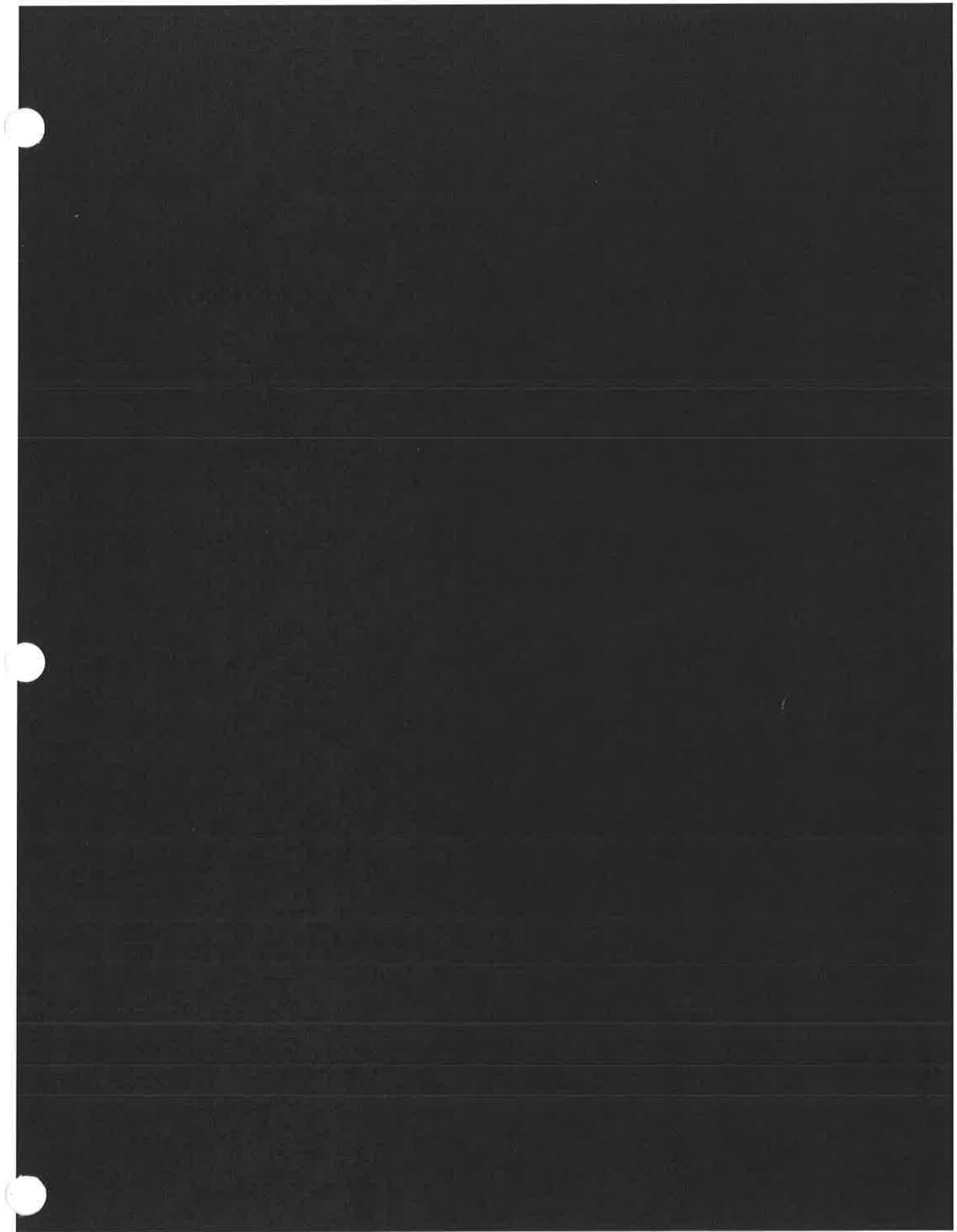
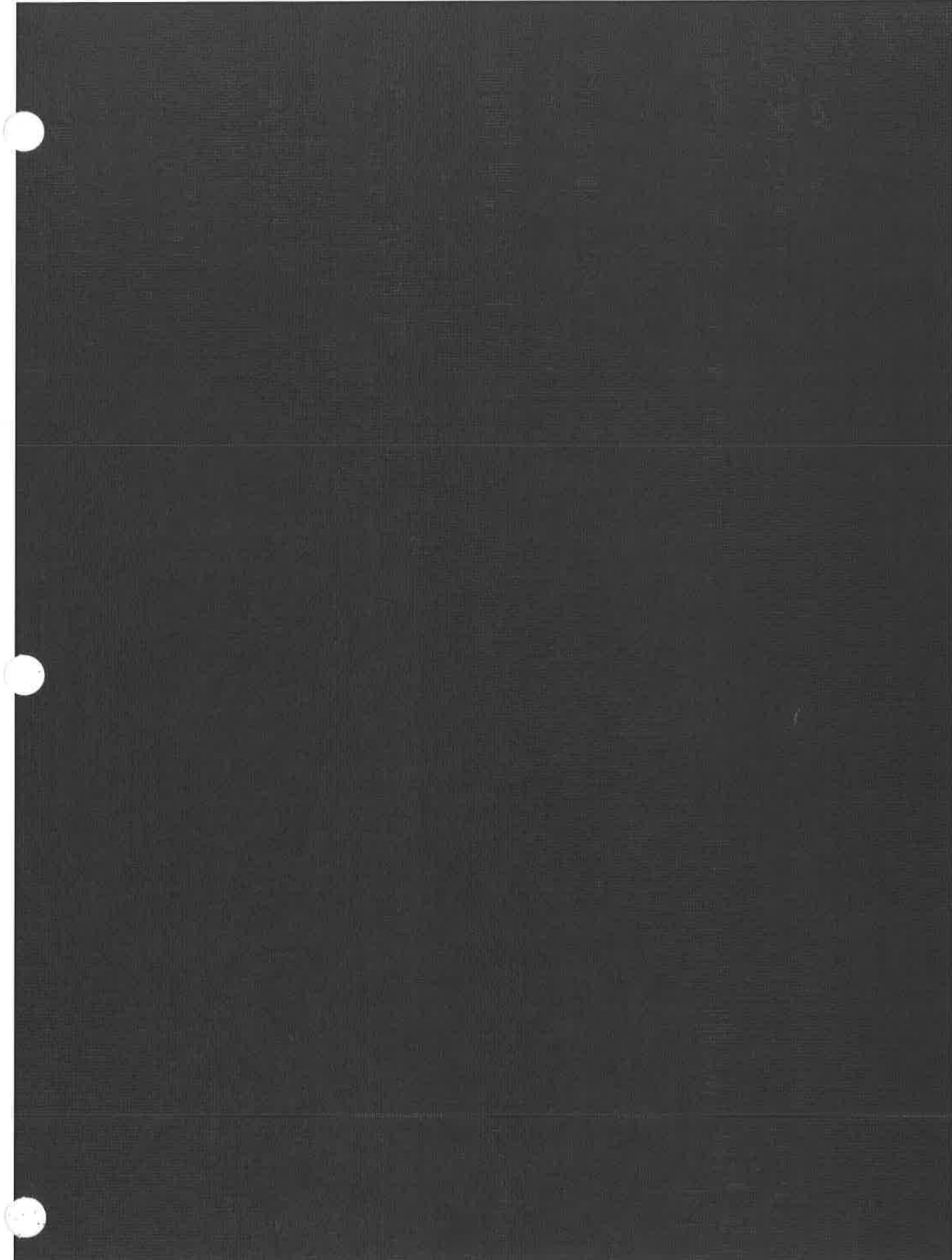
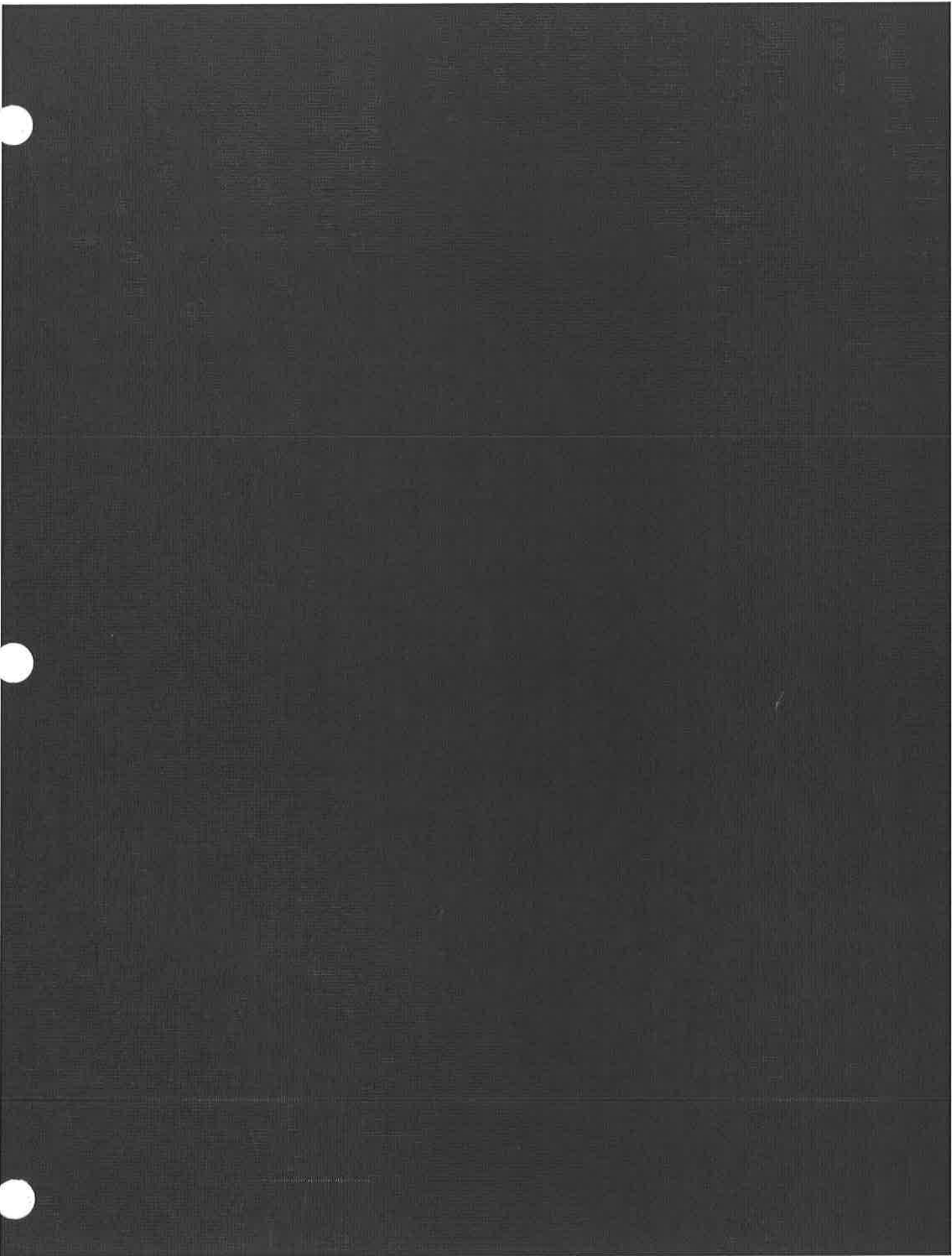


Kenneth Gansmann







Kenneth Gansmann, OFM

Pastor of St. John's of Union Hill, MN

According to the Official Catholic Directory

1948: Living in Chicago

1949-1959: Pastor of St. Johns, Union Hill

1960: Returned to Chicago

Province of the Sacred Heart (OFM)

GANSMANN, KENNETH BFM

Franciscan Friary
Jordan, Minnesota ✓

August 26, '49

The Very Rev. Gerald O'Keefe, Chancellor
St. Paul, Minn.

Very Rev. and dear Father,

At a meeting of the parish trustees it was unanimously voted to expend a sum not to exceed \$3500.00 for the following improvements of the parish school:

Inside lavatories,
Furnace,
Running water,
Improvements in the kitchen.

These improvements are to be paid for out of \$5000.00 on hand, and the remainder to be raised by parishioners.

May I ask you to submit this to His Excellency for approval of this project, and for the appointment of a proxy to cast a favorable vote so that the corporation be authorized to carry out the above improvements.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Kenneth Gammann, O.F.M.
Pastor.

St. John's Church
Union Hill
New Prague,
Minn.

Proty

ARCH-009757

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, UNION HILL

P. O., New Prague, Minn.

August 29, '50

Rev. and dear Father,

Some time ago I requested permission to purchase an electronic organ and was informed that His Excellency does not approve of them for our churches. May I purchase a pipe organ, a Wick, for \$4000.00? The money is on hand.

Will you please bring this to the notice of His Excellency?

I am writing a special delivery letter, because I've received notice from the Wick company that all organs will go up 5% on September 1.

Sincerely and gratefully yours,

Rev. Kenneth Gansmann O.F.M.
Rev. Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.

Prosz

ARCH-009758

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, UNION HILL ✓

P. O., New Prague, Minn.

May 4, '51

The Chancery Office
244 Dayton Ave.
St. Paul 2, Minn.

Dear Reverend Father,

During the winter months and the spring thaws our church buildings suffered rather extensive damage. The trustees are in accord with me that the repairs are necessary now before more damage is done. The estimated figure for needed roofing and tuckpointing is \$850.00

Another item. Before next September we must provide more classroom space for our school children. We may be able to buy a suitable district school building and move it onto our property for about \$3000.00 We can do this much more easily than we could build new.

Our ordinary income can take care of most of these expenses; and the remainder can be raised without difficulty by parish social affairs or by special subscription.

May I have permission to go ahead with these matters?

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

Rev. Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.
Rev. Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.

- 1) spend the sum of \$850.00 for repairing the roof and tuckpointing the parish buildings
- 2) spend the sum of \$3000.00 for the purchase of a district school building and moving it to parish property

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, UNION HILL

P. O., New Prague, Minn.

March 13, '53

The Very Reverend Gerald O'Keefe
Chancery Office
St. Paul, Minnesota.

Very Reverend and dear Father,

In a meeting of the parish trustees it was unanimously voted to expend a sum of \$5500.00 to purchase new pews for our church.

The monies for these new pews are on hand, having been raised by subscription; and \$5500.00 will cover the expense for fine red oak pews.

May I ask you to submit this matter to His Excellency for approval and for the appointment of a proxy to cast a favorable vote so that the corporation be authorized to carry out the proposed improvement.

Sincerely yours

Rev. Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.
(Rev.) Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M., pastor.

Proxy

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, UNION HILL

P. O., New Prague, Minn.

March 14, '55

Very Rev. dear Father O'Keefe,

For some time it has been apparent that our school kitchen is inadequate. The trustees and myself have discussed the matter repeatedly and have secured a plan and an estimate of the cost of enlarging and remodeling the kitchen.

The contractor's estimated cost of the completed work is \$4500.00

There is enough money in the parish treasury to stand this expense without extra collections or subscriptions from the people.

May I ask you to present this matter to the archbishop, and ask the appointment of a proxy to authorize us to spend this amount of money?

Thanking you sincerely,

(Rev) Kenneth Gansmann, O.S.M.

Proxy

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, UNION HILL

P. O., New Prague, Minn.

March 14, '55

Dear Father O'Keefe,

I'd like to submit the names of these two men for trustees of the parish for the coming two years: Mr. Nicholas Schommer and Mr. Joseph Koenig.

Would you be good enough to bring this to the attention of His Excellency, the archbishop?

Sincerely and gratefully yours,

(R) Kenneth Gansmann, O.M.

Provy

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH

~~UNION HILL~~

P. O. New Prague, Minn.

May 24, 1957

Chancery office
244 Dayton Ave.
St. Paul 2, Minn.

Very Rev. dear Father,

During the past year and more we have been planning to decorate our church, and have gathered the necessary funds to do it. After discussing the project with the parish trustees I have had a decorator submit a drawing and give me an estimate of the cost of decorating....\$4000.00

We have this money on hand and are now asking your permission to go ahead with the work. If permission is granted, we hope to have the job done this summer.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.
Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Proby", with a horizontal line underneath it.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH
UNION HILL
P. O. New Prague, Minn.

April 21, 1958

Most Reverend Archbishop,

At a meeting of the trustees of the parish held yesterday it was decided to purchase a new car for the parish. Our present car, a '53 Ford, and \$1850.00 will get us a '58 Fairlane Ford.

We have the money on hand to pay cash. May we have the necessary proxies and approval to make the purchase?

Sincerely yours,

Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.
Kenneth Gansmann, O.F.M.

Proxy

August 23, 2002

Dear Mr.

I am trying to locate the information on [REDACTED] for you. I have asked the Archives Department of the Archdiocese to review the information they have for the years you suggested and came up with two different priests. I am sending them both as you may remember something from one or the other.

The first one is Fr. [REDACTED] who "left 7/23/65." There is nothing further that I can find. There is a picture, which if you would like I can see if we can have copied for you.

The second one is Fr. Kenneth Gansmann. I am only sending his information along, as they are both near New Prague near the timeframe you spoke of in your letter of August 11th.

I have not contacted the order again but have taken these items from our archives here in St. Paul. If you think of something new from these two documents, please call me at 651-291-4497 or write me and I will follow-up with the Franciscans.

Sincerely,

Phyllis A. Willerscheidt, MA
Director of Advocacy

Attachments: 2

September 25, 2002



Dear [redacted]

I have been trying to do some detective work and it is difficult. There are several different men that sound similar to what you have written about but so far this is all I have been able to come up with.

I checked with the chancellor (without using any names) at the diocese and the following is what he sent to me:

Summarizing our phone conversation, in checking the Official Catholic Directory, I find that between 1950 and 1960 there was no priest in the United States by the name of .

I also found that Fr. died on February 22, 1974, apparently at Superior, Wisconsin, and that Fr. Kenneth Gansmann died in Nashville May 21, 1974.

Also assigned to the parish in Jordan in 1950 was Fr. and in 1953 Fr. who remained there until 1955.

In 1953 and 1954 there was also a Fr.

As you know Fr. Gansmann was assigned to the parish at Union Hill, but lived in Jordan from at least 1950 until 1959.

The chancellor also stated, "If you need any further information concerning any of these individuals please let me know."

I hope this is helpful. It may help with some memories so we can narrow down the information for you. If, at any time, you wish to call me, please do so at 651-291-4497 which is a private, confidential phone line.

Peace,

Phyllis A. Willerscheidt, MA
Director of Advocacy

22 October 2007

Memo To: Archbishop Flynn, Archbishop Nienstedt, and Archbishop's Council

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: An Old Complaint About Sexual Abuse

Father Kevin Clinton called me recently about a man from the [REDACTED] area who had been abused many years ago. I had a chance to meet [REDACTED] and his wife [REDACTED] at the rectory at Saint Wenceslaus on Wednesday, October 17. In this memo I will summarize briefly the abuse he underwent. I will also propose an initial pastoral response.

[REDACTED] is [REDACTED] years old. From the time he was [REDACTED] (in [REDACTED]) until he was in his mid-teens, he was repeatedly sexually abused by Father Kenneth Gansmann OFM, the pastor at Union Hill (and now deceased). The abuse included sexual touching and penetration. Father Gansmann was a close friend of [REDACTED] parents, and they entrusted [REDACTED] to Gansmann's care, in spite of [REDACTED] expressed reluctance to be alone with the priest.

[REDACTED] has had years of rageful anger, which spilled over to his marriage and family life. He abused alcohol and believes that he missed out on the chance for a career in [REDACTED] because of the influence of this priest in his family. About twenty-five years ago he experienced a significant spiritual renewal through his involvement in the charismatic movement, and now believes that he has a calling to help evangelize within and through the Catholic Church. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] he have significant concerns about many aspects of our Church's life and leadership, but they love the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist and believe they are called to remain in the Church all their lives.

[REDACTED] has no interest in pursuing a lawsuit, and I believe he recognizes that he could not do so. He has been aware of the abuse and its effects for many years and has talked about it with various people, including counselors, over those years. He only came forward now as a result of a conversation he had with a hospital chaplain while his tongue was loosened by prednisone. Nonetheless, he believes that his "slip of the tongue" may have been providential, and I agree with him.

[REDACTED] situation opens a door into some small communities that have had far more than their share of the pain of sexual abuse. Father Clinton knows of at least one more area resident who was abused by Gansmann. At about the same time that this priest was at Union Hill, an archdiocesan priest with a known history of abuse, Joseph Heitzer, was assigned to one or two small nearby parishes – I believe that

victims have been identified there as well. Finally, Robert Kapoun was pastor of three parishes in the area. While he abused no one – and we were very disclosive about his history to the people of the parishes – there is still consternation in the area about how trustworthy the priesthood can ever be considered.

Given this history, I propose that I convene the three pastors in the area – Fathers Clinton, Roedel, and Elgar. I would like to talk with all three together about what they know of the history of abuse in the area. Then, building on our existing safe-environment programs, I would like to talk with them about how we might do whatever is necessary to clean out the wounds in that area. Of course, I would bring a proposal to the Archbishop before we acted on it.

I have scheduled a meeting with the [REDACTED] in about a month, the purpose of which is to find out how they are doing. Father Clinton will also be offering them continued pastoral care.

Do you support the proposal that I would work with the area pastors to develop a pastoral plan to try to address the uniquely ugly history in that area?

31 December 2007

Memo To: Archbishop Flynn, Andy Eisenzimmer

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Dealing with the Clergy Abuse History near New Prague

This memo is for your information only, and requires no response (unless you want to tell me to do something differently).

We continue following up on the earlier conversations (reported to you separately) with a couple who told me that the husband was sexually abused by Father Kenneth Gansmann, a Franciscan priest from Union Hill in the late 1940's and early 1950's. On December 20 I had a very productive breakfast meeting at the rectory at New Prague, hosted by Father Kevin Clinton (who has been providing the direct pastoral assistance to the family). Also present were Father Elgar Bockenfeld and Father Richard Roedel, neighboring pastors.

Father Bockenfeld told us that, very early in his own priesthood, he had served with Father Gansmann and that he had seen nothing that made him suspect that Father Gansmann was harming children. As I anticipated, both of the priests (other than Father Clinton) were worried that any public conversation about the alleged abuse by Father Gansmann might "open a can of worms". When I probed this with them, they told me that they were aware of some rumors about priests who had served in the area. As the conversation continued, they saw some value in putting some closure to these matters, in giving people who were hurt by any priest a chance to come forward, and in positioning the church to be a reliable community helper in addressing other issues of abuse.

We agreed to a cautious approach to exploring possible next steps. I will prepare a summary letter to the three pastors. They will discuss the letter with a small group of trusted lay advisors, perhaps their parish trustees. Then, Father Clinton will host a meeting, probably early in Lent, to which the pastors, their lay advisors, and I will all be invited. We will talk about any questions they may have, and then discuss whether any further disclosure is called for in these communities and, if so, how much and by what means. It is important that all six of the parishes work together on these questions: their parishioners are intermarried, are neighbors, or may be employed in the same places – so what we do in any one parish will get out to all six anyway.

I have also called the Provincial Superior of the Franciscans, Father John Doctor, to let him know what we are doing. I am forwarding some written information to him.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

21 January 2008

Reverend Elgar Bockenfeld
Church of Saint Benedict
20087 Hub Drive
New Prague MN 56071

Reverend Richard Roedel
Catholic Parishes
31525 181st Avenue
New Prague MN 56071

Reverend Kevin Clinton
Church of Saint Wenceslaus
215 Main Street East
New Prague MN 56071

Reverend and dear Fathers,

A month ago today the four of us had breakfast together, enjoying the generous hospitality of Saint Wenceslaus parish. At that meeting I promised to send you a letter, and I am embarrassed to say that I am only now following through on that promise. I am grateful to you for your patience with me.

As you may recall, I proposed that you share this letter with a trusted group of lay leaders. Perhaps the best group initially would be the trustees of the parishes you serve, although you may certainly choose to share it with others. In this letter I will describe a pastoral challenge we are facing, and then will offer some questions. We agreed that you would seek the advice of your lay leaders, giving them time to think about the questions I will list below. Then, perhaps in late February or early March, I will come to a meeting – probably to be hosted at Saint Wenceslaus – to which your leaders will be invited. We will then talk together about these questions facing all of your parishes.

What is the pastoral challenge? It begins with information we recently received that implicates Father Kenneth Gansmann in the sexual abuse of a minor. Father Gansmann was the pastor at Union Hill about sixty years ago, so this is not a new matter by any means. Nonetheless, we have good reason to believe that the man who came forward to speak with us is not the only one to have suffered such abuse by Father Gansmann. If there are other people who are carrying around old wounds from Father Gansmann's betrayal, we want to be able to help them.

Furthermore, we are aware that the issue of clergy abuse has affected your parishes in other ways. The two most obvious are these. First, Louis Joseph Heitzer was assigned to two area parishes over fifty years ago, and we know that he abused young men elsewhere. It is likely that he also did so in your communities. And second, Robert Kapoun served as pastor in your area as recently as a decade and a half ago. I had the honor of visiting annually for several years with lay leaders and members of the parishes that Father Roedel now serves, and I believe that Robert Kapoun did not commit abuse while with you. But I recall that his presence and known abuse history raised hard questions for people in your area.

Given such history, I obtained Archbishop Flynn's permission to bring these matters into the open in your communities. I asked him for this permission for three reasons. First, there are likely to be members or former members of your parishes who were abused, and we want to reach out to them. Second, there are also likely to be family members, friends and neighbors, and others who have lost a good deal of their respect for and trust in our Church because of such misconduct, and we want to take some steps to restore trust. Finally, even though we have taken strong steps to prevent abuse from happening in our churches, we know that the problem continues in other places where our fellow Catholics are active – in family life, in schools and other community youth activities, and elsewhere. Perhaps the things that we have had to learn so painfully in our church can help make the whole community safer for young people today.

And so, I would like to ask you to discuss the following questions with your lay leaders:

1. Are there questions, rumors, stories, or other painful local history that we ought to know about as we seek to restore trust in our Catholic community in your area?
2. How informed are the "average members" of your parishes about issues of clergy misconduct and of child safety? Would they be interested in knowing more? Would it be useful and helpful to try to interest them further?
3. What would be some helpful ways to engage members of your parishes in this conversation? What would be the priority groups that should be addressed (for example: older members; committee members and other leaders; parents; teenagers)?
4. What other questions concerning the safety of young people could and should be addressed in this context? Is it better just to address the church-related questions, or should other issues also be named?

These are the questions that are on my mind. Perhaps you will also come up with other topics. Please let me know if you would like further information or clarification. I look forward to seeing you during the Lenten season. Meanwhile, may God bless you and the people you serve.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Kevin M. McDonough
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

Thielen, Deborah

From: McDonough, Fr. Kevin
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2009 2:15 PM
To: Thielen, Deborah
Cc: kevin.clinton@saintwenceslaus.org
Subject: two documents for the Archbishop
Attachments: abp nienstedt new prague.doc; union hill update revised.doc

Deb: I am attaching two documents that I would like to get into Archbishop Nienstedt's hand. The first is a cover memo, and the second is a draft letter. Together, they form two parts of one message. May I ask your help in printing them out, attaching them to each other, and sharing them with the Archbishop?

I have taken the liberty of copying Father Kevin Clinton on this message, so that he knows where everything stands.

Father Kevin McDonough
Pastor, Saint Peter Claver
Capellan, Sagrado Corazon de Jesus
Coordinator of Safe Environment, Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
651-646-1797 x103

9/28/2009

ARCH-009744

Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church

375 North Oxford Street
Saint Paul, MN 55104
651-646-1797 (fax) 651-647-5394

28 September 2009

Memo To: Archbishop Nienstedt

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Dealing with Clergy Abuse in the Greater New Prague Area

Archbishop, for over a year and a half I have been working with Father Kevin Clinton and with the two pastors to his west (Father Roedel, now retired, and Father Bockenfeld) to deal with the effects of clergy sexual abuse that occurred over fifty years ago. The priest who committed the abuse, Kenneth Gansmann OFM, died years ago. But his victims are just coming forward now – three of them in the last two years. They are men in their late sixties and early seventies, whose status as victims was previously unknown to each other. All have remained active in the Church. None has shown interest in pursuing a lawsuit. All are especially grateful for the excellent and honest pastoral care offered by the current priests.

Were this abuse more recent, I would be recommending to you a very active series of steps to reveal this history to the broader community. After consultation with lay leaders, however, I want to suggest a more gentle approach. This approach would be respectful to the privacy needs of the victims – who have expressed concern that they may be embarrassed by a more public message. It also respects, and takes positive advantage of, the communications channels that exist in well-connected small rural communities like Union Hill and Saint Benedict.

Here is what I propose: that I send the attached letter (after it is modified by your staff or yourself) to the priests. They in turn would distribute copies of the letter to their lay leaders. The priests and lay leaders would use the letter, in accord with their own best judgment, to spread the word quietly and effectively in their community circles. There is some likelihood, of course, that the letter might make its way to a news outlet, but I think there is nothing in that for us to fear. Our approach is not motivated by any need to “keep this under wraps” – in fact, I have proposed the possibility of public meetings. Rather, it respects the sensitivities of the people who live in close proximity to each other in these communities.

A further sensitivity: the area around New Prague has suffered more than its share of clergy sexual abuse. At the same time that Kenneth Gansmann was abusing children in Union Hill and Saint Benedict, one of our more notorious Archdiocesan abusers was assigned at Saint Scholastica in Heidelberg. Robert Kapoun abused at least one young man in Jordan in the 1980's and continued to work in Heidelberg into the late 1990's. We want to be especially respectful to the people in this area as we deal straightforwardly with this history.

Since 1892, an African-American Catholic Community
of Faith in Jesus Christ

DRAFT LETTER

(on letterhead with McDonough contact information)

Dear Fathers Bockenfeld and Clinton,

I am writing to you to provide an interim summary of our recent pastoral discussions. After our August meeting with parish leaders from Union Hill and Saint Benedict, it makes sense to assess what we have done so far and to begin to think about next steps.

We first met almost exactly a year and a half ago because we learned that at least three people were sexually abused by a long-deceased former pastor at Union Hill, Kenneth Gansmann. That abuse took place in the 1950's. Of course, we wanted to provide pastoral care and support to the men who have borne the pain of that abuse for many years. We also realized that there were likely to be other people who were abused, perhaps by Father Gansmann, and certainly in other relationships. We wanted to make sure that others would be invited to come forward to receive the spiritual support of the Church.

Some have asked why these crimes that happened so long ago coming out now. We know that those who have come forward have carried the burden of this abuse alone for 50 years. Each person who came forward thought he was the only one abused. I believe that it is through the grace of God that they are finally able to speak. The support and care offered by the two of you have begun to liberate our brothers from that terrible emotional isolation.

We began to reach out to parish leaders last year, only to have that process interrupted by my own father's death, by transitions in archdiocesan leadership, and by priests' illnesses. I am grateful for your patience, especially with my own distractions last year.

This summer we had two meetings with parish leaders from Union Hill and Saint Benedict. We considered a variety of strategies for communicating with parish members past and present. As a result of those conversations, I believe that we have come to the following conclusions:

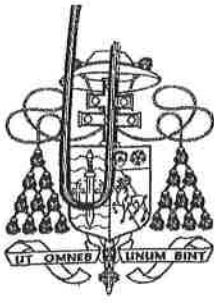
1. That we will reaffirm the importance of using the Safe Environment programs of the Archdiocese in order to make the parishes the safe and trustworthy places they deserve to be (and, through the generous leadership of Father Elgar, in fact are).
2. That parish lay leaders and clergy are welcome to talk about the tragic misconduct of Father Gansmann wherever they think appropriate. No one has been asked for silence; in fact, we wish to encourage the continuation of the conversations that are already circulating in the community.
3. That I would provide a letter like this one to assist you – priests and lay leaders – spreading the word as you see fit.
4. That we will reconvene in mid-autumn to assess what has been happening in the parishes and how to improve our responses.
5. That I would provide you with contact information to which people could bring their questions, concerns or information about this abuse, or any other church-related abuse. In addition to the two of you and myself (contact information above), people are strongly encouraged to call or Director of Victim Advocacy, Greta Sawyer, at 651-291-4497).

Please let me know if you think I have missed anything in this summary. I encourage you to distribute this letter as widely as you judge useful, and am ready to respond to questions from you, your parish

7
leaders, or community members at the phone number and/or e-mail address above. Thank you for your leadership!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Father Kevin McDonough
Delegate for Safe Environment
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis



*Archdiocese of Saint Paul
and Minneapolis*

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP
MOST REVEREND JOHN C. NIENSTEDT

CONFIDENTIAL

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Members of the Archbishop's Council
FROM: Archbishop John C. Nienstedt *JCN*
RE: Memo from Fr. Kevin McDonough (9-28-09)
DATE: October 2, 2009

I received the attached memo from Father McDonough about a sensitive situation of clergy abuse in the New Prague area. I would like to discuss his recommendations at the next Council meeting, October 13, 2009.

I meant to tell you this past week that I will be in Rome from October 4-12. Therefore, there will be no Council meeting on October 6.

/dkt

Attachment



Saint Peter Claver Catholic School
1060 West Central Avenue
Saint Paul MN 55104
651-646-1797
fax: 651-647-5394

23 August 2010

Reverend Kevin I. Clinton
Churches of Saints Scholastica,
and Saint Thomas and Saint Joseph
c/o 215 Main Street East
New Prague MN 56071-1832

Deacon Robert Wagner
Churches of Saint John
and Saint Benedict
20087 Hub Drive
New Prague MN 56071

Dear Father Clinton and Deacon Wagner,

Father Clinton came to speak with me just after Easter about the tragic child abuse committed several decades ago by a priest in the beautiful parishes newly entrusted to his care. We agreed that I would provide you a letter that would inform parish members about that history and which might be used also as a way to promote further discussion in the community. I apologize for the long delay in writing to you, and hope that this letter may be of use to the people you serve.

The priest who abused young people in those communities was named Louis Joseph Heitzer. He was assigned to Saints Scholastica and Joseph from 1958 until 1966. After listening to people from several parishes to which he was assigned, I believe that Louis Heitzer abused young men through much of his time as a priest. Although I do not wish the death of anyone, I consider it an act of grace that his priesthood, and his offenses against young people, were cut short by his death at age 55 in 1969.

I first learned of Louis Heitzer's crimes from members of Saint Joseph parish in about 1993. Parishioners may remember that I was visiting their communities regularly in the middle part of the 1990's as part of a monitoring plan for Robert Kapoun, then assigned there. I am sorry that I did not share the information about Heitzer more broadly in the parishes at that time. Your community members may be glad to know, nevertheless, that their testimony about that abusive priest prepared me to be open to and supportive of a man who came forward a few years later with a similar complaint. That man, [REDACTED], spoke on nationwide television about Heitzer's abuse when he addressed the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002. [REDACTED] with whom I remain in communication, has addressed the pain inflicted on him by Joseph Heitzer to such a profound degree that he has become a regional leader and national spokesman for healing of victims of sexual abuse.

A K-8 School of Excellence, Catholic and African-American

ARCH-ESI-0000414

Father Clinton and Deacon Wagner
23 August 2010
page 2

Sadly, the abuse by Louis Heitzer was not the only such crime committed in the communities you serve. Some three years ago Father Clinton and I started to receive complaints about another long-deceased priest, a Franciscan named Kenneth Gansmann. Working at Union Hill and Saint Benedict in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Gansmann reportedly assaulted several boys who were involved in those churches and in the school. Since the school served families west of New Prague, all five of your communities were probably affected by his depredations.

We have been meeting both with the individuals and families harmed by Gansmann during these last three years. We also had two meetings with community leaders, so that they could be informed and could help us seek out those who were harmed. Please know that our Archdiocese stands ready to help those who were violated. I ask your pastoral assistance to anyone who wishes to come forward.

Father Kevin and Deacon Bob, I hope that this letter may be one small step in a similarly deep process of healing for individuals and families in your parishes, as well as for the communities as a whole. Please let me know if I can be of some use in that process, including by coming to meet with individuals or groups. I thank you for your exemplary leadership and wish you a blessed autumn and harvest season.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Kevin M. McDonough
Delegate for Safe Environment, Archdiocese
Pastor, Church of Saint Peter Claver



Saint Peter Claver Catholic School
1060 West Central Avenue
Saint Paul MN 55104
651-646-1797
fax: 651-647-5394

23 August 2010

Reverend Kevin I. Clinton
Churches of Saints Scholastica,
and Saint Thomas and Saint Joseph
c/o 215 Main Street East
New Prague MN 56071-1832

Deacon Robert Wagner
Churches of Saint John
and Saint Benedict
20087 Hub Drive
New Prague MN 56071

Dear Father Clinton and Deacon Wagner,

Father Clinton came to speak with me just after Easter about the tragic child abuse committed several decades ago by a priest in two beautiful parishes in your area. We agreed that I would prepare a letter that would inform parish members about that history and which might be used also as a way to promote further discussion in the community. Since then, it became apparent that there is more history that ought to be disclosed and discussed. I apologize for the long delay in writing to you, and hope that this letter may be of use to the people you serve.

A priest named Louis Joseph Heitzer abused young people in your area. He was assigned to Saint Scholastica and Saint Joseph from 1958 until 1966. After listening to people from other parishes to which he was assigned, I believe that Louis Heitzer abused young men at other parishes as well through much of his time as a priest. His offenses against young people were cut short by his death at age 55 in 1969.

I first learned of Louis Heitzer's crimes from members of Saint Joseph parish in about 1993. Parishioners may remember that I was visiting their communities regularly in the middle part of the 1990's as part of a monitoring plan for Robert Kapoun, then assigned there. I am sorry that I did not share the information about Heitzer more broadly in the parishes at that time. Your community members may be glad to know, nevertheless, that their testimony about that abusive priest prepared me to be open to and supportive of a man who came forward a few years later with a similar complaint. That man, [REDACTED] spoke on nationwide television about Heitzer's abuse when he addressed the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002. [REDACTED] with whom I remain in communication, has addressed the pain and trauma inflicted on him by Joseph Heitzer to such a profound degree that he has become a regional leader and national spokesman for healing of victims of sexual abuse.

A K-8 School of Excellence, Catholic and African-American

ARCH-ESI-0000416

Father Clinton and Deacon Wagner

8 September 2010

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Sadly, the abuse by Louis Heitzer was not the only such crime committed in the communities you serve. Some three years ago Father Clinton and I started to receive complaints about another long-deceased priest, a Franciscan named Kenneth Gansmann. Working at Union Hill and Saint Benedict in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Gansmann assaulted several boys who were involved in those churches and in the school. Since the school served families west of New Prague, all five of your communities may have had young people traumatized by Gansmann's abuse.

We have been meeting both with the individuals and families harmed by Gansmann during these last three years. We also had two meetings with community leaders, so that they could be informed and could help us seek out those who were harmed. Please know that our Archdiocese stands ready to help those who were violated. I ask your pastoral assistance to anyone who wishes to come forward.

Father Kevin and Deacon Bob, I hope that this letter may be one small step in a similarly deep process of healing for individuals and families in your parishes, as well as for the communities as a whole. Please let me know if I can be of some use in that process, including by coming to meet with individuals or groups. I thank you for your exemplary leadership and wish you a blessed autumn and harvest season.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Kevin M. McDonough
Delegate for Safe Environment, Archdiocese
Pastor, Church of Saint Peter Claver

Call From Fr. Clinton

12/8/13

Fr. G abused at least 8 victims
in Union Hill from '49-'59

No victims have sued

First victim came forward in 2009

Fr. Clinton has held town hall meetings
about this and 7 more victims came forward

Fr. Clinton said Fr. Kevin McDonnell handled this very
well:

Fr G died

Fr.

Dec. 5, 2013

Joe,

I spoke with Fr. Kevin McDonough about Fr. Kenneth Gansmann, OFM. He told me that Fr. Clinton at St. John's in Union Hill called the Chancery in 2009 to notify us that Fr. Gansmann, former pastor at St. John's, had abused parishioners. Fr. McDonough notified Archbishop Nienstedt of the allegations. Fr. McDonough also notified the Franciscan order, the St. John's parish council, and the parish trustees about Fr. Gansmann's abuse. Fr. Gansmann had died "many years earlier."

Heather Lawton

- Each parish has its own CCW, but only St. Benedict's has a men's club
- Parish financially sound with savings; Congregation responds to special needs collections very well.
- Cemetery contact at St. John's: Cemetery committee (Ronald Solheid)

Notes from Trustee Meeting with St. John's of Union Hill

18. Who are you, as trustees?

- Years in parish
- Years as trustee
- Role & responsibilities currently in the parish
 - a. Marvin Deutsch, Trustee, 28 years in parish, 17 years Trustee,**
 - b. Joe Giesen, Trustee in training, 57 years in parish, 8 years trustee,**
 - c. Kevin Giesen, Trustee, 43 years in parish, half-year Trustee,**
 - d. Roger Weiers, Trustee in training, 46 years in parish, half-year as trustee**

Fr. Elgar is still very involved in the financial. Parish Council meets 2-3X per year. Carol Weiers does book work. They use a New Prague CPA firm for their accounting.

19. Brief history of your parish. How has the population changed over the decades not only in number, but also in kind and involvement of people?

Parish started in 1866 by German immigrants who found St. Ben's too far away. St. Ben's and St. John's had their own priest until 1968 when the two parishes shared the same priest. St. John's had a school from around 1920 to 1960. In September of 1966 Fr. Elgar came to be pastor. Right now might be the "high-point" of the parish. The parish is getting older, however.

20. What are the top two concerns among the people of your parish? **What is going to happen? Open or close!**

21. Does your parish fear losing its identity and being swallowed up by a larger parish? **YES**

22. What is the financial health of your parish? Are people concerned about what will happen to the assets of the parish? **Financial health is good. People respond generously to special needs. Cemetery is well endowed!**

23. What are your names, addresses and ways of contacting you (including e-mail, if you have it)?

- **Roger Weiers: 952-758-4331, cell 952-200-4786**
- **Kevin Giesen: 758-3008, cell 612-328-7206 kdgiesen@bevcomm.net**
- **Joe Giesen: 873-6697, cell 212-6697 bigjoemary@frontiernet.net**
- **Marv Deutsch: cell 612-685-1465, home-952-758-6277 deutschmk@gmail.com wife: Kim**

24. Do you have any additional observations, concerns or requests?

The trustee group was aware of a victim of priest sexual abuse. They did not mention his name. The victim is not the one that came forward to me, but the same priest in the 1950's is the alleged perpetrator.

They were making plans for sharing with the parish the suggestion that the five parishes to the west of New Prague be served by only one priest and the Masses would be reduced from 7 to 3.

NUMBER	NAME	INCIDENT/ TIME PERIOD	ALLEGED OFFENDER	PRIEST/DEACON TYPE
1	[REDACTED]	Happened in the late 70s, there was inappropriate touching and talk about their bodies in the shower during swimming outings.	[REDACTED]	priest of another diocese
2	[REDACTED]	Touching, fondling when playing football on several occasions, from 72 to 74 when was to [REDACTED] years of age.	Gil Gustafson	Archdiocesan Priest
3	[REDACTED]	Abused as a child.	Fr Kenneth Gansmann OFM	Religious Order Priest, Province of the Franciscans
4	[REDACTED]	Fondled on a camping trip in the early to mid 1970s.	[REDACTED]	Religious order priest at time of the incident. Now with our Archdiocese.

STATUS

no further information

Prlest deceased. No further contact from victim.

Victim was _____ at time of reporting. Has made no contact for assistance since release.