

Holy Trinity Church

West Harwich, Massachusetts

02671

Telephone

617-432-4000

November 18, 1972

Dear [REDACTED]

It is with much pain and concern that I write this letter. Stan has informed me of the accusations that [REDACTED] have made about me.

First of all I wish to categorically deny these accusations.

I can not comprehend how the boys could say such things. I feel that these accusations are of a most serious nature and I am concerned not only for myself but also for [REDACTED]

I have spoken with my Major Superior, Fr. Fintan Sheeran, regarding this matter. If you would like we could arrange a meeting with the boys to discuss it.

I only wish that this could be handled in such a manner that no one would be hurt.

Wishing you and the family our best regards and assuring you of our prayers, I remain

Sincerely yours in the Sacred Hearts,



Jim Nickel, ss.cc.

Extra copy

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Sincerely yours in the Sacred Hearts,


Jim Nickel, ss.cc.



FATHER DAMIEN SEMINARY
TERRACE HEIGHTS
WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

Dear [REDACTED]
I want to thank you for your letters and [REDACTED] phone call. As you know before I could do anything - [REDACTED] wrote to Stan.

Unfortunately, Tim felt he needed to defend himself. As I saw it - it was not so much a matter of admitting or denying especially publicly - but rather a point for him to consider in the privacy of his own

[REDACTED] conversation conversed



FATHER DAMIEN SEMINARY
TERRACE HEIGHTS
WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

this point you were making and the great concern for himself and his priesthood.

Because of my own work + distance from Tim - I have been able to speak with Tim only once over the phone on this matter. I pray with you for Tim - your children - and yourselves.

Also I will offer the Masses you requested for [REDACTED]

Recently I have started working with 3 boys at a Catholic home for children.

ARCH-039322



FATHER DAMIEN SEMINARY
TERRACE HEIGHTS
WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

I put in a few hours a week with them.
How sad are their little lives - one boy's
mother + sister are drug addicts (main liars),
another was beaten by his father at the age
of [REDACTED]

Pray for God's little children + also their
parents because they too need to know of
his love and feel our love too.

Peace in Him,



FATHER DAMIEN SEMINARY
TERRACE HEIGHTS
WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

Dear [REDACTED]
I want to thank you for your letters and [REDACTED] phone call. As you know before I could do anything [REDACTED] write to Stan.

Unfortunately, Jim felt he needed to defend himself. As I saw it - it was not so much a matter of admitting or denying especially publicly - but rather a point for him to consider in the privacy of his own [REDACTED] alone conversation conveyed



FATHER DAMIEN SEMINARY
TERRACE HEIGHTS
WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

this point you were making and the great concern for himself and his priesthood.

Because of my own work + distance from Jim - I have been able to speak with Jim only once over the phone on this matter. I pray with you for Jim - your children - and yourselves.

Also I will offer the Masses you requested for [REDACTED]

Recently I have started working with 3 boys at a Catholic home for children.

ARCH-039318



FATHER DAMIEN SEMINARY
TERRACE HEIGHTS
WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

I put in a few hours a week with them.
How sad are their little lives - one boy's
mother + sister are drug addicts (main business),
another was beaten by his father at the age
of [REDACTED]

Pray for God's little children + also their
parents because they too need to know of
his love and feel our love too.

Peace in Him,

Easter Sunday

File, please

Fr. Columban Grotty ssc
Sacred Hearts Community
Three Adams Street
Fairhaven, Mass 02719-0111

Dear Father: Yesterday I had lunch with my oldest son [REDACTED] - who was a seminary student with your order at the time Jim Nickel sexually abused two of my younger sons. Following the abuse [REDACTED] was strongly encouraged to drop out of your seminary so he did and eventually dropped out of the Catholic Church as well. Today [REDACTED] is a born again fundamentalist who has more Christianity & love & compassion in his little finger than all of the priests and religious I have ever known combined..

During lunch [REDACTED] accused me of having a vendetta against Jim. I said - no - its righteous anger. He said vendetta or righteous anger - both are the opposite of love & love is what Christ is all about. He also restated what I already knew - that [REDACTED] who was abused has decided to put the incident behind once and for all. So because I truly love [REDACTED] and want to respect his decision and because [REDACTED] is worth a million Jim Nickels I too will stop searching for ways to destroy Jim and will once again fight to forgive and forget. As I made that decision I felt myself " calm " and I had a wonderful warm feeling flow over me as I realized that [REDACTED] was right and that Christ was encouraging my decision.

So Father - I leave Jim to you and your conscience to deal with. There is no doubt in my mind that Jim has abused many boys during his career as a so called priest but its not up to me to judge - God will judge Jim and He will judge you.

May you find peace in your decision...

[REDACTED]

*KEVIN - JUST THOUGHT YOU MIGHT
LIKE TO SEE THIS - TO SEE HOW I
BROUGHT THIS SITUATION TO A CLOSE.*

*UNFORTUNATELY I WILL NEVER HAVE
ANYTHING GOOD TO SAY ABOUT YOU OR JACK
& WILL TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO
BELITTLE YOU & YOUR "SEX" DEPT.*

February 5, 1993

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Very Reverend Columban Crotty, SS.CC.
Sacred Hearts
Provincial House
3 Adams Street, Box 111
Fairhaven, MA 02719

Dear Fr. Crotty,

On February 1 I met with Mr. [REDACTED] an active Catholic, resident in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Mr. [REDACTED] asked to speak with me apparently because he has seen my name identified with efforts in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis to respond to clergy sexual misconduct. He brought me some information and asked for my assistance in passing it on to you.

He indicated that his eldest son, [REDACTED] was a student at your Order's Seminary in Winona, Minnesota in [REDACTED] Mr. and Mrs. [REDACTED] and their children would go to visit regularly, and on one visit Fr. James Nickel invited two of the younger [REDACTED] children to spend a weekend with him at his parish at Minneiska. The two sons were [REDACTED] then age [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] then age [REDACTED]. These two children eventually did spend a weekend at the parish with Fr. Nickel.

Some months later, the two children indicated that their

weekend with Fr. Nickel had been an unpleasant one and that some bad things had happened. At the time, they did not make clear what that was, but indicated that it was sexual in some way. Mr. [REDACTED] went to speak with his pastor at a Crosier parish here in the Twin Cities, and he advised Mr. [REDACTED] to write to the Superior of the Seminary. There followed some correspondence, copies of which I am attaching. The correspondence ended without the [REDACTED] family knowing what the resolution of their complaint was.

In the subsequent years, the elder of the two sons involved in the alleged abuse, [REDACTED] began to "go downhill", according to his father. He had problems with alcohol, with drugs, and with sexual acting out. Finally, he was [REDACTED] in a [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. The family believes that their son's decline and even perhaps his accidental death are connected with the abuse that they believe Fr. Nickel perpetrated.

The Very Reverend Columban Crotty, SS.CC.

Page 2

February 5, 1993

Over the intervening years, [REDACTED] has assembled a composite summary of what he thinks happened that weekend. It is worth noting that their son, [REDACTED] never communicated all of the details of that weekend directly to the parents, and [REDACTED] memory appears to be incomplete. The critical issues are at least these, however. Allegedly, Fr. Nickel had [REDACTED] sleep on the couch the first night of the weekend and [REDACTED] sleep in the same bed with him. The sleeping positions were reversed on the second night. [REDACTED] reportedly told his sister that Fr. Nickel performed oral sex on him during the night. [REDACTED] reportedly remembers Fr. Nickel trying to do something similar, but [REDACTED] feigned sleep. Reportedly, the next morning Fr. Nickel asked [REDACTED] if anything strange had happened during the night. [REDACTED] pretended that nothing had, and Fr. Nickel told him that he had had a strange dream and wondered about it.

Beside that particular weekend, it appears that there was no further contact between the two boys and Fr. Nickel. Their experience of the weekend apparently was quite traumatic, however.

Both [REDACTED] and his father, [REDACTED] have expressed concern that Fr. Nickel would not be in a position to harm other young children. I am passing this information on to you at [REDACTED] request and in view of that concern. If you would like to be in contact with the family, please let me know. It seems to me that Mr. [REDACTED] is still reflecting on exactly what sort of response he might expect from your Community, but I would be willing to try to help establish communication.

I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news. I wish you well in your service to the Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Kevin M. McDonough
Vicar General
Moderator of the Curia

KMM:jd

cc: Mr. [REDACTED]

Enclosure

file please

February 10, 1993

Fr. Kevin McDonough
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102-2197

Dear Kevin,

I got home this evening (Tuesday the 9th) at about 10:30 p.m. and found your letter of February 5 waiting for me. I opened it and read it and was disgusted at myself for not insisting on an opportunity to proofread your letter before it was sent to Fairhaven. I made several notes on your letter and went to bed.

It's now 1:00 a.m. on the 10th and I am fuming. The first page of your letter is more or less accurate except for "sexual acting out". I told you [redacted] was actively bi-sexual. In case you don't know what that means - it means he was actively having intercourse with girls and was engaged in homosexual acts with boys - is that clear enough.

On page 2 you refer to [redacted] "incomplete" memory. His memory is not faulty and I gave you no reason to think his memory was faulty. If you had had an erect-hard-penis pressed and poked against your lips and mouth when you were [redacted] years old I would suggest that you would have very vivid memories of the experience. Regardless of the experience. Regardless, [redacted] memories are vivid and clear.

Regarding [redacted] report. [redacted] was forced to perform oral sex on Nickels. In other words, Nickels forced his penis into [redacted] mouth and made [redacted] give him (Nickels) a blow job - now is that clear enough.

So far as my expectations are concerned. If you will remember I told you the ball was in your court and I would wait to see what you or Roach or Grotty might do.

At this point in time - after reading your letter which only covered a small part of our conversation, I can only give you an "F" so far and will state very clearly that I think your department is just more smoke being laid down by our bishop. Your letter is full of inaccuracies - it soft soaps or glosses over what happened and shows once again that you are part of a "good old boys network" that protects its own.

Now let's have some real action because I could very easily contact the Dispatch and Tribune and give them still another story of priestly sexual abuse and how the diocese once again does nothing.

[redacted]
cc: Fr. Grotty
Fr. Nickels
Archbishop Roach



PROVINCIAL HOUSE

SACRED HEARTS COMMUNITY

THREE ADAMS STREET - BOX 111
FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS 02719-0111

TEL. 508-993-2442
FAX 508-996-5499



*file,
please*

Feb 16 '93

Dear Fr. M. Donough

*Enclosed is a copy of my letter to
Mr [REDACTED] I hope he accepts it in good faith.*

*I am going to the Bahamas for the dedication
of a new Church on Sunday & I will be
back on the night of the 23rd.*

*God bless you in your difficult assignment
fraternally*

Columba Costy

CONFIDENTIAL-Filed Under Seal

ARCH-039312



PROVINCIAL HOUSE

SACRED HEARTS COMMUNITY

THREE ADAMS STREET - BOX 111
FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS 02719-0111
TEL. 508-993-2442
FAX 508-996-5499

COPY

February 16, 1993



Dear Mr [REDACTED]

On Saturday afternoon, February 13, I received a letter from Fr Kevin McDonough, Vicar General of the archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis and a copy of your letter to Fr McDonough.

These letters were a cause of profound grief and dismay to me. I am very sorry that you and your family had to endure the tribulations and pain that you describe in your letter.

I want to thank you for bringing this serious matter to my attention. I assure you that I am taking your letter very seriously and that your allegations against Fr Nickel are being actively pursued. On Saturday evening I had a meeting with Fr Nickel and showed him the letters I had received. I met with him today also and informed him that due to the serious nature of the allegations I was placing him on Administrative Leave. [This means that he may not publicly celebrate Mass, administer the Sacraments, preach or engage in the priestly ministry until the issue is resolved.]

I believe that further communication between us is necessary and I would be happy to arrange a meeting with you either personally or through a representative of our Community. If you would feel more comfortable communicating through Fr McDonough that is agreeable to me also.

I share your concern, [REDACTED] that sexual abuse be eliminated and that healing must be made available to those who have been injured.

I pray that the Lord may bring His peace and healing to all of our lives.

Sincerely Yours,

Fr Columban Crotty, SS.CC.
Provincial

cc. Fr Kevin McDonough, V.G.



PROVINCIAL HOUSE

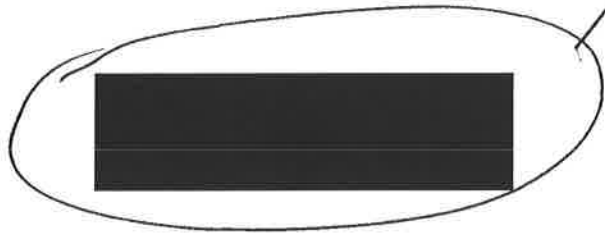
SACRED HEARTS COMMUNITY

THREE ADAMS STREET - BOX 111
FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS 02719-0111

TEL. 508-993-2442
FAX 508-998-5499

*Maulyn -
File, please.
Thanks.
K.*

March 15, 1993



COPY

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

Some weeks have passed since I wrote to you concerning the matter discussed by you and Fr McDonough and described in both of your letters to me.

In my letter to you, I wrote that I had taken initial action due to the serious nature of the charges involved. I also said that further communication between us seemed necessary and suggested the possibility of a meeting, if that was agreeable to you.

Although I realize that this is not easy for you, Mr [REDACTED] I would appreciate hearing from you. I hope that our mutual efforts and prayers will help to bring about a better world where goodness will prevail and "the wounds of our sins will be healed."

Sincerely Yours,

Fr. Columban Crotty, SS.CC.
Provincial.



March 17th.

Dear Keon

This is a copy of a
letter I sent to Mr. [REDACTED]
yesterday. He did not respond
to my first letter. I pray all goes
well. Belated happy St. Patrick's Day
Columban (Crotty m.u.)