

C/O Father Gordon J. MacRae
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10 October 1998

His Excellency
Mons. Dario CASTRILLON HOYOS
Piazza della Citta Leonina, 1
00193 ROMA
Italia

Your Excellency,

I respectfully request your attention to this correspondence and to the affidavit enclosed herein.

I am a priest of the Diocese of Manchester (New Hampshire). In 1994 I was placed on trial charged with the sexual abuse of a fifteen year old counseling client alleged to have occurred fifteen years ago. The charges were brought by three men who are siblings, and are now between the ages of 31 and 35. I am 45 years of age and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Manchester in 1982. The jury trial involved the charges of one of the three adult brothers, and resulted in the maximum possible sentence of 33½ to 67 years in prison. I have no prior convictions. Before and during the trial I was repeatedly offered a negotiated plea agreement of one to three years in prison in exchange for a plea of guilty to one of the charges and the dismissal of all others. I declined these offers.

While preparing for trial, my attorneys and I repeatedly sought the cooperation of officials of the Diocese of Manchester to address these false charges. Diocesan officials refused to assist in the funding of a criminal defense despite the fact that they had ample reason to doubt the validity of the charges against me. Further, officials of the Diocese refused any form of cooperation in providing information to my attorneys. In the months prior to trial, the Diocese issued a widely publicized press release announcing their belief that I was guilty, and denouncing my efforts to prove my innocence. After the publication of

this press release, my attorneys felt that there was little left for a court and a jury to do. These matters are clearly detailed in the enclosed affidavit. Following an unofficial inquiry to the Roman Rota through a third party, I was urged to bring this matter to the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy for review. I have attached a copy of an unsigned memo which I received earlier this year from an unnamed canonist connected to the Rota.

The trial was highly complicated and sensationalized, but the core testimony of the accuser, for which I was convicted, was that sometime between April and November of 1983, at the age of fifteen, he made five appointments with me to discuss his drug abuse problem. He claimed that he was assaulted in my office during each of these sessions, and that following each he "repressed" the memory of the assault thus returning for subsequent sessions unaware that he had been assaulted during previous appointments.

Prior to the filing of criminal charges, all three of the adult brothers brought lawsuits against the Diocese of Manchester and its insurers. The three brothers originally accused another priest as well. The reports alleged incidents in which the other priest and I had together, and simultaneously, sexually abused the three brothers between 1982 and 1983. This other priest had been the subject of publicity between 1984 and 1990 because of unrelated accusations of sexual abuse. When it was learned, however, that he was not present in that parish until 1985 when the youngest of the three brothers was over sixteen years of age, the other priest's name was dropped from reports of the revised interviews and the lawsuits and never mentioned again.

In 1996 my case was reviewed and accepted by a San Diego based advocacy organization called The National Justice Committee. At their request, I prepared a sixty-six page detailed affidavit of the case and related matters which surfaced before and after trial. I believe that you would be shocked and alarmed at the content of this report.

Early this year, Ms. Carol Hopkins, the Executive Director of The National Justice Committee, revealed details of the NJC's review of my

case, as well as the Case History I generated, to former Los Angeles Prosecutor Marcia Clark who has some ties to The National Justice Committee and is now a legal analyst for one of the major American television networks. Ms. Clark in turn discussed the case with Mark Phillips, a network television producer. They then reviewed all discovery in the case, results of pre-trial polygraphs examinations I had taken and passed, and media reports including videotape of the accuser's testimony. Following this review, network officials requested my approval to air the case in a nationally televised format. I have attached a copy of the initial correspondence I received from network officials.

After much deliberation I have declined, for now, to allow this matter to be aired publicly. I also felt that there are a vast number of unanswered questions in my case - questions which are made clear in the written Case History - and I fear that those who could potentially shed light on these questions will be intimidated into silence by media exposure of the complex issues involved in this matter. As recently as last month, Ms. Clark, officials at the FOX Network, and others have urged me to permit them to air this case, but I have asked them to wait due to my concern that such publicity would be premature.

There is, however, another reason why I have declined to allow media exposure of the details of my case. I have sought the advice of a canonist, legal counsel, and others, and I have determined that public exposure of this matter may only result in a major scandal for my diocese. I cannot be the willing instrument of such scandal. Being the catalyst for such a disturbance in the local Church is not, and was not ever, my goal. Regardless of any outcome of my appeal to you, I will not willingly participate in bringing scandal and ridicule to the Church.

Still, the positions taken by officials of my diocese throughout this matter demand review by Church authority. The details of this are evident in the enclosed affidavit, and I respectfully request that you, or your designee, read the document in its entirety. It is a lengthy and disturbing account, and I apologize for this, but it is the simple truth.

Excellency, I am uncertain of what I am asking of you and the Congregation. The simple knowledge that I have been heard and understood, however, would be a welcomed beginning. I have not been the subject of a canonical penalty, have not received any threat of being the subject of an administrative laicization, nor have I been censured in any way. In fact, in the four years that I have been imprisoned some fifteen miles from the Chancery Office of my Diocese, I have neither seen nor heard from any priest or official of the Diocese. I have not received the Sacraments in four years, but recently I was granted permission by prison officials to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass in private once per week.

I continue to seek legal means to address the injustice of what has occurred in my case, but regardless of whether these efforts are ever successful I wish to remain a priest. I live with the daily fear that officials of my Diocese will petitioned the Holy See for my forced laicization. I believe in my heart that such a step would only add to the gross injustice which has taken place.

I beg your forgiveness for the cynicism which has developed within me, but I must also be honest and state I do not anticipate that anything can be done to address the injustices to which I have been subjected. If Your Excellency or a representative deems it appropriate to contact me, I can be reached confidentially by mail at the above address, or by e-mail at GJMacRae@aol.com. My legal counsel's confidential facimile number is: (603)926-1368.

I wish Your Excellency every Grace and Blessing in the coming months.

Fraternally in Christ,

(Rev.) Gordon J. MacRae

(Father) Gordon J. MacRae

- Enc. 1. Unsigned memo from a canonist at the Rota.
 2. Copy of a facimile from Mr. John Downey, a researcher for the FOX Television Network.
 3. Copy of the signed, sworn and notarized affidavit described herein..