly: Please provide me with some kind of writing from your side, even just a letter that will bear a positive spirit so that people see that your conclusion has not been negative. Also, my understanding was that I would have the honour of meeting you once the process was over. I am still eager to meet you in person and ask you for an audience.

10.07.04 As a direct response to this letter, Mrs. Rydén received a letter two weeks later, dated the 10th July 2004, from Fr. Josef Augustine Di Noia, the new undersecretary to the CDF. It informed Mrs. Rydén that the CDF had written to a number of Presidents of Bishops' Conferences and included a copy of the said letter. This new letter from the CDF to the Bishops' Conferences was also dated 10th July 2004. We later learned that it was sent to the Presidents of five Bishops' Conferences who had responded to the request for information from bishops on 07.04.03, mentioned above.

It contained the following information:

As you know, this Congregation published a Notification in 1995 on the writings of Mrs. Vassula Rydén. Afterwards, and at her request, a thorough dialogue followed. At conclusion of this dialogue, a letter of Mrs. Rydén dated 4 April 2002 was subsequently published in the latest volume of "True Life in God", in which Mrs. Rydén supplies useful clarifications regarding her marital situation, as well as some difficulties which in the aforesaid Notification were suggested towards her writings and her participation in the sacraments (cf. Attachment).

Since the aforementioned writings have enjoyed a certain diffusion in your country, this Congregation has deemed it useful to inform you of the above. Concerning the participation in the ecumenical prayer groups organised by Mrs. Rydén, the Catholic faithful should be called to follow the dispositions of the Diocesan Bishops.

This was the "low-key" positive response the CDF would issue!

15.10.04 The entire dialogue between Mrs. Rydén and the CDF was published in the

form of a booklet in October 2004. It contains Fr. Grech's initial letter to Mrs. Rydén with the five questions, Mrs. Rydén's answers to the questions, and Mons. Di Noia's letter to Mrs. Rydén of 10.07.04 with a copy of Cardinal Ratzinger's letter to the Bishops' Conferences. It was prefaced by Archbishop Ramon Argüelles of the Philippines and postfaced by a commentary by Fr. Lars Messerschmidt from Denmark. The full dialogue booklet can be downloaded at: www.tlig.org/cdf.

22.11.04 The entire dialogue between Mrs. Rydén and the CDF had been initiated by my request to Cardinal Ratzinger that he meet Mrs. Rydén in 1999. As mentioned earlier, he said at the time that it was not possible due to the situation with the Notification, but that he would like Mrs. Rydén to have a dialogue with the CDF. Now the dialogue had been completed and the situation had been clarified. Hence, it was time to ask Cardinal Ratzinger for the encounter promised so long ago if there was a positive outcome to the dialogue.

I made this request to Cardinal Ratzinger, just as Mrs. Rydén did in her letter of 29.06.04 mentioned above. Cardinal Ratzinger told me that, yes, we should indeed have this meeting, but that it should be well-prepared since it had "a semi-official character to it". By that time, Mr. and Mrs. Rydén were to soon leave for Washington, where Mr. Rydén was to assume a new responsibility at the World Bank.

Cardinal Ratzinger granted the audience on 22.11.04. We were received very cordially, first by his personal secretary, Mons. Gänswein, and then by Cardinal Ratzinger himself, in his magnificent audience hall in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. I made notes of our conversation immediately after the meeting and am convinced I have been accurate in referring its essential highlights.

The conversation was informal and very cordial. It was held in French, the common language best spoken by all. Cardinal Ratzinger began by exclaiming: "Well, finally we can meet!" This exclamation clearly entailed that the process with Mrs. Rydén had been completed successfully and that this was the reason why the meeting could take place at all. Mrs. Rydén replied with a heartfelt expression of gratitude that His Eminence had shown the courage of having a dialogue with her and that, although she would have liked to have seen a second Notification, she understood and appreciated very much that Cardinal Ratzinger had done all that he could and had strived hard for her case.

Cardinal Ratzinger replied:

Well, we always seek peace. We all seek to do what the Lord gives us and to live for the Lord's service, and we hope that the Lord guides us in peace. Naturally, we have, as you well know, also this task of defending the identity of the Catholic faith and the discipline of the faith, and in this sense, we do all that we can. We hope that the Lord pardons our errors and grants us the just path.

A lengthy conversation followed on Mrs. Rydén's mission, on her dialogue with other Christians and even with other faith traditions such as Muslims on the character of the Christian faith.

Cardinal Ratzinger's view was that such dialogues are difficult, but that they are very important. At the end of the conversation, Mrs. Rydén asked Cardinal Ratzinger a question she had reflected upon after the disappointment of the "low-key" reply of the CDF:

"The last question: What would the response be if someone were to call your office in order to reassure themselves on my case and they would ask: 'Is the Notification still valid'? What would your response be?"

Cardinal Ratzinger replied:

"Well, we would say that there have been modifications in the sense that we have written to the interested bishops that one should now read the Notification in the context

of your preface and with the new comments that you have made."

We agreed to remain in dialogue. If the CDF were to have any more questions for Mrs. Rydén she would answer them. Also, if the CDF had any questions regarding the activities of readers of TLIG, Mrs. Rydén would be glad to advise these readers accordingly.

At the end of the encounter, Mrs. Rydén offered an icon to Cardinal Ratzinger, which he thankfully received. A picture was taken with the agreement that it not be used for "cheap propaganda", as Cardinal Ratzinger said. Mrs. Rydén has kept this promise and talked about the meeting and shown the picture to friends only. Likewise, I do not consider this report to be cheap propaganda, but rather as a significant testimony to an important series of events that have happened in the life of the Church and to the CDF's willingness to engage in serious dialogue.

Subsequent developments from 2004-2007

Mrs. Vassula Rydén was very pleased with the outcome of the dialogue. She thought it was deeply unfair that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) did not issue a new Notification with a summary of the results of the dialogue, and yet she appreciated the work the CDF and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in particular had done. She never expected that the CDF would issue new negative statements, especially now that Cardinal Ratzinger had been elected to the Papacy.

08.12.05 To manifest her commitment to the ongoing spirit of exchange and dialogue, she wrote a letter to Cardinal William Levada (then still Archbishop) after his election as Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as well as Archbishop Angelo Amato, the Secretary of the CDF. In the letter she assured them both that she would very much like to continue to communicate with the CDF, as was agreed upon during the audience with Cardinal Ratzinger, and that they could call on her anytime if they had any further questions. Regrettably, Mrs. Rydén did not hear back from either of them.

25.01.07 On 25th January 2007, Cardinal Levada sent a letter to all Bishops' Conferences regarding Mrs. Rydén. It was motivated by the many requests that the CDF continued to receive about Mrs. Rydén, "in particular the import of the Notification of 6 October 1995, and the criteria to be considered by the local Church in judging whether the writings of Mrs. Vassula Rydén may appropriately be disseminated." It continues with three clarifications:

1. As has already been explained above in this report, the Notification remains valid.
2. However, Mrs. Rydén has now "offered clarifications on some problematic points in her writings and on the nature of her messages, which are presented not as divine revelations, but rather as her personal meditations [reference to Mrs. Rydén's clarifications in the dialogue]. From a normative point of view therefore, following the same clarifications, a case by case prudential judgment is required in view of the real possibility of the faithful being able to read the writings in the light of the said clarifications."

Thus, Cardinal Levada confirms what Cardinal Ratzinger answered when Mrs. Rydén asked him how they would respond if people called in to ask about her case (see above): The Notification and Mrs. Rydén's writings should now be read in the light of the clarifications she had provided. In other words, the universal advise of not reading the messages expressed in the Notification of 1995 had been modified in a more positive sense, whereby it is now a matter of "case by case judgment."

One expression, however, remains enigmatic: The letter states that Mrs.

Rydén in her clarifications presents her messages "not as divine revelations, but rather as her personal meditations." Close examination of her clarifications reveals that such expression is nowhere found in the said letter. Mrs. Rydén confirms that there is a normative difference between her experience and Divine Revelation (with a capital R), but nowhere says that they are the result of "personal meditations."

3. The last paragraph came as a surprise. The rather positive conclusion under point 2 is followed by a statement that "it remains inappropriate for Catholics to take part in prayer groups established by Mrs. Rydén" and that the faithful should "follow the norms of the Ecumenical Directory, of the Code of Canon ... and of Diocesan Ordinaries."

The letter was completely unexpected by Mrs. Rydén. She was glad that it confirmed the dialogue and that the CDF still considered her to have provided the "useful clarifications" that Cardinal Ratzinger's letter of July 2004 mentioned. However she was concerned about some significant ambiguities that she had seen in the letter.

18.05.07 Mrs. Rydén voiced three primary concerns in a letter dated 18th May 2007 to Cardinal Levada:

1. She expressed her disappointment that this new negative statement had been issued and, once again, she had not been called upon, despite the CDF's expressed commitment to call on all authors that it holds something against—just as had happened with the first Notification of 1995 and the follow-up Notification of 1996.

2. In her letter, she pointed out three errors, namely that her letter of response was not published on 04.04.02, as stated in Cardinal Levada's letter but on 26.06.02, nor was it in Volume 10, but in Volume 12 of her *True Life in God* (TLIG) writings that the dialogue was published, and that this might confuse readers. More importantly, she pointed to the statement that she presented her writings "merely as the result of her private meditations." To quote Mrs. Rydén: "This is simply not true! These words are not found anywhere in my letter. I clearly point out that my messages (as all post-biblical revelations) do not range on the same level as Public Revelation, but that does not lead me or anyone else with a minimal knowledge of my writings to the conclusion that they are nothing else than my personal meditations. They are gifts of divine providence for the benefit of the church."

3. She expressed her bewilderment at the Cardinal stating that it "remains inappropriate" for Catholics to participate in the ecumenical prayer groups of True Life in God since the Catholic Canon Law not only allows but even calls for such ecumenical prayer groups to be formed.

Finally she confirmed, once again, her wish to continue the dialogue with the CDF, asking Cardinal Levada to express any concerns the CDF might still have with her writings or activities so that she could clarify them, just as the then Cardinal Ratzinger had granted her the opportunity to do so.

Copies of the letter were sent to Pope Benedict XVI, to Cardinal Bertone, now Secretary of State, to Mons. Angelo Amato, then Secretary of the CDF, to Cardinal Walter Kasper, then President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, to the late Mons. Eleuterio Fortino, then undersecretary of the same council and responsible for the dialogue with the Orthodox, and to Mons. Georg Gänswein, the personal secretary of Pope Benedict XVI.

02.06.07 In June 2007 Mrs. Rydén received a reply from Mons. Gabriele Caccia, on behalf of Cardinal Bertone, assuring her that the Cardinal had taken notice of the content of her letter.

16.07.07 Later that summer, Mrs. Rydén received a reply from Mons. Amato. He wrote that the CDF had written to the Bishops' Conferences precisely so that they would be informed of the dialogue, implying that Mrs. Rydén should be grateful that they had done so and that Cardinal Levada's letter was a good thing for Mrs. Rydén, to quote

Mons. Amato directly: "In reference to the preoccupations you expressed in letter of 18 May 2007, I consider it useful to call to your attention the fact that the correspondence you refer to has exactly the scope of assuring that all Catholic Bishops know of the dialogue that has taken place between yourself and this Congregation, in order that they may know how to regulate themselves."

In fact, despite the above-mentioned ambiguities, this is indeed good from Mrs. Rydén's perspective for at least two reasons:

1. The Notifications of 1995 and 1996 were sent to all Catholic bishops in the world. In contrast, Cardinal Ratzinger's positive letter of 2004 was sent only to those Presidents of Catholic Bishops' Conferences who had responded to his letter of 2003 (see above). Now, as a result of Cardinal Levada's letter of 25th January 2007, all Catholic bishops in the world have been informed of the dialogue that took place between Mrs. Rydén and the CDF.

2. The Notifications of 1995 and 1996 "request the intervention of the Bishops so that their faithful may be suitably informed and that no opportunity may be provided in their Dioceses for the dissemination of her ideas." Now, it is up to the bishops to make up their "case by case prudential judgment...in view of the real possibility of the faithful being able to read the writings in the light of the said clarifications."