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Update on Card. George and New Ways Ministry

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NCR Today

Catholic News Service issued an update to their story Cardinal George: Group's support of gay marriage not authentic church teaching.

(To recap: Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago issued a statement Feb. 5 that said that in its ministry to lesbian and gay Catholics New Ways Ministry, based in Mount Rainier, Md., was not providing "an authentic interpretation of Catholic teaching and an authentic Catholic pastoral practice." He said, "New Ways Ministry has no approval or recognition from the Catholic church and ... cannot speak on behalf of the Catholic faithful in the United States.")

Today, CNS offered two updates. First:

In a Feb. 11 response to questions about what had prompted the earlier statement, Cardinal George cited "an often troubled conversation" between New Ways and church leadership over the past three decades and said "opposition to church teaching and governance is clear" in [Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry,]'s testimony before the Maryland committee.

"The point of the recent USCCB statement is to put again on the public record what everyone knows: the New Ways Ministry is not a ministry of the Catholic church and has no right to present its moral opinions as Catholic," the cardinal said.

"Genuine pastoral concern is based on respect for every person, no matter their sexual orientation, and acceptance of the truths of the Catholic faith," he added. "These are the terms in which the church welcomes everyone and offers them a true home in Christ's love and mercy."

And then:

In an "action alert" on the organization's Web site Feb. 11, [Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry,] said Cardinal George needed to hear from those who "support New Ways Ministry's mission and programs" and asked supporters to write or e-mail the cardinal about the role the organization's "projects have played in your life."

He urged that copies of the letters and e-mails also be sent to Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, and to New Ways.

"New Ways Ministry has withstood several challenges over the years, thanks to our concerned and involved supporters," DeBernardo wrote. "We trust that you will do what you are able at this point, too."

Here's the link to New Ways Ministry's "**action alert**."

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