

Diocese of New Ulm

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 Sixth Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966

COPY

December 16, 1994

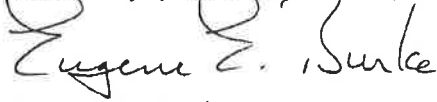
The Reverend Robert P. Clark, Jr.
The Church of Our Lady
57382 CSAH 3
Grove City, Minnesota 56243-9786

Dear Father Clark:

A matter has recently surfaced in a deposition taken in a case of litigation not involving you but where your name was mentioned. I want to discuss this matter with you in person at your convenience. Some time after the holiday press of work, would you please call me to arrange a day and time convenient for you to come to the Pastoral Center to meet with me. I am very grateful to you in advance for this intrusion into your busy schedule.

Meanwhile, I pray that Advent will unfold for you an abundance of Grace and that Christmas will be joyful for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Eugene E. Burke
Licensed Psychologist
Bishop's Delegate

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMO TO: Files
FROM: Gene Burke
DATE: December 27, 1994
SUBJECT: Father Robert Clark

On this date I met with Father Robert Clark. After exchanging greetings and pleasantries, I instructed Father Clark to remain silent throughout our interview, that I had a notice of sexual misconduct concerning him, that I had come to this knowledge indirectly through an oral deposition taken in regard to a civil suit not directed against him, that I needed to investigate this matter and would do so according to the diocesan procedures (a copy of which he was given at this point, although one had been sent to all priests of the diocese in September, 1994) and that this would include the Diocesan Review Board on Sexual Misconduct. I explained to him that the reason why I was strongly stating he should not speak was that he needed to get an Advocate who would counsel him concerning his rights and with whom he could confer prior to making any response to me. I stated that I would put what information I had in writing, send it to him and then arrange to meet again with him and his Advocate.

MEMO TO: Files

FROM: Gene Burke

DATE: February 10, 1995

SUBJECT: Fr. Robert Clark

On this date comes now Father Robert Clark in the company of his advocate, Father Ronald Bowers, J.C.D., in response to my request dated January 5, 1995.

Fr. Clark stated he was in agreement about the accuracy of the statement of January 5, 1995. He wanted to clarify the nature of the relationship he had with [REDACTED] up until [REDACTED] Fr. Clark characterized the relationship today as that of good friends, of two people close in age. Fr. Clark was not [REDACTED] teacher. He was the Associate Pastor in [REDACTED] Father [REDACTED] stated that when he was assigned there in [REDACTED] was already away at college completing his [REDACTED] In the [REDACTED] entered [REDACTED] [REDACTED] studying for the Diocese of [REDACTED]

Father Clark's recollection was that [REDACTED] was not a regular attendee at Eucharist in [REDACTED] Over the summer of [REDACTED] the two met, but in circumstances Father no longer recalls. He does recall that [REDACTED] called him by his first name and that the two would occasionally go out to dinner or to the movies. Over the next two and a half years, the relationship grew gradually.

The incident reported by [REDACTED] occurred [REDACTED] There was only one such incident. Father recalled that by that time the two had become good friends. Father perceived certain "signals" inviting him to "move the relationship a step forward." He did not elaborate on what the "signals" were. The "step forward" referred to sexualizing the relationship.

Father stated that he would not say [REDACTED] never spent the night before with him. But the night in question, [REDACTED] was there overnight. Father recalls that he touched [REDACTED] but does not recall where on his body. Father recalls that the incident was terminated, that the two had a conversation about it, but does not recall any details. He was certain it was not a heated conversation. [REDACTED] left the rectory the next day. On that same next day, Father stated he was coming back to the rectory with one of the teachers and caught sight of [REDACTED] outside. Father stated he and [REDACTED] hugged and said goodbye to each other. That was the last time Father saw [REDACTED]

Father Clark stated that [REDACTED] mother knew about the incident, as did a "neighboring" priest (name not given). Father spoke to Father Gerald Mahon, now Vicar General but then Rector of the seminary in Winona, who in turn wrote a letter to Bishop Lucker asking for financial assistance for one of his priests in need of counseling, but

without mentioning the priest's name. The bishop was reluctant to go along not knowing for whom and for what the assistance would be used. Father Clark repeated his perception that a priest needs "permission" for psychotherapy. At the time, Father was distrustful of Father Bill Sprigler, at the time Director of Priest Personnel, because of Father Clark's belief that Father Sprigler could not keep confidences. Father Clark stated he had a good confessor at the time who apparently helped him over the rough spots.

Father Clark stated [REDACTED] and that he wrote to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and said he received a "nice note" in return. Father said his goodbyes to the mother, since he was being transferred in assignment. Father said the incident was "alluded to" in the exchange.

On the night of the incident, Father Clark and [REDACTED] had been drinking alcohol. Father drank, in the course of the evening, 4-5, 6 at the most, mixed drinks (brandy and mix). He thinks he experienced a "blackout" on the evening of the incident because he can recall so few details of the time in question. He recalls feeling "hungover" the next day, experiencing headache and dizziness. He does not recall vomiting.

Since May of 1993 Father has been in outpatient psychotherapy with Signe Nestigen - about a year and a half. In addition, Father was evaluated at St. Michael's Community in St. Louis in 1989. At the completion of that program, Father agreed to an eight point program of continuing self care from November, 1989. The eight points and his current status with each follows:

1. he continues to see a spiritual director once a month;
2. he takes a day off;
3. he joined a support group for two years, in 1990 and 1991. That group disbanded. He is in another at present.
4. cardio-vascular exercise: he could do more;
5. he has been in psychotherapy regularly;
6. call Father Leehy monthly: Father Leehy is no longer at St. Michael's;
7. re-entry workshop: done;
8. return to St. Michael's for Aftercare Week mid 1990: done.

At the end of the interview, I admonished Father Clark to have no contact again with [REDACTED] in any way, shape or form. I further admonished him to cease and desist from any behavior of the kind reported.

If I want to have a report from Signe Nestigen, I will formulate a set of written questions. I agreed to let Father Clark and his advocate see the questions in advance.

Father Clark will be monitored by me periodically.

December 10, 1996

DEC 11 1996

Gene Burke
Chancellor, New Ulm Diocese
1400 Sixth Street North
New Ulm MN 56073-2099

Dear Mr. Burke:

We are deeply concerned with the welfare and direction of St. Patrick's Parish. Regarding the up-coming December 16th meeting with St. Patrick's, there are some specific issues of eminent importance that we want addressed: Therefore, this letter will lay them out for you to review prior to the meeting.

1. Severe decline in mass attendance
2. Ambiguity of finances
3. Priest's insensitivity towards organist, altar boys and other parishioners, resulting in feelings of lack of spiritual leadership
4. Accountability of priest's time and what are his specific duties
5. Correct procedure for scheduling and conducting parish meetings
6. Loss of active social concerns projects, such as the food shelf

As concerned pastoral council members, finance committee members, parish trustees and parishioners, we would appreciate your preparation for our meeting.

Prayerfully Yours,

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966; (507) 233-5322

COPY

March 3, 1997

The Reverend Robert C. Clark
The Church of Saint Patrick
245 Third Street
Kandiyohi, Minnesota 56251-0164

Dear Father Clark:

Enclosed is a copy of the response Denny Labat and I made to the paper handed out at the meeting February 20, 1997. The paper was openly distributed and this response can be, too. If I may, I would suggest that the response be made available, but without fanfare. Copies could be made available at the back of church for those who are interested and the whole process could be handled by the Finance Council itself, rather than you personally. Again if I may, I would suggest that you simply make no mention of it or expand on it or preach about it at this point in time. You could simply announce the paper is available and say nothing further. Or an announcement could be put in the bulletin. For those who may not have seen or read the original paper, I incorporated it into the response, making it a complete document in itself.

I remain hopeful that conditions at St. Patrick's will calm down and that the vocal disaffected ones can learn to have a working relationship with you and one another. On reflection, I continue to view the meeting as an expression of sometimes intense feelings, but overall also an expression of the depth of concern about and commitment to an effective parish.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be of whatever help I can to you and the parishioners and lay leaders in pastoral and finance councils. Meanwhile I hope you will find the support and strength to see your way through this rough time to the other side of it which, I hope, will be for everyone's well being and a greater understanding of church in the real world.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966; (507) 233-5322

March 3, 1997

Mr. Michael Cruze
Chairperson Finance Council
St. Patrick's Parish
245 Third Street
Kandiyohi, Minnesota 56251-0164

COPY

Dear Mr. Cruze:

At the meeting Thursday, February 20, 1997 with concerned parishioners at St. Patrick's, a handout of four pages entitled, "Financial Responsibilities of Parish and Priest," was distributed and presented orally by one of the participants in the meeting. I said I would respond to the items and am doing so now. Because the issues raised are of such fundamental importance and to foster effective communication, I have asked Father Dennis Labat, Vicar General of the Diocese and Director of Priest Personnel, to co-author this response.

First, in all matters of Church life and conduct, we all look to the Gospel and the words of Jesus as our guide. The message of Jesus is clear: love is to prevail in all our dealings with each other. In this we are to imitate God who loves us without regard to whether we deserve it or not. When we do this, we are doing God's will and thereby making the Kingdom present in our world. So for pastor and parishioner alike, love should characterize our conduct towards one another whether or not the other person seems worthy.

Second, in all matters of conduct, Church law (canon law) directs us in the official organizational aspects of our life together. Where universal Church, or canon, law does not cover an issue, we must then look to diocesan, or particular law promulgated by the bishop. Together these form our marching orders, so to speak. Otherwise there would be chaos in our institutional life.

Let me simply quote the pertinent canon law relevant to the issues brought up in the paper distributed at the meeting.

Canon 536 - §1. After the diocesan bishop has listened to the presbyteral (priest) council and if he judges it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give their help in fostering pastoral activity.

§2. This pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by norms determined by the diocesan bishop.

Canon 537 - Each parish is to have a finance council which is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this council the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of the parish goods with due regard for the prescriptions of canon 532.

Canon 532 - the pastor represents the parish in all juridic (legal) affairs in accord with the norm of law; he is to see to it that the goods of the parish are administered in accord with the norms of (law).

Diocesan policy (Policy Bulletin, Administration, Parish, Number 8) states clearly in Part I, Section B, number 1: "The (Finance) Council is an advisory group to be consulted at the discretion of the pastor or pastoral administrator (PA). The pastor/PA of the parish is not bound to follow the advice given in those cases where these statutes require him/her to consult with the council. In those cases where these statutes require he/she obtain the favorable recommendation of the council, a withholding of this recommendation bars the pastor/PA from proceeding with the proposed act unless the diocese directs the action to be taken.

NOTE: see the appendices at the end of the Policy Bulletin for a complete listing of relevant canon laws.

With this introduction and the diocesan Policy Bulletin (with appendices) mentioned above in mind, I will now respond to each item in the handout.

1. It is the responsibility of the parish people to provide housing for the priest. We are also responsible for the keeping of his house. We can either pay for a person to clean the house or we can provide these services through the people of the parish itself.

Response: this is true. The people have the responsibility to provide housing and its upkeep. The people can certainly discuss the method of house cleaning, but the pastor makes the final decision.

2. The parish will provide a monthly stipend of \$884 in cash to the priest.

Response: the parish pays the priest a salary, not a stipend. The amount is determined by the bishop. This fiscal year it is \$884, but fiscal year starting July 1, 1997 it will be \$909.

3. There is no set amount for a food allowance, this should be decided by the finance committee.

Response: the official group in a parish which advises the pastor on financial matters and policy is the finance council. Members of this council are appointed by the pastor. The finance council is not a committee of the parish council, but an independent body. The two councils, however, need very much to communicate with each other and work together harmoniously. No figure for board (meals) is set by diocesan policy. The parish finance council can certainly form a useful opinion on the matter and express it, but ultimately does not make the decision.

4. We, as a parish are required to provide up to \$1,100 per year for continuing education. But it must be documented that the priest has attended the retreat, workshop, etc. If they do not attend in (sic) the function in its entirety, we are not obliged to pay for it. We do have the right to check to see if attendance was real.

Response: it is current diocesan policy that each priest is allowed up to \$1,100 per year for continuing education. There is no diocesan policy about reporting attendance. The parish council and the finance council may inquire about and should take an interest in the priest's continuing spiritual and professional formation and be supportive. But neither council has the right to demand an accounting because neither council is in a position of authority over the pastor. On the other hand, the Priest Personnel Director is the person who would contact any priest who is not attending scheduled events. If a priest does not attend a continuing education/formation event, he should not submit a charge to the continuing education benefit.

5. We are required to pay up to \$800 per year for auto insurance coverage for the car used by the priest.

Response: correct. If the actual cost is less than \$800, the amount is paid. The difference cannot be taken in cash.

6. As of 1966 we pay \$316 per month as a car allowance. Mileage is paid after 12,000 miles have been traveled in a year for church business only. Miles must be logged and documented.

Response: the car allowance is \$300 (not \$316) per month and reimbursement at \$.30 per mile above 12,000 business miles is correct for this current fiscal year. Logging and documentation are required by the Internal Revenue Service, not the finance council. IRS rules are if there is no log, the reimbursement is considered salary. If an amount is to be considered a business expense, a log must be kept.

7. As of January 1, 1997 there will no longer be a car allowance provided by the parish as stated in diocesan policy. Instead, actual mileage is to be paid at 31 cents per mile for church business only. Church business includes trips to New Ulm to confer there, parish visits, hospital visits, and qualified retreats. The miles must be accurately logged and documented, this log must then be presented to the Parish Finance Committee secretary and verified by that person before it can be paid. If the miles have not been documented then they can not be paid by the parish.

Response: As of July 1, 1997 (not January 1), the beginning of the new fiscal year, a monthly car allowance will no longer be provided. Instead, all business miles traveled by the pastor are to be reimbursed at the rate of \$.31 cents per mile. The pastor is to log his business miles and turn in a copy each month to the person who pays the bills, again according to IRS rules. The pastor will determine what his business miles were. The examples given above are business related, but are not the only ones. The log, or a copy of the log, is to be turned in to the parish accountant or bookkeeper for reimbursement like other accounts payable. The parish finance council (not committee) must not micro manage the daily operation of handling matters like accounts payable or receivable, general ledger, and matters of this sort.

8. DUF dues. We must pay monthly DUF dues for our priest. That amount will be \$641.61 per month as of January 1, 1997. We also are obligated to pay Priest Pension Plan fund for \$218.47 per month and Priest Care Fund for approximately \$200.00 per month.

Response: for the current fiscal year, the Diocesan United Fund (DUF) payment to the diocese is \$702.59 per month for St. Patrick's parish. Priest Pension Plan payment is \$240.37 per month. What these amounts will be for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1997 have not yet been determined but are presently being worked out by the diocesan Director of the Office of Finance. Priest Care Fund payment is exactly \$200.00 per month. DUF is not some kind of payment "for our priest." The Diocesan United Fund is the means designated by the bishop in the Diocese of New Ulm to help provide funding for the various diocesan offices and responsibilities. Other fund sources for these purposes are bequests, grants, interest income from investments.

9. The Parish Finance committee (hereafter called the committee) has the actual authority of the parish as this is set down by Canon (sic) Law.

Response: canon law requires there be a finance council in each parish to aid the pastor, but it is strictly advisory and consultative. Actual authority in the parish is in the hands of the pastor. Canon 519 states "The pastor is the proper shepherd of the parish entrusted to him, exercising pastoral care in the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share; in accord with the norm of law he carries out for his community the duties of teaching, sanctifying and governing, with the cooperation of other presbyters (priests) or deacons and the assistance of lay members of the Christian faithful." As mentioned previously, the parish finance council is not a committee of another body, but is independently established.

10. The priest is obligated to listen to and to follow the advice of the committee.

Response: please refer to the diocesan policy and the appendices. In those matters determined by diocesan statute where the pastor is to consult the finance council, he is not obligated to follow their advice. In those matters determined by diocesan statute where the pastor is required to obtain the favorable recommendation of the finance council, he is barred from proceeding unless he has that recommendation except in a situation where the diocese directs the action be taken.

11. The priest must make a full disclosure to the committee on a monthly basis of all financial matters. He must show the check book and each check that has been written and have an explanation for each one. The priest must make available complete Financial Statements on a monthly basis. The books must be maintained according to GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures) and according to the policy of the diocese.

Response: the relationship of the finance council to the pastor is not that of employer to employee. The language in number 11 is "must" which is a term of necessity or obligation, like the performance or conduct an employer demands of an employee. Rather the relationship between pastor and finance council should be characterized by a spirit of cooperation and mutual support as both strive to fulfill the mission and objectives of the parish. The pastor should take advantage of the finance council members' experience to help him make good decisions, and sometimes needs their positive recommendation before proceeding. But he does not report to them as to a superior. It is not to be the practice of the Finance Council to review or approve each check or payment of each bill. This is part of the administrative responsibilities of the pastor or pastoral administrator. On the other hand, if there are questions about what the debits or credits are for in a financial report or budget, clarifications can certainly be given.

12. Borrowing. On new construction at least half of the money must be saved and a plan in place for the repayment of the money before a loan can be taken. Maintenance. Borrowing for this can only occur in an emergency situation. The parish may borrow up to 5% of its annual budget if they repay it in one year or less. This loan can only be taken out every three years and must be approved by the Diocesan Finance Council. If the parish says no to the loan then the priest must bring it before the Diocese. Then that council must decide if the priest can prove if it is an actual need.

Response: borrowing for new construction requires, normally, that the parish have 50% of the money already on hand. New construction also requires the approval of the Building Committee of the Priests Council, and then the Priests Council itself, as well as a long range financial plan with a detailed monthly amortization schedule included in it, showing how the parish plans to meet this obligation along with all the other parish obligations. There may be some confusion in number 12 about "maintenance" and "operational needs." For emergency major maintenance a loan can be taken, but within three months a detailed plan like the one previously mentioned must be prepared and given to the diocesan Office of Finance. For non-emergency maintenance loans, or when the amount exceeds 20% of the parish annual operating budget, the detailed plan has to be prepared three months in advance and submitted to the Office of Finance. For an operational loan, a parish may borrow up to 5% of its budget if the following year's budget shows it will be repaid 100%, along with all other parish obligations. Such a loan may be taken once every three years. If a parish needs to borrow more than once in three years, or needs to borrow more than 5% of its budget for operational loans, the diocesan Finance Council must do a review and make a recommendation to the bishop before such a loan would be taken. For item 12, please refer to the whole document Diocesan Policy, Administration, Parish #5.

13. Policy Bulletin: Administrative Policy #5: the priest is not empowered to borrow money on his own. It must be done through the parish. There can be no personal loan from a parish member and the parish cannot make personal loans to parish members.

Response: Policy Bulletin, Administration, Parish, number 5 states that only corporations can borrow money. That means there must be a corporate resolution authorizing the borrowing. There are five

members of each parish corporate board: the bishop, the vicar general, the pastor and two trustees. The majority of these members must vote favorably to authorize corporate actions, like borrowing money. The parish cannot loan money to any individual.

14. The priest may not have access to the cashbox of the parish. The person who deposits the collection and/or cash donations must be a separate individual from the person who counts said donations.

Response: it may be wise or prudent to have such separations, but again the word "must" changes a wise move to an obligatory one. There is no such obligation on the pastor. He cannot fulfill his responsibilities and not have access to a cashbox, if indeed the parish has one, to obtain petty cash for immediate payment of small items (e.g. stamps). His hands would be tied otherwise. It is, however, important that proper checks and balances be arranged for handling money, from the time it is given through paying bills and proper accounting of these actions.

The remainder of the handout is a page and a half taken from Policy Bulletin, Administration, Parish, number 8 referenced above. These pages contain diocesan policy and call for no response from me.

I hope that my responses prove helpful. I continue to emphasize that the people concerned, including Father Clark, and I are attempting to find our way to an acceptable working relationship. I regret not being able to meet with folks last December, but the weather has not cooperated. Sometimes the longer such differences persist, the greater the distortions of perception of the other person's position. I hope I can help calm things down and help people listen.

I look forward to seeing you March 20.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

Reverend Dennis C. Labat
Vicar General and
Director of Priest Personnel

Xc: Father Robert Clark

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Bishop

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966 Fax (507) 354-3667

May 8, 1997

The Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

Dear Bob:

I hope you are doing well and want you to know I keep you constantly in mind and prayer, asking God to bless you and guide you during this time especially.

I am writing to clarify your situation and to set out the terms required by diocesan policy for those on administrative leave, as stated in our policy manual, Personnel, Priests, number two.

I accepted your resignation, effective noon March 16, 1997. Also in accordance with diocesan policy, I am placing you on administrative leave and removing your faculties as of this date, although you may continue to celebrate the Eucharist privately. I prefer to proceed informally and in a way that will foster a good working relationship between us.

Attached you will find two copies of an agreement describing the details of the leave. I ask you to sign both copies, retain one for your records and return the other to me as soon as possible.

I look upon written agreements as making things clear and fostering mutual understanding. I also want to reaffirm my support and care for you personally and pray neither of us will lose sight of that. Besides myself, Fr. Labar and Gene Burke will be in touch with you and I hope you will be able to rely on us for any response we can give to you. Please feel free to call me.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Bishop

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966 Fax (507) 354-3667

May 8, 1997

The Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

Dear Bob:

I hope you are doing well and want you to know I keep you constantly in mind and prayer, asking God to bless you and guide you during this time especially.

I am writing to clarify your situation and to set out the terms required by diocesan policy for those on administrative leave, as stated in our policy manual, Personnel, Priests, number two.

I accepted your resignation, effective noon March 16, 1997. Also in accordance with diocesan policy, I am placing you on administrative leave and removing your faculties as of this date, although you may continue to celebrate the Eucharist privately. I prefer to proceed informally and in a way that will foster a good working relationship between us.

Attached you will find two copies of an agreement describing the details of the leave. I ask you to sign both copies, retain one for your records and return the other to me as soon as possible.

I look upon written agreements as making things clear and fostering mutual understanding. I also want to reaffirm my support and care for you personally and pray neither of us will lose sight of that. Besides myself, Fr. Labat and Gene Burke will be in touch with you and I hope you will be able to rely on us for any response we can give to you. Please feel free to call me.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

COPY

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

507 359-2966

Leave of Absence for Temporary Service Outside the Diocese

Terms and Conditions

This is an agreement with Bishop Raymond A. Lucker, Fr. Robert P. Clark and Monsignor Richard J. Schuler, pastor of the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Purpose: The purpose of this temporary service outside the Diocese of New Ulm is to enable Fr. Clark to provide for himself while he focuses on the elements of the program listed below. It is granted under the condition that Fr. Clark follow the program indicated below.

Length: This leave of absence for temporary service outside the Diocese of New Ulm will be for a period of approximately ten months, expiring on June 30, 1998.

Place of Residence: It is expected that Fr. Clark will live in residence in the rectory and participate in the regular routine of responsibilities, meals, and prayer in which priests serving in a parish participate.

Program: During this temporary service outside the Diocese of New Ulm Fr. Clark will also participate in the following:

1. Regular spiritual direction
2. Meeting with his support group
3. Daily prayer and spiritual reading
4. A regime promoting his physical health and well being
5. Continued psychotherapy dealing with issues raised by Dr. John Gonsiorek, especially
 - a. Meeting his intimacy needs consistent with his commitment to live as a celibate priest
 - b. Develop greater appreciation on how he comes across to people and develop better methods for dealing with conflicts and differences with people
 - c. Avoid alcoholic drinks
 - d. Meet bi-monthly with Mr. Eugene Burke regarding this program
6. Regular consultation with his supervising pastor. Fr. Dennis Labat, Director of Priest Personnel, will meet regularly with the supervising pastor.
7. Participation in pastoral leader sessions in the fall and spring and the diocesan retreat for priests

Financial Arrangement: During this temporary service outside the diocese Fr. Clark's salary, business expenses and benefits are to be provided by the institution he is serving. This includes minimally those listed in the Personnel, Priest 2 policy of the Diocese of New Ulm. This includes things such as:

1. room and board
2. regular salary of \$909.00 per month
3. business mileage at \$.31 per mile
4. continuing education allowance up to \$1100 which also covers retreat
5. up to \$800 per year for car insurance
6. payment for medical plan of the diocese (\$275.00 per month paid to the Diocese of New Ulm)
7. payment into priest pension plan (\$270.50 per month paid to the Diocese of New Ulm)
8. payment into Priest Care Fund (\$150.00 per month paid to the Diocese of New Ulm)

Public Notice: While recognizing Fr. Clark's right to privacy, nevertheless notification must be made to the pastoral leaders of the Diocese of New Ulm regarding this service outside the diocese.

Review of Leave of Absence: During this leave of absence there will be consultation with Fr. Clark and the supervising pastor in the fall, mid-year and in the spring of 1998.

Rev. Robert P. Clark

Date

Msgr. Richard J. Schuler
Pastor of the Church of St. Agnes

Date

Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Bishop of New Ulm

Date

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

507 359-2966

Leave of Absence for Temporary Service Outside the Diocese

Terms and Conditions

This is an agreement with Bishop Raymond A. Lucker, Fr. Robert P. Clark and Monsignor Richard J. Schuler, pastor of the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Purpose: The purpose of this temporary service outside the Diocese of New Ulm is to enable Fr. Clark to provide for himself while he focuses on the elements of the program listed below. It is granted under the condition that Fr. Clark follow the program indicated below.

Length: This leave of absence for temporary service outside the Diocese of New Ulm will be for a period of approximately ten months, expiring on June 30, 1998.

Place of Residence: It is expected that Fr. Clark will live in residence in the rectory and participate in the regular routine of responsibilities, meals, and prayer in which priests serving in a parish participate.

Program: During this temporary service outside the Diocese of New Ulm Fr. Clark will also participate in the following:

1. Regular spiritual direction
2. Meeting with his support group
3. Daily prayer and spiritual reading
4. A regime promoting his physical health and well being
5. Continued psychotherapy dealing with issues raised by Dr. John Gonsiorek, especially
 - a. Meeting his intimacy needs consistent with his commitment to live as a celibate priest
 - b. Develop greater appreciation on how he comes across to people and develop better methods for dealing with conflicts and differences with people
 - c. Avoid alcoholic drinks
 - d. Meet bi-monthly with Mr. Eugene Burke regarding this program
6. Regular consultation with his supervising pastor. Fr. Dennis Labat, Director of Priest Personnel, will meet regularly with the supervising pastor.
7. Participation in pastoral leader sessions in the fall and spring and the diocesan retreat for priests

Financial Arrangement: During this temporary service outside the diocese Fr. Clark's salary, business expenses and benefits are to be provided by the institution he is serving. This includes minimally those listed in the Personnel, Priest 2 policy of the Diocese of New Ulm. This includes things such as:

1. room and board
2. regular salary of \$909.00 per month
3. business mileage at \$.31 per mile
4. continuing education allowance up to \$1100 which also covers retreat
5. up to \$800 per year for car insurance
6. payment for medical plan of the diocese (\$275.00 per month paid to the Diocese of New Ulm)
7. payment into priest pension plan (\$270.50 per month paid to the Diocese of New Ulm)
8. payment into Priest Care Fund (\$150.00 per month paid to the Diocese of New Ulm)

Public Notice: While recognizing Fr. Clark's right to privacy, nevertheless notification must be made to the pastoral leaders of the Diocese of New Ulm regarding this service outside the diocese.

Review of Leave of Absence: During this leave of absence there will be consultation with Fr. Clark and the supervising pastor in the fall, mid-year and in the spring of 1998.

Rev. Robert P. Clark

Date

Msgr. Richard J. Schuler
Pastor of the Church of St. Agnes

Date

Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Bishop of New Ulm

Date

DIOCESE OF NEW ULM**ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE****Terms and Conditions**

The undersigned agree to the following terms and conditions for the administrative leave invoked by Bishop Raymond A. Lucker for the Reverend Robert P. Clark.

Purpose. The purpose of the administrative leave is to provide time for evaluation, reflection, prayer and discernment of the future direction of Fr. Clark's ministry in the Church. The period of discernment is intended to be focused and time limited.

Length. The administrative leave will be up August 1, 1997. At that time, an extension of time, or the conditions of the agreement, or both may be requested by either Fr. Clark or Bishop Lucker. If necessary, a new agreement will be drawn up. According to policy, "When the priest is able bodied and the administrative leave is likely to extend for some time, he is expected to find work."

Manner of Dress. During the time of the administrative leave, Fr. Clark may wear the Roman collar and identify himself as a priest not on current assignment in the diocese. He is expected to comport himself in line with accepted clerical standards.

Place of Residence. It is acceptable that Fr. Clark reside in his home located at 2131 Sheridan Avenue North in Minneapolis. It is expected that he will notify Fr. Labat or Gene Burke of his whereabouts if he will be absent from his home for a length of time, e.g. for a vacation.

Program. During the time of the leave, Fr. Clark will participate in the following:

- a psychological evaluation by John Gonsiorek, Ph.D.;
- any follow-up recommended by Dr. Gonsiorek;
- regular spiritual direction;
- the meetings of his support group;
- daily prayer and spiritual reading;
- continued psychotherapy with Signe Nestigen;
- a regime promoting his physical health and well being.
- Nothing in this section is intended to prevent Fr. Clark from being gainfully employed.

Financial Support. Until August 1, 1997 the following support will be provided by the diocese:

- regular salary of \$884 per month (\$909 effective July 1, 1997);
- housing allowance at \$291.67 per month (\$300 effective July 1, 1997);
- food allowance at \$225 per month;
- health insurance;
- payment of psychologist's fees;

- payment for spiritual direction.

Public Notice. While recognizing Fr. Clark's right to privacy, nevertheless notification must be made to the priests of the diocese and the parishioners of St. Patrick's and St. Thomas More. The signatories will find a mutually agreeable wording of the notification. It is further agreed, that at the bishop's discretion, meetings of parishioners will be conducted for a period of time by the bishop's staff to help the people process their feelings and differences among themselves and to assist them in dealing with those differences and coming to terms with events in an adult, Christian way.

Feedback Session. When the reports from the psychologists are done, a meeting will be held to discuss the results and recommendations. At that meeting, attended by Bishop Lucker, Fr. Clark, Fr. Labat and Gene Burke, the tests results and their meaning will be discussed and the future direction of any remaining work to be done will be determined. If more time is needed, the terms and conditions will be decided for a longer leave. A decision will be made, if appropriate, about return to ministry or restricted ministry or other options at this meeting.



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

Rev. Robert P. Clark

May 8, 1997
Date

Date

DIOCESE OF NEW ULM

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Terms and Conditions

The undersigned agree to the following terms and conditions for the administrative leave invoked by Bishop Raymond A. Lucker for the Reverend Robert P. Clark.

Purpose. The purpose of the administrative leave is to provide time for evaluation, reflection, prayer and discernment of the future direction of Fr. Clark's ministry in the Church. The period of discernment is intended to be focused and time limited.

Length. The administrative leave will be up August 1, 1997. At that time, an extension of time, or the conditions of the agreement, or both may be requested by either Fr. Clark or Bishop Lucker. If necessary, a new agreement will be drawn up. According to policy, "When the priest is able bodied and the administrative leave is likely to extend for some time, he is expected to find work."

Manner of Dress. During the time of the administrative leave, Fr. Clark may wear the Roman collar and identify himself as a priest not on current assignment in the diocese. He is expected to comport himself in line with accepted clerical standards.

Place of Residence. It is acceptable that Fr. Clark reside in his home located at 2131 Sheridan Avenue North in Minneapolis. It is expected that he will notify Fr. Labat or Gene Burke of his whereabouts if he will be absent from his home for a length of time, e.g. for a vacation.

Program. During the time of the leave, Fr. Clark will participate in the following:

- a psychological evaluation by John Gonsiorek, Ph.D.;
- any follow-up recommended by Dr. Gonsiorek;
- regular spiritual direction;
- the meetings of his support group;
- daily prayer and spiritual reading;
- continued psychotherapy with Signe Nestigen;
- a regime promoting his physical health and well being.
- Nothing in this section is intended to prevent Fr. Clark from being gainfully employed.

Financial Support. Until August 1, 1997 the following support will be provided by the diocese:

- regular salary of \$884 per month (\$909 effective July 1, 1997);
- housing allowance at \$291.67 per month (\$300 effective July 1, 1997);
- food allowance at \$225 per month;
- health insurance;
- payment of psychologist's fees;

- payment for spiritual direction.

Public Notice. While recognizing Fr. Clark's right to privacy, nevertheless notification must be made to the priests of the diocese and the parishioners of St. Patrick's and St. Thomas More. The signatories will find a mutually agreeable wording of the notification. It is further agreed, that at the bishop's discretion, meetings of parishioners will be conducted for a period of time by the bishop's staff to help the people process their feelings and differences among themselves and to assist them in dealing with those differences and coming to terms with events in an adult, Christian way.

Feedback Session. When the reports from the psychologists are done, a meeting will be held to discuss the results and recommendations. At that meeting, attended by Bishop Lucker, Fr. Clark, Fr. Labat and Gene Burke, the tests results and their meaning will be discussed and the future direction of any remaining work to be done will be determined. If more time is needed, the terms and conditions will be decided for a longer leave. A decision will be made, if appropriate, about return to ministry or restricted ministry or other options at this meeting.



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

Rev. Robert P. Clark

May 8, 1997

Date

Date

COPY

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966; (507) 233-5322

May 12, 1997

John Gonsiorek, Ph.D.
1111 West 22nd Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405

Dear Dr. Gonsiorek:

I am enclosing copies of relevant documents for your information regarding Fr. Robert Clark. He was born June 28, 1958, making him 39 years old today. He was ordained a priest February 18, 1984 and was originally assigned to the Church of the Holy Trinity in Winsted, Minnesota from June 13, 1984 to June 13, 1989. He was then assigned to the Cathedral in New Ulm, but from July, 1989 to November, 1989 was in treatment at St. Michael's Institute in St. Louis. He returned to the Cathedral, but in August, 1990 was named pastor in Watkins until May, 1993 when he went to Manannah, MN. On August 8, 1996 he was sent to St. Patrick's in Kandiyohi and St. Thomas More in Lake Lillian (neighboring towns). He resigned March 16, 1997 and is currently on administrative leave until August 1, 1997. On leave, he is not permitted to celebrate a public liturgy or preach. He resides in his own home in Minneapolis and is supported by the diocese while on leave. We have drawn up the terms and conditions of the leave, as you will see from one of the enclosed documents.

His past history is relevant in that while in the minor seminary, as a sophomore in college, there was an incident of some sort involving another male. Exactly what the nature of the behavior was, or whether it was with a peer or a faculty member, is unclear. A second incident, this time a sexual overture by Fr. Clark to a young adult male staying with him overnight at the rectory in Winsted on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was discovered indirectly, in a deposition as a part of a civil suit brought by a woman against another priest in Winsted. The woman testified that [REDACTED] had been the recipient of Fr. Clark's overture in [REDACTED] I discovered the testimony and summoned Fr. Clark to give an explanation. In searching his file, I discovered the third incident, one involving [REDACTED] and reported [REDACTED] He was [REDACTED] at the time and Fr. Clark 31. It was as a result of the allegations made that Fr. Clark spent time at St. Michael's Institute in St. Louis, about five months it looks like. The present situation he finds himself in began, as a process I believe, when he arrived at St. Patrick's in Kandiyohi, his most recent assignment.

He was assigned to St. Patrick's last August. By September and October, complaints were coming in about his manner, his old fashioned outlook (pre-Vatican II), his management methods. It seems to me that there was a certain small (N=30?) core of people who simply did not like nor accept him. They may have heard things from his previous assignments or suspected he was gay or whatever, I do not know for sure. I have never thought of Fr. Clark in terms of a DSM whatever. Rather I think of him as a nice guy who is friendly but aloof from diocesan officials, able to make loyal friends in the places he has worked, but one who is clueless in many areas, particularly about what his stimulus value is in being a pastor. For example, he typically comes into a new parish and immediately throws out old hymnals or vestments or whatever, totally ignoring their meaning to the people who have been there for a long time. He neither consults with them, or involves them in any planning about these things. He remodels the rectory without apparent concern for the expenditures and, more especially, what that money represents

in terms of sacrifice and generosity by those who gave it. He generally acts like the place is his to do with as he pleases and he doesn't have to take anyone else's opinion into account. Then he cannot understand it when he meets with opposition, does not know how to deal with that opposition and does not seem to learn from the past. I was suggesting he be assigned to a priest mentor who could help him avoid conflicts in the first place when someone dug up the arrest record from October, 1994 when Fr. Clark was arrested for prostitution while soliciting an undercover policeman in Loring Park. I asked him to resign the same day we learned about the arrest - March 11, 1997. Interestingly enough, the arrest had occurred prior to my calling him in to explain the incident mentioned in the deposition. He never mentioned it to me. He plays things close to the vest.

There are about 250 households in Kandiyohi, another 89 in Lake Lillian. Everybody knows what happened. Each will receive a letter from the bishop, a copy of which I am enclosing. It gives a good overview of events since last August. It is my belief that, in the present climate at large, no clergy person who has declared him/herself as gay can probably serve in a regular parish assignment. While there are many people who would be willing to accept such a clergy person, provided they are celibate, there are just as many (if not more) who would not be willing to do so. In no way do I wish to preclude the outcome of this process with Fr. Clark. We are willing to ordain gay priests. One way to view the present situation is as a forced "outing," something which worries our other gay priests, and rightly so in my view. As you will see from the bishop's letter, we think what happened to Fr. Clark stinks. He is able to connect with some of the people in a parish, but not with others and does not seem to know how to be pastor of all the people. In this he makes what I consider to be quite simple errors of judgment. I keep coming back to "clueless" as a good characterization.

A sound evaluation by an experienced and competent clinician is a place to begin. Fr. Clark has been in therapy with Signe Nestigen for several years and I mean to take nothing from her work with Bob or to imply it has been unhelpful. Rather I want a fresh look from a different perspective. The following is what I would like you to address, in addition to whatever your own expertise suggests:

- is there any underlying pathology;
- what is the status of his own understanding of his sexual orientation; what are the issues for him; how does he deal with them;
- how well does he grasp his own emotional and relational needs; how does he fulfill those needs; how does all that fit in with the commitment to celibacy;
- can any light be shed on his experienced difficulties in his various assignments, particularly his apparent inability to learn from past mistakes;
- why did he act out the four times we know of;
- how clear is he about boundary issues; two of the incidents we know of could be exploitation; how sensitive is he to that;
- how capable is he to live out a celibate commitment; what is his understanding of that; does he have a double standard in that regard;
- what can we do to help him both be a pastor and be celibate; is there something we can do to help him structurally live as a gay priest;
- anything else pertinent.

When I receive your written report, a meeting will be held with Bob, the bishop, Fr. Labat (Director of Priest Personnel) and myself. His canon lawyer may be there also and you can attend if you think that helpful at all. I will be gone July 5-28 which is largely the reason the administrative leave extends to August 1.

As usual, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 507-233-5322. And thank you in advance for your help in this case.

Very truly yours,

Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

COPY

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966; (507) 233-5322

May 12, 1997

John Gonsiorek, Ph.D.
1111 West 22nd Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405

Dear Dr. Gonsiorek:

I am enclosing copies of relevant documents for your information regarding Fr. Robert Clark. He was born June 28, 1958, making him 39 years old today. He was ordained a priest February 18, 1984 and was originally assigned to the Church of the Holy Trinity in Winsted, Minnesota from June 13, 1984 to June 13, 1989. He was then assigned to the Cathedral in New Ulm, but from July, 1989 to November, 1989 was in treatment at St. Michael's Institute in St. Louis. He returned to the Cathedral, but in August, 1990 was named pastor in Watkins until May, 1993 when he went to Manannah, MN. On August 8, 1996 he was sent to St. Patrick's in Kandiyohi and St. Thomas More in Lake Lillian (neighboring towns). He resigned March 16, 1997 and is currently on administrative leave until August 1, 1997. On leave, he is not permitted to celebrate a public liturgy or preach. He resides in his own home in Minneapolis and is supported by the diocese while on leave. We have drawn up the terms and conditions of the leave, as you will see from one of the enclosed documents.

His past history is relevant in that while in the minor seminary, as a sophomore in college, there was an incident of some sort involving another male. Exactly what the nature of the behavior was, or whether it was with a peer or a faculty member, is unclear. A second incident, this time a sexual overture by Fr. Clark to a [REDACTED] staying with him overnight at the [REDACTED] was discovered indirectly, in a deposition as a part of a civil suit brought by a woman against another priest in [REDACTED]. The woman testified that [REDACTED] had been the recipient of Fr. Clark's overture in [REDACTED]. I discovered the testimony and summoned Fr. Clark to give an explanation. In searching his file, I discovered the third incident, one involving [REDACTED] and reported [REDACTED]. He was [REDACTED] at the time and Fr. Clark 31. It was as a result of the allegations made that Fr. Clark spent time at St. Michael's Institute in St. Louis, about five months it looks like. The present situation he finds himself in began, as a process I believe, when he arrived at St. Patrick's in Kandiyohi, his most recent assignment.

He was assigned to St. Patrick's last August. By September and October, complaints were coming in about his manner, his old fashioned outlook (pre-Vatican II), his management methods. It seems to me that there was a certain small (N=30?) core of people who simply did not like nor accept him. They may have heard things from his previous assignments or suspected he was gay or whatever, I do not know for sure. I have never thought of Fr. Clark in terms of a DSM whatever. Rather I think of him as a nice guy who is friendly but aloof from diocesan officials, able to make loyal friends in the places he has worked, but one who is clueless in many areas, particularly about what his stimulus value is in being a pastor. For example, he typically comes into a new parish and immediately throws out old hymnals or vestments or whatever, totally ignoring their meaning to the people who have been there for a long time. He neither consults with them, or involves them in any planning about these things. He remodels the rectory without apparent concern for the expenditures and, more especially, what that money represents

in terms of sacrifice and generosity by those who gave it. He generally acts like the place is his to do with as he pleases and he doesn't have to take anyone else's opinion into account. Then he cannot understand it when he meets with opposition, does not know how to deal with that opposition and does not seem to learn from the past. I was suggesting he be assigned to a priest mentor who could help him avoid conflicts in the first place when someone dug up the arrest record from October, 1994 when Fr. Clark was arrested for prostitution while soliciting an undercover policeman in Loring Park. I asked him to resign the same day we learned about the arrest - March 11, 1997. Interestingly enough, the arrest had occurred prior to my calling him in to explain the incident mentioned in the deposition. He never mentioned it to me. He plays things close to the vest.

There are about 250 households in Kandiyohi, another 89 in Lake Lillian. Everybody knows what happened. Each will receive a letter from the bishop, a copy of which I am enclosing. It gives a good overview of events since last August. It is my belief that, in the present climate at large, no clergy person who has declared him/herself as gay can probably serve in a regular parish assignment. While there are many people who would be willing to accept such a clergy person, provided they are celibate, there are just as many (if not more) who would not be willing to do so. In no way do I wish to preclude the outcome of this process with Fr. Clark. We are willing to ordain gay priests. One way to view the present situation is as a forced "outing," something which worries our other gay priests, and rightly so in my view. As you will see from the bishop's letter, we think what happened to Fr. Clark stinks. He is able to connect with some of the people in a parish, but not with others and does not seem to know how to be pastor of all the people. In this he makes what I consider to be quite simple errors of judgment. I keep coming back to "clueless" as a good characterization.

A sound evaluation by an experienced and competent clinician is a place to begin. Fr. Clark has been in therapy with Signe Nestigen for several years and I mean to take nothing from her work with Bob or to imply it has been unhelpful. Rather I want a fresh look from a different perspective. The following is what I would like you to address, in addition to whatever your own expertise suggests:

- is there any underlying pathology;
- what is the status of his own understanding of his sexual orientation; what are the issues for him; how does he deal with them;
- how well does he grasp his own emotional and relational needs; how does he fulfill those needs; how does all that fit in with the commitment to celibacy;
- can any light be shed on his experienced difficulties in his various assignments, particularly his apparent inability to learn from past mistakes;
- why did he act out the four times we know of;
- how clear is he about boundary issues; two of the incidents we know of could be exploitation; how sensitive is he to that;
- how capable is he to live out a celibate commitment; what is his understanding of that; does he have a double standard in that regard;
- what can we do to help him both be a pastor and be celibate; is there something we can do to help him structurally live as a gay priest;
- anything else pertinent.

When I receive your written report, a meeting will be held with Bob, the bishop, Fr. Labat (Director of Priest Personnel) and myself. His canon lawyer may be there also and you can attend if you think that helpful at all. I will be gone July 5-28 which is largely the reason the administrative leave extends to August 1.

As usual, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 507-233-5322. And thank you in advance for your help in this case.

Very truly yours,

Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Bishop

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

(507) 359-2966

May 14, 1997

Dear Member of St. Patrick and St. Thomas More Communities:

I am writing to you about Fr. Clark's resignation as your pastor and the circumstances surrounding his leaving. I will state the sequence of events, then the consequences on the parishes, finally I will address two false rumors.

The coming of a new pastor by itself can cause difficulties in adjusting to change. Soon after Fr. Clark's arrival as your pastor, several individuals from St. Patrick's - I have no way of knowing how many - became increasingly opposed to his leadership. Feelings became intense and deep seated. Early on, Fr. Clark made some errors in judgment, too. Fr. Labat, Director of Priest Personnel, and Ray McClellan, Director of the Office of Finance, attended a meeting at St. Patrick's in November at Fr. Clark's request. The meeting, I am told, was highly confrontational. A second meeting with Gene Burke, Coordinator of Diocesan Staff and Chancellor, was scheduled for December 16 but had to be postponed twice because of winter storms and was not held until February 20, 1997. The tone of that meeting, I am told, was much improved over the November meeting and several people spoke of their personal experiences at St. Patrick's, their hurt and deep unhappiness with the changes Fr. Clark made and his style. People from St. Thomas More were not among the vocal critics at the two meetings. Both Fr. Labat and I called Fr. Clark from time to time to offer support and guidance.

These concerns and the results of the parish meetings were brought up at meetings of the Priest Personnel Board. Board members and I felt the differences between Fr. Clark and concerned parishioners could be worked out and Fr. Clark could be guided in his decisions. We were in the process of arranging a mentor for Fr. Clark. The issues brought to our attention were about pastoral style, manner of relating to people and management technique.

Unknown to me and without my consent, some parishioners from St. Patrick's consulted attorney Dennis Neeser in January because they were concerned about Father's absences from the parish and questioned whether personal and parish finances were being commingled. No parish funds were used to pay the attorney. At the advice of the attorney, an investigator was hired to put Fr. Clark under surveillance. The investigator looked into his personal financial situation and that of the parish. The attorney reported that no financial irregularities were found. Surveillance produced nothing having any bearing on Fr. Clark's assignment. Meanwhile, someone anonymously sent one of the trustees a report from Hennepin County Court indicating that a Robert Clark had been arrested in October, 1994 for soliciting an undercover policeman for sex in Minneapolis. Initially the report was not believed (it could have been another person with the same name). Verification was sought and found that it was Fr. Clark.

On March 11, 1997 the attorney and his clients met with me, Fr. Labat and Gene Burke. I knew about the difficulties Fr. Clark was having in the parish and wanted to support him and help him work through those problems. But when I learned at this meeting about the arrest in 1994 and the surveillance, I had to take action. Gene Burke met that same evening with Fr. Clark and offered him the opportunity to resign. He resigned effective Saturday noon, March 15, 1997. God calls priests to a ministry of service to Him and His people. In the Catholic Church that also entails a promise of celibacy, regardless of the person's sexual orientation. Acting against that promise is wrong and, further, what Father did was also illegal. It is classified as a misdemeanor. There was a single act. Fr. Clark's record would have been cleared in October of this year, since there have been no other violations.

Based on statements made at the March 11 meeting, that few if any others knew about the arrest and that such information would be kept confidential, Mr. Burke went to St. Patrick's and St. Thomas More March

16-17 to announce Fr. Clark's resignation at all the Masses. I and my advisors saw no need to reveal information about Fr. Clark which would damage his reputation, something he, like the rest of us, has a right to. What Mr. Burke found was that many people already knew most of the details about Fr. Clark's situation. Several people expressed anger about what was not said in the announcement, while still others were angry and ashamed at the way Fr. Clark had been treated.

In terms of the consequences, there are differing opinions and feelings. I have learned, however, of individual efforts to maintain good relationships in spite of widely differing opinions about Fr. Clark. I applaud such efforts. The first step in healing any rifts in a community is to lay out the basic facts. A few people from St. Patrick's and St. Thomas have written to me or members of my staff. Members of my staff have met with several different groups of people in both parishes and continue to do so. The issues for some of the people center around whether or not a gay priest is acceptable as a pastor, whether a priest acting against his promise of celibacy can be restored, and what the acceptable ways are of dealing with a pastor with whom people disagree. My staff and I are looking for ways to help the community face its differences in a respectful way and seek to find ways of healing and forgiveness. I ask each of you to pray fervently that the Holy Spirit be present among you and guide you all in this difficult task. I have appointed Fr. Dennis Labat as Administrator of both parishes until a pastor can be sent. I trust you will give him your full support and cooperation in this transition period.

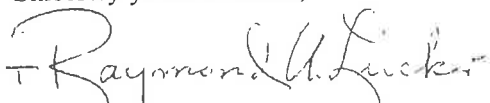
I am very disappointed in the way differences between some parishioners and Fr. Clark have been handled. In situations where several people differ, each person must look within to learn what part he or she might have played in the conflict, rather than only blaming someone else. Fr. Clark, as I have said, contributed earlier to the conflict by some errors in judgment, and, ultimately, by an illegal action. Father's violation of his promise to be celibate was wrong. But I am not hearing how others, from the beginning of the conflict, think they might have contributed. This is not right. We are a Christian community and ought to deal with our differences in a Christian way. I disapprove of the methods used to invade Fr. Clark's privacy. The efforts in opposition to Fr. Clark appear to be organized and focused and I do not approve of that, either.

As to false rumors, I am responding to two I know. First, Fr. Clark is not and has not been charged with any offense involving children or adolescents. Second, it is not true that any new pastor must be approved by a select group of parishioners. I appoint pastors recommended by the Priest Personnel Board.

What happens in the future depends on the Holy Spirit and your good efforts. Continued blaming and judging others will only prevent the needed healing from taking place. Talk about individuals or groups leaving the parish won't help resolve differences when what is needed is people staying and working to rebuild the community. As your bishop I am intent on calling forth the gifts of your community to take the lead in seeking and finding ways to come together.

As for Fr. Clark, every priest in the local Church is linked to the bishop in a mutual pledge of support and loyalty. That holds even when our human condition causes us to fail, especially at those times. According to diocesan policy, Fr. Clark is on administrative leave and is provided for in terms of basic necessities. He is undergoing a thorough evaluation. I pray for his welfare and invite you to do the same. And I pray for your community that it will take advantage of God's grace and fidelity to us even when we falter, calling us all to conversion of our lives to Him and the ways Jesus taught.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Bishop

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

(507) 359-2966

May 14, 1997

Dear Member of St. Patrick and St. Thomas More Communities:

I am writing to you about Fr. Clark's resignation as your pastor and the circumstances surrounding his leaving. I will state the sequence of events, then the consequences on the parishes, finally I will address two false rumors.

The coming of a new pastor by itself can cause difficulties in adjusting to change. Soon after Fr. Clark's arrival as your pastor, several individuals from St. Patrick's - I have no way of knowing how many - became increasingly opposed to his leadership. Feelings became intense and deep seated. Early on, Fr. Clark made some errors in judgment, too. Fr. Labat, Director of Priest Personnel, and Ray McClellan, Director of the Office of Finance, attended a meeting at St. Patrick's in November at Fr. Clark's request. The meeting, I am told, was highly confrontational. A second meeting with Gene Burke, Coordinator of Diocesan Staff and Chancellor, was scheduled for December 16 but had to be postponed twice because of winter storms and was not held until February 20, 1997. The tone of that meeting, I am told, was much improved over the November meeting and several people spoke of their personal experiences at St. Patrick's, their hurt and deep unhappiness with the changes Fr. Clark made and his style. People from St. Thomas More were not among the vocal critics at the two meetings. Both Fr. Labat and I called Fr. Clark from time to time to offer support and guidance.

These concerns and the results of the parish meetings were brought up at meetings of the Priest Personnel Board. Board members and I felt the differences between Fr. Clark and concerned parishioners could be worked out and Fr. Clark could be guided in his decisions. We were in the process of arranging a mentor for Fr. Clark. The issues brought to our attention were about pastoral style, manner of relating to people and management technique.

Unknown to me and without my consent, some parishioners from St. Patrick's consulted attorney Dennis Neeser in January because they were concerned about Father's absences from the parish and questioned whether personal and parish finances were being commingled. No parish funds were used to pay the attorney. At the advice of the attorney, an investigator was hired to put Fr. Clark under surveillance. The investigator looked into his personal financial situation and that of the parish. The attorney reported that no financial irregularities were found. Surveillance produced nothing having any bearing on Fr. Clark's assignment. Meanwhile, someone anonymously sent one of the trustees a report from Hennepin County Court indicating that a Robert Clark had been arrested in October, 1994 for soliciting an undercover policeman for sex in Minneapolis. Initially the report was not believed (it could have been another person with the same name). Verification was sought and found that it was Fr. Clark.

On March 11, 1997 the attorney and his clients met with me, Fr. Labat and Gene Burke. I knew about the difficulties Fr. Clark was having in the parish and wanted to support him and help him work through those problems. But when I learned at this meeting about the arrest in 1994 and the surveillance, I had to take action. Gene Burke met that same evening with Fr. Clark and offered him the opportunity to resign. He resigned effective Saturday noon, March 15, 1997. God calls priests to a ministry of service to Him and His people. In the Catholic Church that also entails a promise of celibacy, regardless of the person's sexual orientation. Acting against that promise is wrong and, further, what Father did was also illegal. It is classified as a misdemeanor. There was a single act. Fr. Clark's record would have been cleared in October of this year, since there have been no other violations.

Based on statements made at the March 11 meeting, that few if any others knew about the arrest and that such information would be kept confidential, Mr. Burke went to St. Patrick's and St. Thomas More March 16-17 to announce Fr. Clark's resignation at all the Masses. I and my advisors saw no need to reveal

16-17 to announce Fr. Clark's resignation at all the Masses. I and my advisors saw no need to reveal information about Fr. Clark which would damage his reputation, something he, like the rest of us, has a right to. What Mr. Burke found was that many people already knew most of the details about Fr. Clark's situation. Several people expressed anger about what was not said in the announcement, while still others were angry and ashamed at the way Fr. Clark had been treated.

In terms of the consequences, there are differing opinions and feelings. I have learned, however, of individual efforts to maintain good relationships in spite of widely differing opinions about Fr. Clark. I applaud such efforts. The first step in healing any rifts in a community is to lay out the basic facts. A few people from St. Patrick's and St. Thomas have written to me or members of my staff. Members of my staff have met with several different groups of people in both parishes and continue to do so. The issues for some of the people center around whether or not a gay priest is acceptable as a pastor, whether a priest acting against his promise of celibacy can be restored, and what the acceptable ways are of dealing with a pastor with whom people disagree. My staff and I are looking for ways to help the community face its differences in a respectful way and seek to find ways of healing and forgiveness. I ask each of you to pray fervently that the Holy Spirit be present among you and guide you all in this difficult task. I have appointed Fr. Dennis Labat as Administrator of both parishes until a pastor can be sent. I trust you will give him your full support and cooperation in this transition period.

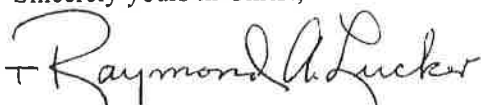
I am very disappointed in the way differences between some parishioners and Fr. Clark have been handled. In situations where several people differ, each person must look within to learn what part he or she might have played in the conflict, rather than only blaming someone else. Fr. Clark, as I have said, contributed earlier to the conflict by some errors in judgment, and, ultimately, by an illegal action. Father's violation of his promise to be celibate was wrong. But I am not hearing how others, from the beginning of the conflict, think they might have contributed. This is not right. We are a Christian community and ought to deal with our differences in a Christian way. I disapprove of the methods used to invade Fr. Clark's privacy. The efforts in opposition to Fr. Clark appear to be organized and focused and I do not approve of that, either.

As to false rumors, I am responding to two I know. First, Fr. Clark is not and has not been charged with any offense involving children or adolescents. Second, it is not true that any new pastor must be approved by a select group of parishioners. I appoint pastors recommended by the Priest Personnel Board.

What happens in the future depends on the Holy Spirit and your good efforts. Continued blaming and judging others will only prevent the needed healing from taking place. Talk about individuals or groups leaving the parish won't help resolve differences when what is needed is people staying and working to rebuild the community. As your bishop I am intent on calling forth the gifts of your community to take the lead in seeking and finding ways to come together.

As for Fr. Clark, every priest in the local Church is linked to the bishop in a mutual pledge of support and loyalty. That holds even when our human condition causes us to fail, especially at those times. According to diocesan policy, Fr. Clark is on administrative leave and is provided for in terms of basic necessities. He is undergoing a thorough evaluation. I pray for his welfare and invite you to do the same. And I pray for your community that it will take advantage of God's grace and fidelity to us even when we falter, calling us all to conversion of our lives to Him and the ways Jesus taught.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Raymond A. Lucker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "L".

Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Bishop

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

(507) 359-2966

May 14, 1997

Dear Member of St. Patrick and St. Thomas More Communities:

I am writing to you about Fr. Clark's resignation as your pastor and the circumstances surrounding his leaving. I will state the sequence of events, then the consequences on the parishes, finally I will address two false rumors.

The coming of a new pastor by itself can cause difficulties in adjusting to change. Soon after Fr. Clark's arrival as your pastor, several individuals from St. Patrick's - I have no way of knowing how many - became increasingly opposed to his leadership. Feelings became intense and deep seated. Early on, Fr. Clark made some errors in judgment, too. Fr. Labat, Director of Priest Personnel, and Ray McClellan, Director of the Office of Finance, attended a meeting at St. Patrick's in November at Fr. Clark's request. The meeting, I am told, was highly confrontational. A second meeting with Gene Burke, Coordinator of Diocesan Staff and Chancellor, was scheduled for December 16 but had to be postponed twice because of winter storms and was not held until February 20, 1997. The tone of that meeting, I am told, was much improved over the November meeting and several people spoke of their personal experiences at St. Patrick's, their hurt and deep unhappiness with the changes Fr. Clark made and his style. People from St. Thomas More were not among the vocal critics at the two meetings. Both Fr. Labat and I called Fr. Clark from time to time to offer support and guidance.

These concerns and the results of the parish meetings were brought up at meetings of the Priest Personnel Board. Board members and I felt the differences between Fr. Clark and concerned parishioners could be worked out and Fr. Clark could be guided in his decisions. We were in the process of arranging a mentor for Fr. Clark. The issues brought to our attention were about pastoral style, manner of relating to people and management technique.

Unknown to me and without my consent, some parishioners from St. Patrick's consulted attorney Dennis Neeser in January because they were concerned about Father's absences from the parish and questioned whether personal and parish finances were being commingled. No parish funds were used to pay the attorney. At the advice of the attorney, an investigator was hired to put Fr. Clark under surveillance. The investigator looked into his personal financial situation and that of the parish. The attorney reported that no financial irregularities were found. Surveillance produced nothing having any bearing on Fr. Clark's assignment. Meanwhile, someone anonymously sent one of the trustees a report from Hennepin County Court indicating that a Robert Clark had been arrested in October, 1994 for soliciting an undercover policeman for sex in Minneapolis. Initially the report was not believed (it could have been another person with the same name). Verification was sought and found that it was Fr. Clark.

On March 11, 1997 the attorney and his clients met with me, Fr. Labat and Gene Burke. I knew about the difficulties Fr. Clark was having in the parish and wanted to support him and help him work through those problems. But when I learned at this meeting about the arrest in 1994 and the surveillance, I had to take action. Gene Burke met that same evening with Fr. Clark and offered him the opportunity to resign. He resigned effective Saturday noon, March 15, 1997. God calls priests to a ministry of service to Him and His people. In the Catholic Church that also entails a promise of celibacy, regardless of the person's sexual orientation. Acting against that promise is wrong and, further, what Father did was also illegal. It is classified as a misdemeanor. There was a single act. Fr. Clark's record would have been cleared in October of this year, since there have been no other violations.

Based on statements made at the March 11 meeting, that few if any others knew about the arrest and that such information would be kept confidential, Mr. Burke went to St. Patrick's and St. Thomas More March

16-17 to announce Fr. Clark's resignation at all the Masses. I and my advisors saw no need to reveal information about Fr. Clark which would damage his reputation, something he, like the rest of us, has a right to. What Mr. Burke found was that many people already knew most of the details about Fr. Clark's situation. Several people expressed anger about what was not said in the announcement, while still others were angry and ashamed at the way Fr. Clark had been treated.

In terms of the consequences, there are differing opinions and feelings. I have learned, however, of individual efforts to maintain good relationships in spite of widely differing opinions about Fr. Clark. I applaud such efforts. The first step in healing any rifts in a community is to lay out the basic facts. A few people from St. Patrick's and St. Thomas have written to me or members of my staff. Members of my staff have met with several different groups of people in both parishes and continue to do so. The issues for some of the people center around whether or not a gay priest is acceptable as a pastor, whether a priest acting against his promise of celibacy can be restored, and what the acceptable ways are of dealing with a pastor with whom people disagree. My staff and I are looking for ways to help the community face its differences in a respectful way and seek to find ways of healing and forgiveness. I ask each of you to pray fervently that the Holy Spirit be present among you and guide you all in this difficult task. I have appointed Fr. Dennis Labat as Administrator of both parishes until a pastor can be sent. I trust you will give him your full support and cooperation in this transition period.

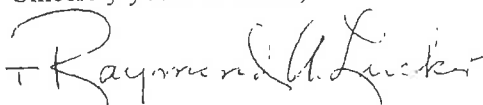
I am very disappointed in the way differences between some parishioners and Fr. Clark have been handled. In situations where several people differ, each person must look within to learn what part he or she might have played in the conflict, rather than only blaming someone else. Fr. Clark, as I have said, contributed earlier to the conflict by some errors in judgment, and, ultimately, by an illegal action. Father's violation of his promise to be celibate was wrong. But I am not hearing how others, from the beginning of the conflict, think they might have contributed. This is not right. We are a Christian community and ought to deal with our differences in a Christian way. I disapprove of the methods used to invade Fr. Clark's privacy. The efforts in opposition to Fr. Clark appear to be organized and focused and I do not approve of that, either.

As to false rumors, I am responding to two I know. First, Fr. Clark is not and has not been charged with any offense involving children or adolescents. Second, it is not true that any new pastor must be approved by a select group of parishioners. I appoint pastors recommended by the Priest Personnel Board.

What happens in the future depends on the Holy Spirit and your good efforts. Continued blaming and judging others will only prevent the needed healing from taking place. Talk about individuals or groups leaving the parish won't help resolve differences when what is needed is people staying and working to rebuild the community. As your bishop I am intent on calling forth the gifts of your community to take the lead in seeking and finding ways to come together.

As for Fr. Clark, every priest in the local Church is linked to the bishop in a mutual pledge of support and loyalty. That holds even when our human condition causes us to fail, especially at those times. According to diocesan policy, Fr. Clark is on administrative leave and is provided for in terms of basic necessities. He is undergoing a thorough evaluation. I pray for his welfare and invite you to do the same. And I pray for your community that it will take advantage of God's grace and fidelity to us even when we falter, calling us all to conversion of our lives to Him and the ways Jesus taught.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

May 19, 1997

Reverend Robert P. Clark Jr.
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411
522-7790

The Most Rev. Harry J. Flynn
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Archbishop Flynn,

It has been some time since I had a chance to visit with you. I am able to keep up a bit with your weekly column in the Catholic Spirit. I am always touched when a column or story refers to Emmitsburg. I also have such fond memories of your visit to my parish in Manannah.

I am writing to you for some advice. Certainly from a "fatherly" perspective and also from a "Mount" perspective. Since the happiest years of my life were spent at Mount St. Mary's it is now necessary for me to return to the roots of my formation. (How many times I've thought of our dear Father Manochio in the last few months!)

I resigned from my pastorates in Kandiyohi and Lake Lillian on March 15 and am currently on administrative leave. The enclosed letter from Bishop Lucker to the parishes and the details of the leave are pretty much self-explanatory. Because of the small size and limited apostolate I will not be able to return to New Ulm.

Before I make any major life decisions, I would very much like to have the chance to visit with you. At your convenience, perhaps I could visit with you about my situation and what the future may hold in store. I am at the above address and phone number and would very much appreciate if I could have the chance to visit with you, either formally during office hours or perhaps for dinner some evening.

I ask the favor of your good prayers Archbishop. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers often.

Sincerely in Christ,



Reverend Robert P. Clark Jr.

enc.

May 19, 1997

2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Rev. Msgr. Richard J. Schuler
Church of St. Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Monsignor Schuler,

I am writing to thank you so very much for the invitation to have lunch with you last week at the Quail. I so very much appreciated the chance to visit with you and update you on my situation. I cannot thank you enough for your kind and compassionate words of support and encouragement. I also want to thank you for your generous offer to teach at St. Agnes in the fall.

Enclosed please find a copy of the letter that Bishop Lucker has mailed out. Also several more pages regarding the "Administrative Leave". I am also sending copies of these to Archbishop Flynn and will ask to see him for advice (a Mount St. Mary's perspective etc...). If he would give the slightest indication that he would take me in St. Paul, I would then convey to him your kind offer at St. Agnes.

I hope we can visit again soon. I always enjoy the chance to visit with you. I enjoyed the fact that you found Kandiyohi "trying" in 1946! Not much has changed in the 50 years since!

I ask the favor of your good prayers.

Sincerely,



Reverend Robert P. Clark Jr.

enc.

May 19, 1997

Reverend Robert P. Clark Jr.
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411
522-7790

The Most Rev. Harry J. Flynn
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Archbishop Flynn,

It has been some time since I had a chance to visit with you. I am able to keep up a bit with your weekly column in the Catholic Spirit. I am always touched when a column or story refers to Emmitsburg. I also have such fond memories of your visit to my parish in Manannah.

I am writing to you for some advice. Certainly from a "fatherly" perspective and also from a "Mount" perspective. Since the happiest years of my life were spent at Mount St. Mary's it is now necessary for me to return to the roots of my formation. (How many times I've thought of our dear Father Manochio in the last few months!)

I resigned from my pastorates in Kandiyohi and Lake Lillian on March 15 and am currently on administrative leave. The enclosed letter from Bishop Lucker to the parishes and the details of the leave are pretty much self-explanatory. Because of the small size and limited apostolate I will not be able to return to New Ulm.

Before I make any major life decisions, I would very much like to have the chance to visit with you. At your convenience, perhaps I could visit with you about my situation and what the future may hold in store. I am at the above address and phone number and would very much appreciate if I could have the chance to visit with you, either formally during office hours or perhaps for dinner some evening.

I ask the favor of your good prayers Archbishop. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers often.

Sincerely in Christ,



Reverend Robert P. Clark Jr.

enc.

Diocese of New Ulm

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 507-359-2966 Fax: 507-354-3667

June 23, 1997

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Chancery
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Archbishop Flynn:

I would like to apprise you of the situation with Fr. Bob Clark. You know him from his student days at Mt. St. Mary's. He is a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm and at the present time is on administrative leave. He loves the priesthood and the church. At the same time he has had considerable difficulty dealing with people who differ with him and has had problems in a number of his assignments. But, he did well in one very small parish of Manannah where he served for three and one half years.

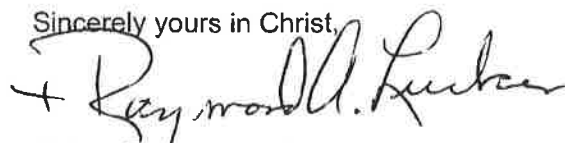
On the basis of his good work at Manannah, I thought that he would be able to successfully serve the parish of Kandiyohi and a smaller parish at Lake Lillian. However, almost from the very beginning he ran into serious difficulties at Kandiyohi, made some poor judgments, and did not get along well at all with some of the people. On the other hand, some of these same people were very unfair to him.

This small group discovered that he had been arrested for soliciting an undercover policeman in Loring Park in Minneapolis. We confronted him and placed him on administrative leave after he agreed to resign from the parish. He is now undergoing psychological evaluation and we are discussing whether he can return to active ministry in the Diocese of New Ulm or whether he wishes to leave active ministry. The basic issue is whether he can commit himself to celibacy not just negatively, but in an affirmative way. He will also need to do some substantial work on his interpersonal relationships.

Right now we are concluding a rather extensive psychological evaluation and we are planning to work with him in a structured program to help him integrate his gay orientation and a commitment to celibacy.

I wanted to let you know about this since Fr. Clark is living in Minneapolis in his own house. He does not have faculties to exercise public ministry. At some time he might approach the Archdiocese for consideration of serving in some ministerial capacity there. If he does, I will be quite willing to share whatever information I have that might be helpful.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

mm

*Msgr - a copy for you. I'll see you Monday evening -
Bob*

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff & Chancellor

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 233-5322 Fax (507) 354-3667

July 2, 1997

The Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

Dear Bob:

I was delighted to hear from you today. I regret that I have not been able to make contact with you more frequently. I would not want you to feel forgotten.

X It surely must have been reassuring for you that Msgr. Schuler sought you out and in a fully fraternal way accepted you and offered work to match your skills.

I took up your question about what the bishop's thoughts were about this offer with the bishop and Denny Labat. As I expected, the general consensus was that at this point it is premature to consider much more than what is to happen in the very near future, that is, the time of the evaluation phase. While we have received Dr. Gonsiorek's report, we have not as yet had an opportunity to sit down together with you to discuss it and its ramifications. The plan until August 1, as the agreement states, is for the evaluation to be completed and any recommendations received, spiritual direction, participation in your support group, sessions with Signe, etc. At or near the end of this phase, we would all gather, discuss, discern a future direction or second phase. We would have this meeting sometime in the week of July 28. I don't want to make the process too complicated, but I think it important to take one step at a time.

X Y One very basic and essential feature about teaching at St. Agnes is that it is really not the bishop's place to "permit" or not. It is really an issue which must include Archbishop Flynn since it involves a priest serving in the archdiocese. Accordingly, Bishop Lucker has written to Archbishop Flynn by way of notifying him of the offer. If it is in accordance with his wishes, then Bishop Lucker is not inclined to stand in the way. I put it this way because, as I have said, it is really premature to think of a longer range plan until we have all had the opportunity to sit down and digest what has already happened.

I want to emphasize again our commitment to you and your well being. None of my response is meant to create distance between us. Personally, I hope you can see your way to remaining in active ministry. Rather I think we both recognize that the work you face is profoundly personal and, to a great extent lonely. No one else can do it for you. I acknowledge the fact that the rest of us are necessarily relegated to roles of support, encouragement and fraternal love, but that you are at the center of the struggle and alone with God there.

X Y This is the best I can do for the present. I can see why Msgr. Schuler approached you. Many people from St. Patrick's reported how much they will miss you and your teaching. Your orthodoxy and love for the Church have never been questioned. You need and want a job, an opportunity to be challenged and to use your gifts meaningfully. But teaching in a Catholic high school in another diocese really makes this a question for the Ordinary there. Let's see what he thinks.

I will be leaving Saturday, July 5 and will return to work July 28. Let's plan to meet here the week of July 28. Meanwhile, if you have any need to contact me in the meanwhile, my telephone number is (218) 475-2211 and my address is P.O. Box 554, Hovland, MN 55606.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

Msg - a copy for you. I'll see you Monday evening - Bob

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff & Chancellor

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 233-5322 Fax (507) 354-3667

July 2, 1997

The Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

Dear Bob:

I was delighted to hear from you today. I regret that I have not been able to make contact with you more frequently. I would not want you to feel forgotten.

X It surely must have been reassuring for you that Msgr. Schuler sought you out and in a truly fraternal way accepted you and offered work to match your skills.

I took up your question about what the bishop's thoughts were about this offer with the bishop and Denny Labat. As I expected, the general consensus was that at this point it is premature to consider much more than what is to happen in the very near future, that is, the time of the evaluation phase. While we have received Dr. Gonsiorek's report, we have not as yet had an opportunity to sit down together with you to discuss it and its ramifications. The plan until August 1, as the agreement states, is for the evaluation to be completed and any recommendations received, spiritual direction, participation in your support group, sessions with Signe, etc. At or near the end of this phase, we would all gather, discuss, discern a future direction or second phase. We would have this meeting sometime in the week of July 28. I don't want to make the process too complicated, but I think it important to take one step at a time.

X X One very basic and essential feature about teaching at St. Agnes is that it is really not the bishop's place to "permit" or not. It is really an issue which must include Archbishop Flynn since it involves a priest serving in the archdiocese. Accordingly, Bishop Lucker has written to Archbishop Flynn by way of notifying him of the offer. If it is in accordance with his wishes, then Bishop Lucker is not inclined to stand in the way. I put it this way because, as I have said, it is really premature to think of a longer range plan until we have all had the opportunity to sit down and digest what has already happened.

I want to emphasize again our commitment to you and your well being. None of my response is meant to create distance between us. Personally, I hope you can see your way to remaining in active ministry. Rather I think we both recognize that the work you face is profoundly personal and, to a great extent lonely. No one else can do it for you. I acknowledge the fact that the rest of us are necessarily relegated to roles of support, encouragement and fraternal love, but that you are at the center of the struggle and alone with God there.

X X This is the best I can do for the present. I can see why Msgr. Schuler approached you. Many people from St. Patrick's reported how much they will miss you and your teaching. Your orthodoxy and love for the Church have never been questioned. You need and want a job, an opportunity to be challenged and to use your gifts meaningfully. But teaching in a Catholic high school in another diocese really makes this a question for the Ordinary there. Let's see what he thinks.

I will be leaving Saturday, July 5 and will return to work July 28. Let's plan to meet here the week of July 28. Meanwhile, if you have any need to contact me in the meanwhile, my telephone number is (218) 475-2211 and my address is P.O. Box 554, Hovland, MN 55606.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Eugene".

Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Coordinator of Staff & Chancellor

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 233-5322 Fax (507) 354-3667

July 2, 1997

COPY

The Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

Dear Bob:

I was delighted to hear from you today. I regret that I have not been able to make contact with you more frequently. I would not want you to feel forgotten.

It surely must have been reassuring for you that Msgr. Schuler sought you out and in a truly fraternal way accepted you and offered work to match your skills.

I took up your question about what the bishop's thoughts were about this offer with the bishop and Denny Labat. As I expected, the general consensus was that at this point it is premature to consider much more than what is to happen in the very near future, that is, the time of the evaluation phase. While we have received Dr. Gonsiorek's report, we have not as yet had an opportunity to sit down together with you to discuss it and its ramifications. The plan until August 1, as the agreement states, is for the evaluation to be completed and any recommendations received, spiritual direction, participation in your support group, sessions with Signe, etc. At or near the end of this phase, we would all gather, discuss, discern a future direction or second phase. We would have this meeting sometime in the week of July 28. I don't want to make the process too complicated, but I think it important to take one step at a time.

One very basic and essential feature about teaching at St. Agnes is that it is really not the bishop's place to "permit" or not. It is really an issue which must include Archbishop Flynn since it involves a priest serving in the archdiocese. Accordingly, Bishop Lucker has written to Archbishop Flynn by way of notifying him of the offer. If it is in accordance with his wishes, then Bishop Lucker is not inclined to stand in the way. I put it this way because, as I have said, it is really premature to think of a longer range plan until we have all had the opportunity to sit down and digest what has already happened.

I want to emphasize again our commitment to you and your well being. None of my response is meant to create distance between us. Personally, I hope you can see your way to remaining in active ministry. Rather I think we both recognize that the work you face is profoundly personal and, to a great extent lonely. No one else can do it for you. I acknowledge the fact that the rest of us are necessarily relegated to roles of support, encouragement and fraternal love, but that you are at the center of the struggle and alone with God there.

This is the best I can do for the present. I can see why Msgr. Schuler approached you. Many people from St. Patrick's reported how much they will miss you and your teaching. Your orthodoxy and love for the Church have never been questioned. You need and want a job, an opportunity to be challenged and to use your gifts meaningfully. But teaching in a Catholic high school in another diocese really makes this a question for the Ordinary there. Let's see what he thinks.

I will be leaving Saturday, July 5 and will return to work July 28. Let's plan to meet here the week of July 28. Meanwhile, if you have any need to contact me in the meanwhile, my telephone number is (218) 475-2211 and my address is P.O. Box 554, Hovland, MN 55606.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Eugene E. Burke
Coordinator of Staff and
Chancellor

The Church of Saint Agnes

548 LAFOND AVENUE

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55103

July 7, 1997

The Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Dear Archbishop,

Inpreparing for the opening of the Fall semester at Saint Agnes High School I am searching for a teacher of religion.

It has come to my attention that Father Robert P. Clark of the New Ulm Diocese has resigned his parish and may possibly be available for a teaching position. He has had experience on a high school faculty at Winsted, Minnesota, where he taught for five years.

I have known Father Clark for many years, even from his days in the preparatory seminary in Winona and during his theology at Mount Saint Mary in Maryland.

In speaking with Father Clark, I asked him if he would be interested in joining our religion faculty. He indicated that with the permission of Bishop Lucker and your approval, he would be very willing to come to Saint Agnes.

I am, therefore, with this letter asking you to make such a proposal come about. The sooner that this can be determined, the better. Scheduling and determining the teachers is so important to have done promptly.

With all good wishes to you and anticipating your reply, I am

Cordially,


(Rev. Msgr.) Richard J. Schuler
Pastor

7-10
July 15, 1997

Most Reverend Raymond A. Lucker, S.T.D.
Bishop of New Ulm
1400 Sixth North Street
New Ulm, MN 56073

Dear Bishop Lucker,

I write to you today to express to you my gratitude for writing to me on June 23, 1997. In that letter you apprised me of the situation of Father Bob Clark. I greatly appreciate your kindness in writing.

I apologize for not getting back to you sooner. However, the last week of June we had the convocation of our priests in Rochester and then from there I came to New York on vacation and am just getting caught up now with my correspondence.

Bob Clark did write to me about a month ago. In that letter he asked if he could come to see me some time to visit. I did not respond to him at that time because I thought it would have been better for me to talk to you first and actually there was very little time during those last weeks of June and departing for upstate New York for vacation. However, now that I have your letter and some background I will ask him to come in for lunch when I return.

I don't know Bob that well. I was not the rector when he went to the Mount. However, when I came out here I met him for the first time and then he invited me for lunch to the parish at Manannah. We had a nice visit and he seemed to have been doing quite well. I'm glad he is going to have the opportunity for some psychological evaluation and help. He is a good person and that would assist him greatly.

Thank you so very much for your kindness in writing to me and apprising me of the situation. I greatly appreciate it.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Clark, Robert P.

(Archives vault: 8.A.3.3) Extern

2

07/25/1997-

PERSONAL
CONFIDENTIAL

Persons
Ordained
Clark, Robert P.

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

226 Summit Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-2197

Office of the Archbishop

July 25, 1997

Reverend Monsignor Richard J. Schuler
Church of St. Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Monsignor Schuler,

I received your letter of July 7, 1997. In that letter you indicated that you had spoken with Father Robert Clark of the Diocese of New Ulm and asked him if he would be interested in joining the Religion faculty at St. Agnes High School. You then asked my permission for this to come about so that Father Clark could teach at St. Agnes High School.

It is my understanding that Father Clark has been found by many to be a good teacher. Bishop Lucker informs me that there is no question about his orthodoxy and his love for the Church. I would be able to say this from those who knew him at Mount Saint Mary's. I did not teach him but those who did had great regard for that orthodoxy and that love for the Church.

With that said, however, I believe that there is another issue which needs to be resolved. Father Clark is on administrative leave and has had a thorough psychological examination. The results of this psychological examination have not as yet been discussed with Father Clark, according to my understanding. The second phase would be devoted to a discernment about his orientation and any unresolved issues concerning how he plans to identify and fulfill his intimacy needs. That second phase would also be concerned with whether or not he can commit himself to celibacy.

Monsignor Schuler, it would be difficult for me to see how all of the second phase of this process could be worked with Father Clark teaching full time. Before I would give my blessing to his teaching in St. Agnes High School I would need to know that he would be able to begin responding to these extremely important questions while at the same time teaching. Professionals would need to advise me on that.

I will be back in the office the week of August 4th and if you wish to discuss this with me please call me.

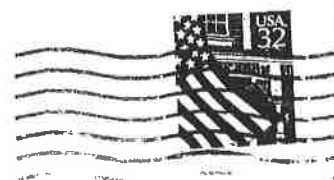
With blessings and good wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

ST. PAUL MN 551
PM
2 JUL
1997



PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

ARCH-043560

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

226 Summit Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-2197

Office of the Archbishop

July 25, 1997

Reverend Monsignor Richard J. Schuler
Church of St. Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103

Father Robert Clark

Dear Monsignor Schuler,

I received your letter of July 7, 1997. In that letter you indicated that you had spoken with Father Robert Clark of the Diocese of New Ulm and asked him if he would be interested in joining the Religion faculty at St. Agnes High School. You also asked my permission for this to come about so that Father Clark could teach at St. Agnes High School.

It is my understanding that Father Clark has been found by many to be a good teacher. Bishop Lucker informs me that there is no question about his orthodoxy and his love for the Church. I would be able to say this from those who knew him at Mount Saint Mary's. I did not teach him but those who did had great regard for that orthodoxy and that love for the Church.

With that said, however, I believe that there is another issue which needs to be resolved. Father Clark is on administrative leave and has had a thorough psychological examination. The results of this psychological examination have not as yet been discussed with Father Clark, according to my understanding. The second phase would be devoted to a discernment about his orientation and any unresolved issues concerning how he plans to identify and fulfill his intimacy needs. That second phase would also be concerned with whether or not he can commit himself to celibacy.

Monsignor Schuler, it would be difficult for me to see how all of the second phase of this process could be worked with Father Clark teaching full time. Before I would give my blessing to his teaching in St. Agnes High School I would need to know that he would be able to begin responding to these extremely important questions while at the same time teaching. Professionals would need to advise me on that.

I will be back in the office the week of August 4th and if you wish to discuss this with me please call me.

With blessings and good wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Harry J. Flynn

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Diocese of New Ulm

COPY

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

507 359-2966

August 27, 1997

Fr. Robert Clark
2131 Sheridan Ave. N.
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Fr. Bob,

I am writing you as follow-up to the meeting on July 31, 1997 at the Catholic Pastoral Center in New Ulm in which you and Fr. Ron Bowers met with Fr. Dennis Labat, Mr. Eugene Burke and myself. The focus of this meeting was to discuss your administrative leave which was to expire on August 1, 1997 and the options beyond that date.

At this meeting we reviewed the psychological evaluation and recommendations made by Dr. John Gonsiorek. You expressed a desire to remain in active priestly ministry and wanted to commit yourself to celibacy. As a condition for your return to ministry, I insisted that you must follow the elements of the program which would include spiritual direction, meeting with a support group, daily prayer and spiritual reading, meeting with your psychotherapist, a regular regime promoting your physical health and well being and having appropriate supervision as indicated in the agreement document.

After considerable discussion regarding these matters we came to some agreement about the immediate future. I reinstated your faculties as a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm. It also was the sense of this group that a return to ministry in the Diocese of New Ulm at this time would not be the best option. We did discuss an opportunity for ministry in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in the parish of St. Agnes in St. Paul. This is a matter which must be acceptable to Archbishop Harry Flynn. I am open to this option for the coming year if it is acceptable to Archbishop Flynn. Once Archbishop Flynn approves this then the document stating the terms and conditions needs to be signed by Msgr. Schuler.

There are several matters which must be in place in order for you to serve in temporary ministry outside the Diocese of New Ulm at this time. According to our Leave of Absence policy (Personnel, Priest 2), *"No priest will be released for temporary service outside the diocese until a written agreement is clearly understood and accepted by the priest himself, his bishop and the bishop of the diocese he will be serving, or the responsible agent of the institution to which the priest will be attached."* First, service in priestly ministry outside the diocese must be agreed to in writing. Before any agreement with Msgr. Schuler is accepted, Archbishop Harry Flynn must accept your service as a priest in the Archdiocese. Second, you and Msgr. Schuler must agree to the terms and conditions for this temporary service outside the diocese.

This agreement will be for a specific period of time and may or may not be extended. The salary, business expenses and benefits of the priest must be taken care of by the institution where he will be working. The details of these matter will be specified in two formal documents. There will be a document of agreement in which Archbishop Harry Flynn accepts you for priestly service in the Arch diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. There will also be a document specifying the terms and conditions of Leave of Absence for Temporary Service Outside the Diocese.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

cc: Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Msgr. Richard J. Schuler

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

507 359-2966

August 27, 1997

Fr. Robert Clark
2131 Sheridan Ave. N.
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Fr. Bob,

I am writing you as follow-up to the meeting on July 31, 1997 at the Catholic Pastoral Center in New Ulm in which you and Fr. Ron Bowers met with Fr. Dennis Labat, Mr. Eugene Burke and myself. The focus of this meeting was to discuss your administrative leave which was to expire on August 1, 1997 and the options beyond that date.

At this meeting we reviewed the psychological evaluation and recommendations made by Dr. John Gonsiorek. You expressed a desire to remain in active priestly ministry and wanted to commit yourself to celibacy. As a condition for your return to ministry, I insisted that you must follow the elements of the program which would include spiritual direction, meeting with a support group, daily prayer and spiritual reading, meeting with your psychotherapist, a regular regime promoting your physical health and well being and having appropriate supervision as indicated in the agreement document.

After considerable discussion regarding these matters we came to some agreement about the immediate future. I reinstated your faculties as a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm. It also was the sense of this group that a return to ministry in the Diocese of New Ulm at this time would not be the best option. We did discuss an opportunity for ministry in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in the parish of St. Agnes in St. Paul. This is a matter which must be acceptable to Archbishop Harry Flynn. I am open to this option for the coming year if it is acceptable to Archbishop Flynn. Once Archbishop Flynn approves this then the document stating the terms and conditions needs to be signed by Msgr. Schuler.

There are several matters which must be in place in order for you to serve in temporary ministry outside the Diocese of New Ulm at this time. According to our Leave of Absence policy (Personnel, Priest 2), *"No priest will be released for temporary service outside the diocese until a written agreement is clearly understood and accepted by the priest himself, his bishop and the bishop of the diocese he will be serving, or the responsible agent of the institution to which the priest will be attached."* First, service in priestly ministry outside the diocese must be agreed to in writing. Before any agreement with Msgr. Schuler is accepted, Archbishop Harry Flynn must accept your service as a priest in the Archdiocese. Second, you and Msgr. Schuler must agree to the terms and conditions for this temporary service outside the diocese.

This agreement will be for a specific period of time and may or may not be extended. The salary, business expenses and benefits of the priest must be taken care of by the institution where he will be working. The details of these matter will be specified in two formal documents. There will be a document of agreement in which Archbishop Harry Flynn accepts you for priestly service in the Arch diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. There will also be a document specifying the terms and conditions of Leave of Absence for Temporary Service Outside the Diocese.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

cc: Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Msgr. Richard J. Schuler

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center
507 359-2966

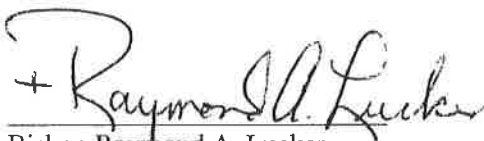
1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

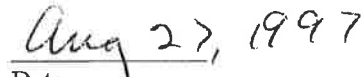
Agreement For Temporary Service Outside the Diocese

The Bishop of New Ulm releases and the Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis accepts Fr. Robert P. Clark for a period of approximately ten months, ending on June 30, 1998, for service as a priest in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

During this period, Fr. Clark's salary, business expenses and benefits will be paid by the institution for which he is working. These details will be specified in a separate document with the employing institution. Fr. Clark will also participate in the designated program set up by the Diocese of New Ulm during this time frame.


Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Bishop of New Ulm

Rev. Robert P. Clark


Date

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis

Date

To Fr. Robert Clark
file

- Extern, no
longer here

08.B.1.2

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center
507 359-2966

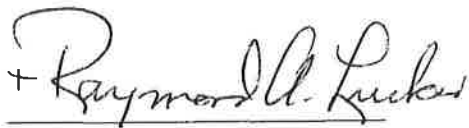
1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

Agreement For Temporary Service Outside the Diocese

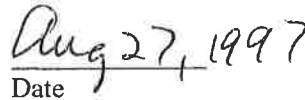
The Bishop of New Ulm releases and the Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis accepts Fr. Robert P. Clark for a period of approximately ten months, ending on June 30, 1998, for service as a priest in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

During this period, Fr. Clark's salary, business expenses and benefits will be paid by the institution for which he is working. These details will be specified in a separate document with the employing institution. Fr. Clark will also participate in the designated program set up by the Diocese of New Ulm during this time frame.



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Bishop of New Ulm

Rev. Robert P. Clark



Date

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis

Date

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center
507 359-2966

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

Agreement For Temporary Service Outside the Diocese

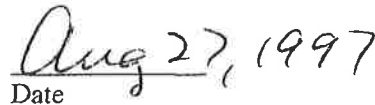
The Bishop of New Ulm releases and the Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis accepts Fr. Robert P. Clark for a period of approximately ten months, ending on June 30, 1998, for service as a priest in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

During this period, Fr. Clark's salary, business expenses and benefits will be paid by the institution for which he is working. These details will be specified in a separate document with the employing institution. Fr. Clark will also participate in the designated program set up by the Diocese of New Ulm during this time frame.



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Bishop of New Ulm

Rev. Robert P. Clark



Date

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis

Date

ARCHBISHOP:

IF INCLINED, PLEASE
SIGN ALL THREE COPIES
AND RETURN ALL THREE
TO BISHOP LUCKER. WE
WILL SECURE FR. CLARK'S
SIGNATURE AND MAIL
YOU A COMPLETED DOCUMENT.
THANKS.

Diocese of New Ulm

Office of the Bishop

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 (507) 359-2966 Fax (507) 354-3667

August 28, 1997

The Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-2197

Dear Archbishop Flynn:

Since I last wrote to you about Father Robert Clark, his psychological evaluation has been completed and I have met with him to discuss both the results and his intentions, needs and plans. At all times Father Clark has been fully cooperative with the process I asked him to undertake. He has given me his assurance that he continues to experience a strong desire to be a priest, wants to be celibate and to be in an environment which will support his desire.

The evaluation revealed a number of important issues which Father Clark needs to address for his own well being as well as to enable him to exercise a more fruitful ministry. He has recently come to accept his gay orientation, something which has been a struggle for him. He now is willing to acknowledge his orientation openly to me. I emphasize that although his orientation is gay, there never has been any suggestion that he has acted out with minors or violated any fiduciary trust as a priest. No one has ever filed a complaint or filed suit for sexual misconduct or threatened to do so. His arrest for solicitation of an undercover policeman in Minneapolis in October 1994 is a matter of public record and is known to the communities of Kandiyohi and Lake Lillian in general and possibly to surrounding communities, like Willmar, as well. The public record, however, will be expunged this coming October if there are no further arrests. I am supplying you with relevant information from his file relating to his history.

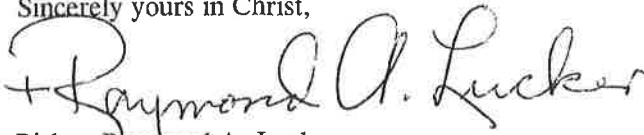
Prolonged exposure to significant stress in early developmental stages of his life has resulted in a strong self protective shell which limits his range of adaptive reactions to further stress and the threat of being overwhelmed by it. Consequently he tends to be somewhat rigid in dealing with others, particularly those who disagree with him or where issues are complex. His needs for affection and intimacy suffer to some degree by this rigidity and self protection. He tends to exercise poor judgment, as is obvious, when his affectional needs become too great. So two areas for continued work on his part center around how best to fill his intimacy needs and how to learn new ways of dealing with others. Besides a good therapist and spiritual director, he needs supervision. The conditions and responsibilities of the written agreement spell out the details. I am enclosing a copy for you.

It is my view that Father Clark needs time to work on these issues, at least before considering a parish assignment. At this time I am willing to remove the restrictions on his faculties. I am not opposed to Msgr. Schuler's offer of a teaching position at St. Agnes for the coming school year and living in the rectory in the company of other priests. That sort of situation is consistent with the personal work he needs to be doing and the time he will need to do it. But because that would entail a priest serving in an assignment in the archdiocese, the decision to proceed to accept Msgr. Schuler's offer is entirely yours. I would not be opposed and am willing to grant a leave for ministry in another diocese for one year. I will draw up a formal written agreement with Father Clark detailing any conditions of this leave and will

share that with you and give you the opportunity to modify it as you see fit. At the term of the agreement I will re-negotiate with Father Clark what steps will next be taken. I want to be candid with you, archbishop, and let you know that our Priest Personnel Board has discussed Father Clark and there is some reservation about his teaching. First it was correctly pointed out that there is public knowledge of his orientation and the arrest (see attached letter I sent to each household in the two parishes he most recently served) and that could be discovered by students and their families, with what consequences I can only guess. Second, he has been observed in other school settings to have shown favoritism towards male students and something quite the reverse with females in such things as grading the students.

I am grateful to you, archbishop, for your willingness to be receptive to me and to Father Clark. If there is anything further you want to know, I will be more than happy to oblige. The offer to teach has come as our program for Father Clark is unfolding and has many positive features to it. The success of our program, however, does not depend on his having that position.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Raymond A. Lucker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

Diocese of New Ulm

FAX 507-354-3667

Catholic Pastoral Center

1400 6th Street North

New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

507 359-2966

August 28, 1997

Msgr. Richard J. Schuler
Church of St. Agnes
548 Lafond Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55103-1672

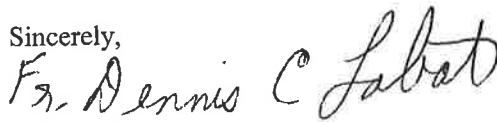
Dear Msgr. Schuler,

I am the Director of Priest Personnel for the Diocese of New Ulm and the Vicar General. I have been working with Fr. Clark along with the bishop and Mr. Eugene Burke. I want to share with you some of the information regarding Fr. Clark's leave of absence. Bishop Lucker has sent Archbishop Flynn an agreement regarding Fr. Clark working in the Archdiocese. Once this is signed then another agreement regarding the terms and conditions for his leave for temporary service outside the diocese would need to be signed by you and Fr. Clark. A very important part of this situation is that Fr. Clark be involved in the various parts of the program as listed in the agreement.

I am enclosing with this letter a copy of the letter Bishop Lucker has sent to Fr. Clark and also a copy of the Terms and Conditions for Fr. Clark to serve outside the diocese. Fr. Clark has the copies which need to be signed by yourself and him. I look forward to visiting with you sometime soon. If you have any questions feel free to give me a call.

May the Lord continue to bless our ministry and His Church.

Sincerely,



Fr. Dennis C. Labat
Director of Priest Personnel

Diocese of New Ulm

*Catholic Pastoral Center
1400 6th Street North
New Ulm, MN 56073-2099*

08/28/97 18:03 AMPF MANKATO MN 560

|||||

MSGR. RICHARD J. SCHULER
CHURCH OF ST. AGNES
548 LAFOND AVE.
ST. PAUL, MN 55103-1672

CONFIDENTIAL-Filed Under Seal

ARCH-043484

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

September 23, 1997

MEMO TO: Archbishop Flynn
FROM: Father Kevin McDonough
SUBJECT: FATHER ROBERT CLARK

Archbishop, I spoke with Gene Burke, a clinical psychologist who is the Chancellor in New Ulm (and also a former priest of this Archdiocese who has applied for reinstatement in the priesthood by the Holy See). Gene and I have worked together on a number of issues, and I find his communications to be straightforward and helpful.

I described the current situation of Father Clark to him. They have been keeping very current on what is going on. He told me that Bishop Lucker was also reluctant about Father Clark being in a school, but did not want to stand on the way of this opportunity for this priest if you would have thought it wise.

I told Gene that I was recommending that we consider a parish assignment for him for this year. He was very much supportive of that possibility, so long as there be a place where he can live with other priests. He also wanted to be sure that we knew about the challenges that Father Clark has had as a pastor. I told him that that was clear from the file.

Burke reassured me that there was no history of abuse or exploitation of minors or of any parish members. The therapeutic work that Father Clark is doing should continue, but he need not be in an inpatient program.

* { He also told me that he understood clearly that this priest is the responsibility of the Diocese of
* { New Ulm. They do not want to "dump their problem" on us, either financially or from a
* { personnel point of view.
* {

Based on that, I recommend that you ask Father Jaroszeski to look for a parish in which Father Clark could serve temporarily. Obviously, he would have to be an associate pastor. He should live with other priests. I suppose theoretically he could live in one rectory and even administer a very small place for us if we had one that needed such administration. If and when we find an assignment for him that seems appropriate to us, we would then be in contact with Bishop Lucker and Father Clark.

KMM:md

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

September 23, 1997

MEMO TO: Archbishop Flynn
FROM: Father Kevin McDonough
SUBJECT: FATHER ROBERT CLARK

Archbishop, I spoke with Gene Burke, a clinical psychologist who is the Chancellor in New Ulm (and also a former priest of this Archdiocese who has applied for reinstatement in the priesthood by the Holy See). Gene and I have worked together on a number of issues, and I find his communications to be straightforward and helpful.

I described the current situation of Father Clark to him. They have been keeping very current on what is going on. He told me that Bishop Lucker was also reluctant about Father Clark being in a school, but did not want to stand on the way of this opportunity for this priest if you would have thought it wise.

I told Gene that I was recommending that we consider a parish assignment for him for this year. He was very much supportive of that possibility, so long as there be a place where he can live with other priests. He also wanted to be sure that we knew about the challenges that Father Clark has had as a pastor. I told him that that was clear from the file.

Burke reassured me that there was no history of abuse or exploitation of minors or of any parish members. The therapeutic work that Father Clark is doing should continue, but he need not be in an inpatient program.

He also told me that he understood clearly that this priest is the responsibility of the Diocese of New Ulm. They do not want to "dump their problem" on us, either financially or from a personnel point of view.

Based on that, I recommend that you ask Father Jaroszeski to look for a parish in which Father Clark could serve temporarily. Obviously, he would have to be an associate pastor. He should live with other priests. I suppose theoretically he could live in one rectory and even administer a very small place for us if we had one that needed such administration. If and when we find an assignment for him that seems appropriate to us, we would then be in contact with Bishop Lucker and Father Clark.

KMM:md

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

September 23, 1997

MEMO TO: Archbishop Flynn
FROM: Father Kevin McDonough
SUBJECT: FATHER ROBERT CLARK

Archbishop, I spoke with Gene Burke, a clinical psychologist who is the Chancellor in New Ulm (and also a former priest of this Archdiocese who has applied for reinstatement in the priesthood by the Holy See). Gene and I have worked together on a number of issues, and I find his communications to be straightforward and helpful.

I described the current situation of Father Clark to him. They have been keeping very current on what is going on. He told me that Bishop Lucker was also reluctant about Father Clark being in a school, but did not want to stand in the way of this opportunity for this priest if you would have thought it wise.

I told Gene that I was recommending that we consider a parish assignment for him for this year. He was very much supportive of that possibility, so long as there be a place where he can live with other priests. He also wanted to be sure that we knew about the challenges that Father Clark has had as a pastor. I told him that that was clear from the file.

Burke reassured me that there was no history of abuse or exploitation of minors or of any parish members. The therapeutic work that Father Clark is doing should continue, but he need not be in an inpatient program.

He also told me that he understood clearly that this priest is the responsibility of the Diocese of New Ulm. They do not want to "dump their problem" on us, either financially or from a personnel point of view.

Based on that, I recommend that you ask Father Jaroszeski to look for a parish in which Father Clark could serve temporarily. Obviously, he would have to be an associate pastor. He should live with other priests. I suppose theoretically he could live in one rectory and even administer a very small place for us if we had one that needed such administration. If and when we find an assignment for him that seems appropriate to us, we would then be in contact with Bishop Lucker and Father Clark.

KMM:md

CLARK

Diocese of New Ulm

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 507-359-2966 Fax: 507-354-3667

October 8, 1997

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Chancery
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Archbishop Flynn:

* { Thank you for the discussion we had on the phone the other day about Fr. Robert
* { Clark. You indicated to me that you did not want Fr. Clark to be teaching at St. Agnes
* { and that you would discuss with your council the possibility of Father serving in some
pastoral capacity in some parish, possibly at St. Agnes.

As I indicated in my previous letter, I together with Fr. Dennis Labat, who is Director of our Priests Personnel Board, and Eugene Burke, our Coordinator of staff who is also a clinical psychologist, discussed the psychological evaluation with him. In that discussion with Fr. Clark we expressly questioned him on several issues:

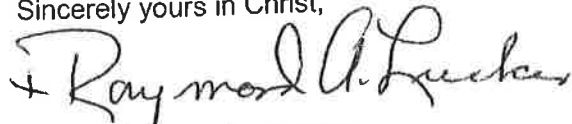
- 1) Is he committed to priestly ministry?
- 2) Is he committed to a celibate life?
- 3) Is he committed to work under strict supervision with a mentor and with a counselor and spiritual director on issues that surfaced during his psychological exam?

To all of those questions he answered a firm "Yes". We were convinced that if a place could be found for him where he could work under the supervision of a mentor that he would be able to do pastoral ministry. We thought it might take some time to find such a parish and perhaps there would not be one in the Diocese of New Ulm. We were, therefore, pleased when there was a prospect of his being able to serve at St. Agnes.

* { Msgr. Schuler is fully aware of Fr. Clark's past history and feels that he could work
* { well at St. Agnes. Msgr. Schuler also believes that he would do well in a teaching
* { position in the High School. Fr. Clark is a good teacher and is capable of doing a good
job.

I just want to keep in touch with you about the situation.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

mm

Diocese of New Ulm

Catholic Pastoral Center 1400 6th Street North New Ulm, MN 56073-2099 507-359-2966 Fax: 507-354-3667

October 8, 1997

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn
Chancery
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Archbishop Flynn:

Thank you for the discussion we had on the phone the other day about Fr. Robert Clark. You indicated to me that you did not want Fr. Clark to be teaching at St. Agnes and that you would discuss with your council the possibility of Father serving in some pastoral capacity in some parish, possibly at St. Agnes.

As I indicated in my previous letter, I together with Fr. Dennis Labat, who is Director of our Priests Personnel Board, and Eugene Burke, our Coordinator of staff who is also a clinical psychologist, discussed the psychological evaluation with him. In that discussion with Fr. Clark we expressly questioned him on several issues:

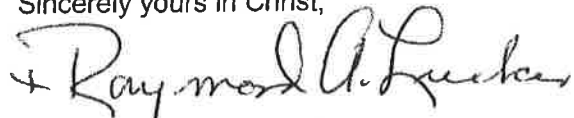
- 1) Is he committed to priestly ministry?
- 2) Is he committed to a celibate life?
- 3) Is he committed to work under strict supervision with a mentor and with a counselor and spiritual director on issues that surfaced during his psychological exam?

To all of those questions he answered a firm "Yes". We were convinced that if a place could be found for him where he could work under the supervision of a mentor that he would be able to do pastoral ministry. We thought it might take some time to find such a parish and perhaps there would not be one in the Diocese of New Ulm. We were, therefore, pleased when there was a prospect of his being able to serve at St. Agnes.

Msgr. Schuler is fully aware of Fr. Clark's past history and feels that he could work well at St. Agnes. Msgr. Schuler also believes that he would do well in a teaching position in the High School. Fr. Clark is a good teacher and is capable of doing a good job.

I just want to keep in touch with you about the situation.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop Raymond A. Lucker
Diocese of New Ulm

mm

Return to Archbishop

October 25, 1997

Most Reverend Raymond Lucker, D.D.
Diocese of New Ulm
1400 6th Street North
New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

Dear Bishop Lucker,

Many, many thanks for your kindness in writing to me on October 8, 1997.
In that letter you discussed the gifts of Father Robert Clark and gifts which
are certainly recognizable.

*
*
*
*) At the present time, Father Clark is residing with Monsignor Schuler at St.
Agnes. As I had indicated to you, to Monsignor Schuler and to Father Clark,
I do not want him teaching in the high school.

That being said, I have taken the subject with my Council and we all agree
that Father Clark can be given an opportunity of pastoral ministry in this
Archdiocese in a situation in which there is a community of priests. Perhaps
that will be at St. Agnes. I have asked the Personnel Director to reflect on
this and to make a suggestion to me.

I have conveyed this information to Father Clark and I am glad it is going to
work out to his advantage and hopefully, to the advantage of the Church.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Return to Archbishop

October 25, 1997

Most Reverend Raymond Lucker, D.D.
Diocese of New Ulm
1400 6th Street North
New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

Dear Bishop Lucker,

Many, many thanks for your kindness in writing to me on October 8, 1997. In that letter you discussed the gifts of Father Robert Clark and gifts which are certainly recognizable.

At the present time, Father Clark is residing with Monsignor Schuler at St. Agnes. As I had indicated to you, to Monsignor Schuler and to Father Clark, I do not want him teaching in the high school.

That being said, I have taken the subject with my Council and we all agree that Father Clark can be given an opportunity of pastoral ministry in this Archdiocese in a situation in which there is a community of priests. Perhaps that will be at St. Agnes. I have asked the Personnel Director to reflect on this and to make a suggestion to me.

I have conveyed this information to Father Clark and I am glad it is going to work out to his advantage and hopefully, to the advantage of the Church.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

May 4, 1998

Dear Archbishop Flynn,

Thank you for the kindness of meeting with me on April 28 and for allowing me to remain at St. Agnes. As I indicated last week my ministry at St. Agnes has been most fruitful and the priestly life there a great source of strength. Monsignor Schuler's kindness and tutelage are very much appreciated by me.

At your request, I will make an appointment to see you in several months (perhaps the end of June/first part of July). As you mentioned, Bishop Lucien may want to be a part of that meeting and something could be put in writing.

Again, Archbishop, I thank you for your confidence and fatherly concern. I thank you for your prayers and assure you of mine for your intentions during the Holy Days of Easter time.

Gratefully,

Father Bob #1118

ARCH-043520

New
Priest
File
(afternoon)

May 12, 1998

Reverend Bob Clark
548 Lafond Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Father Clark,

Thank you very much for your kind note of May 4, 1998. I was glad to have seen you on April 28, and I thank you for coming in to visit me.

Yes, I would like to see you at the end of June. I will be leaving, however, for vacation around July 1st. Perhaps, we could have a meeting with Bishop Lucker when I return in August.

In the meantime, continue to enjoy St. Agnes. I think it is a good place for you to be at this time, and I am glad that you are there.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

75R205/4N



4 May 2001

File copy, please

Memo To: Archbishop Flynn

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Father Robert Clark and Saint Agnes

Archbishop, I spoke with Father Clark last night about the progress of the investigation into the complaint against him. I am attempting to reach the young woman who made the complaint to review the inconsistencies that I have found in the matter. Meanwhile, I also told him that you were not supportive of his appointment as principal of the school, even should the current complaint prove baseless. I told him that at least some of your reluctance related to the disciplinary problem he had in New Ulm.

I also told him that I had described this to Msgr. Schuler last week. That fact came as a surprise to Father Clark. Father Schuler apparently thinks that things will all work out in favor of his plan. He is not telling the key people that they have to look for an alternative.

I know from other sources that the staff and parents at the school are getting anxious to know what lies ahead for them. I suggested to Father Clark that he and Father Schuler ask for some time with you so that they both have it clear that he will not lead the school next year. I am sorry to put this back on you, but I know that your reluctance is about more than the matter that I am investigating. It seemed appropriate that Father Schuler hear that from you.

Father Clark will probably call today (Friday). If you want a briefing on the status of the complaint from the young woman, please let me know.

THE CHURCH OF SAINT AGNES
548 Lafond Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103

651-293-1710 ♦ www.stagnes.net

June 9, 2001

The Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Archbishop Flynn,

I am writing to thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday. I want you to know that your words of spiritual encouragement mean much to me and will be a source of great reflection. It is always my personal desire to grow in deeper union with Our Lord and hence, to better serve Him in the Church.

I was delighted to share with you some of my personal projects such as the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* sermons and my work for the Russian Missions. My four years of pastoral ministry at St. Agnes have been a great blessing for me. Teaching is my greatest joy as well as our campus ministry program. Monsignor Schuler has been a great mentor and I am looking forward to working with Father Welzbacher. The rectory at St. Agnes is a true house of the priesthood for both young and old alike.

I imagine you will be going to your camp in New York for the month of July. I hope your vacation affords a little rest and relaxation for you. Please know of my daily prayers for you and of my gratitude for your paternal kindness in my regard.

Sincerely in Christ,



Reverend Robert P. Clark

9 August 2001

Memo To: Archbishop Flynn and Father Jaroszeski

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Father Robert Clark

The purpose of this memo is to recommend to you both that Father Robert Clark be permitted to remain at Saint Agnes parish on the condition that he serve there as full-time associate pastor and distance himself from regular involvement in the school. Here is the background for the recommendation.

We received an allegation last spring that, about [REDACTED] Father Clark sexually abused a [REDACTED] I met with the young woman, and believe that she was telling what she thought to be the truth. At the time, I promised her only that we would distance Father Clark from the school. Of course, had her complaint proven to have more factual substance, we would have done much more than distance Father Clark from the school! My subsequent conversations with several people have led me to believe that, while she appears to be in good faith in making her complaint, the information in her complaint is not reliable. If you would like, I can detail what led me to this conclusion. It seems sufficient to say at this point that we should not be pursuing further disciplinary steps with Father Clark based on that complaint.

Father Clark was proposed as headmaster for the school in the new administrative alignment. This proposal was rejected by Archbishop Flynn. Even so, word of the proposal got around the school, and engendered further opposition. Rumors began to spread about the incident that led to his leaving New Ulm and coming here – a solicitation of a police officer posing as an adult male prostitute. We checked with his therapist, who said that Father Clark has made significant progress in dealing with the causes of the incident, and that he is unlikely to engage in similar behavior. Even though that is true, Father Clark's homosexual identity could cause a real loss of credibility in the school. This alone would be sufficient reason to remove him from teaching in the school, even if we did have the promise I had made to the young woman complainant, above.

I spoke several times earlier this summer with Father Welzbacher, who believed that Father Clark's removal from the parish would be the best outcome and would make his work easier. I met with Father Clark on August 7 to begin to put that into action. By then, however, Father Welzbacher had changed his mind, according to Father Clark. I spoke with Father Welzbacher later that day, and he told me that he indeed would prefer that Father Clark remain. He said that there is plenty of pastoral work to be done. He believes that Father Clark does his share of the work and is well respected in the parish. He does not think that the story from New Ulm would have any significant negative impact on Father Clark's credibility.

In summary, Father Welzbacher would like Father Clark to stay. He agrees that Clark should not be involved in the school. I do not think that the complaint we received last spring should stand in the way. For these reasons, I suggest he remain in place.

9 August 2001

Memo To: Archbishop Flynn and Father Jaroszeski

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Father Robert Clark

The purpose of this memo is to recommend to you both that Father Robert Clark be permitted to remain at Saint Agnes parish on the condition that he serve there as full-time associate pastor and distance himself from regular involvement in the school. Here is the background for the recommendation.

We received an allegation last spring that, about ten or twelve years ago, Father Clark sexually abused a [REDACTED] diocese. I met with the young woman, and believe that she was telling what she thought to be the truth. At the time, I promised her only that we would distance Father Clark from the school. Of course, had her complaint proven to have more factual substance, we would have done much more than distance Father Clark from the school! My subsequent conversations with several people have led me to believe that, while she appears to be in good faith in making her complaint, the information in her complaint is not reliable. If you would like, I can detail what led me to this conclusion. It seems sufficient to say at this point that we should not be pursuing further disciplinary steps with Father Clark based on that complaint.

Father Clark was proposed as headmaster for the school in the new administrative alignment. This proposal was rejected by Archbishop Flynn. Even so, word of the proposal got around the school, and engendered further opposition. Rumors began to spread about the incident that led to his leaving New Ulm and coming here – a solicitation of a police officer posing as an adult male prostitute. We checked with his therapist, who said that Father Clark has made significant progress in dealing with the causes of the incident, and that he is unlikely to engage in similar behavior. Even though that is true, Father Clark's homosexual identity could cause a real loss of credibility in the school. This alone would be sufficient reason to remove him from teaching in the school, even if we did have the promise I had made to the young woman complainant, above.

I spoke several times earlier this summer with Father Welzbacher, who believed that Father Clark's removal from the parish would be the best outcome and would make his work easier. I met with Father Clark on August 7 to begin to put that into action. By then, however, Father Welzbacher had changed his mind, according to Father Clark. I spoke with Father Welzbacher later that day, and he told me that he indeed would prefer that Father Clark remain. He said that there is plenty of pastoral work to be done. He believes that Father Clark does his share of the work and is well respected in the parish. He does not think that the story from New Ulm would have any significant negative impact on Father Clark's credibility.

In summary, Father Welzbacher would like Father Clark to stay. He agrees that Clark should not be involved in the school. I do not think that the complaint we received last spring should stand in the way. For these reasons, I suggest he remain in place.

4 March 2002

File

Memo To: Clergy Review Board

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Father Robert Clark

This information is provided to you so that you can advise Archbishop Flynn about this question: should Archbishop press Father Clark's bishop to take his priest back to his own diocese (with attendant consequences), or can he reasonably offer a new assignment for Father Clark in the Archdiocese?

Father Robert Clark is a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm. He was ordained in 1984. In 1994 he was arrested for soliciting an adult, undercover male police officer. He also had other history of adult male sexual involvements, documented in the attached report from Eugene Burke. He participated, and with significant success, in a therapeutic program. He accepted his homosexual orientation, recommitted himself to celibacy, and put some supports (especially, ongoing therapeutic support) in place for that recommitment.

His arrest became publicly known. Father Clark is very conservative priest, and therefore is able to function effectively only in a limited number of parishes. This number was reduced even further because of public knowledge of his solicitation arrest and because he will honestly acknowledge his homosexuality when asked. In fact, his diocesan bishop, Bishop Lucker, wrote to Archbishop Flynn in 1997 that it would be impossible to place Father Clark in any parish in the New Ulm diocese. He asked Archbishop Flynn to permit Father Clark to reside in the Archdiocese and even to take up pastoral work, if suitable work could be found. Monsignor Schuler at Saint Agnes, Saint Paul, agreed to provide Father Clark with residence and work.

In the spring of 2001, Monsignor Schuler decided to retire from his pastorate. In preparation for doing so, he instituted a number of changes in the Saint Agnes Schools, where Father Clark had been teaching some religion classes. The changes have met with a good deal of resistance from some of the teachers and others associated with the school. Father Clark became a figure of great controversy in the internal fights in the parish and school, which continue to today. People are aware that Monsignor Schuler hoped to name Father Clark as the headmaster of a combined elementary and secondary school, a move that Archbishop Flynn vetoed. Many people believe that Father Clark is the "power behind the throne" driving undesirable changes in the school. In recent months, his arrest for solicitation has become known. Information about it is part of a whispering campaign in opposition to the changes in school organization.

March 11, 2002

Reverend George A. Welzbacher
Church of Saint Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1672

Dear Father Welzbacher,

I am enclosing a copy of a letter to Father Clark regarding the discontinuation of his ministry in the Archdiocese.

I am grateful for the support and assistance that you and Monsignor Schuler extended to Father Clark while he was at Saint Agnes, and I know that you will be solicitous to his personal situation during this time of transition for him.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

March 11, 2002

Reverend George A. Welzbacher
Church of Saint Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1672

Dear Father Welzbacher,

I am enclosing a copy of a letter to Father Clark regarding the discontinuation of his ministry in the Archdiocese.

I am grateful for the support and assistance that you and Monsignor Schuler extended to Father Clark while he was at Saint Agnes, and I know that you will be solicitous to his personal situation during this time of transition for him.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

March 11, 2002

Reverend Robert Clark
Church of Saint Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1672

Dear Father Clark,

With this letter, I wish to confirm the conversation that Bishop Pates had with you on my behalf on Friday, March 8th. In that communication, you were advised of my decision to discontinue your ministry at Saint Agnes as well as in the Archdiocese, effective immediately.

It is my understanding that you will be meeting with the Bishop of New Ulm, your diocese of incardination, in order to determine your future ministry.

In closing, I wish to express appreciation for your service while in this community and to assure you of my heartfelt prayers in the days ahead.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

March 11, 2002

Reverend Robert Clark
Church of Saint Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1672

Dear Father Clark,

With this letter, I wish to confirm the conversation that Bishop Pates had with you on my behalf on Friday, March 8th. In that communication, you were advised of my decision to discontinue your ministry at Saint Agnes as well as in the Archdiocese, effective immediately.

It is my understanding that you will be meeting with the Bishop of New Ulm, your diocese of incardination, in order to determine your future ministry.

In closing, I wish to express appreciation for your service while in this community and to assure you of my heartfelt prayers in the days ahead.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

March 11, 2002

Reverend Robert Clark
Church of Saint Agnes
548 Lafond Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1672

Dear Father Clark,

With this letter, I wish to confirm the conversation that Bishop Pates had with you on my behalf on Friday, March 8th. In that communication, you were advised of my decision to discontinue your ministry at Saint Agnes as well as in the Archdiocese, effective immediately.

It is my understanding that you will be meeting with the Bishop of New Ulm, your diocese of incardination, in order to determine your future ministry.

In closing, I wish to express appreciation for your service while in this community and to assure you of my heartfelt prayers in the days ahead.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Clergy Review Board
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Recommendation

The Clergy Review Board reviewed the case of **Father Robert Clark**, a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm, presently assigned to the Church of Saint Agnes in Saint Paul.

The Board received both written and oral reports in great detail from Father Kevin McDonough as well as copies of correspondence from Archbishop Flynn, Bishop Lucker and Eugene Burke, who was the Coordinator of Staff and Chancellor of the Diocese of New Ulm.

After a thorough review of the file and considerable discussion of the matter, the Clergy Review Board **unanimously recommends** that Father Clark's assignment be terminated immediately and that no further assignment to active ministry be given.

Father Clark's future is to be determined by the Diocese of New Ulm because of Father's canonical relationship with that ecclesial jurisdiction. Should the Diocese of New Ulm consider an assignment, we urge that such an assignment be undertaken only after a thorough review of Father Clark's personnel file, follow-up background checks, and the strictest of limitations of his ministry as appropriate under the circumstances.

While the Clergy Review Board is sympathetic to the fact that the Bishop of New Ulm is relatively new, it is confident that if he would so elect, that a Board, if it should not already exist, similar in composition to the Clergy Review Board of this archdiocese could assist the bishop in making a judgment in this matter that would best serve the interests of all concerned.

Most Reverend Richard E. Pates, D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
Chair, Clergy Review Board

March 19, 2002

Clergy Review Board
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Recommendation

The Clergy Review Board reviewed the case of **Father Robert Clark**, a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm, presently assigned to the Church of Saint Agnes in Saint Paul.

The Board received both written and oral reports in great detail from Father Kevin McDonough as well as copies of correspondence from Archbishop Flynn, Bishop Lucker and Eugene Burke, who was the Coordinator of Staff and Chancellor of the Diocese of New Ulm.

After a thorough review of the file and considerable discussion of the matter, the Clergy Review Board **unanimously recommends** that Father Clark's assignment be terminated immediately and that no further assignment to active ministry be given.

Father Clark's future is to be determined by the Diocese of New Ulm because of Father's canonical relationship with that ecclesial jurisdiction. Should the Diocese of New Ulm consider an assignment, we urge that such an assignment be undertaken only after a thorough review of Father Clark's personnel file, follow-up background checks, and the strictest of limitations of his ministry as appropriate under the circumstances.

While the Clergy Review Board is sympathetic to the fact that the Bishop of New Ulm is relatively new, it is confident that if he would so elect, that a Board, if it should not already exist, similar in composition to the Clergy Review Board of this archdiocese could assist the bishop in making a judgment in this matter that would best serve the interests of all concerned.



Most Reverend Richard E. Pates, D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
Chair, Clergy Review Board

March 19, 2002

March 21, 2002

Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt
Diocese of New Ulm
1400 6th Street, North
New Ulm, MN 56073-2099

Dear Bishop Nienstedt,

Archbishop Flynn requested me to forward a copy of the letter which he recently sent to Father Clark along with a copy of the recommendation of the Clergy Review Board of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

Father Clark's case was brought before the Board for review. The Board consists of another priest, a permanent deacon who had also been a chief of police, an African-American woman whose [REDACTED] a lawyer, a psychiatrist, the chair of the School of Social Work at the University of Saint Thomas, and a lay woman who is a mother. The Archbishop felt it might be helpful for you to review the Board's recommendation.

With best wishes for a blessed Easter, and with kindest personal regards, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Richard E. Pates, D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

cc: Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn

5 April 2002

Memo To: Father Doug Grams

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Complaint from a Young Woman Against Father Robert Clark

Doug, I am enclosing the only note I can find in our file concerning the complaint you called about. I am embarrassed to say that I cannot find my working documents on that matter. I recall having some other notes, and I imagine that I will come across them soon. Meanwhile, permit me to offer this reconstruction from memory. It is only a reconstruction (except for what appears in my calendar), and so I may get some of the information wrong:

1. I received a phone call from [REDACTED] in late [REDACTED]. She described briefly that she was concerned about Father Clark. We then had a meeting at the Archdiocese offices on Monday, April 2. She was accompanied by her therapist and by a friend/advocate. My records show that her phone number was [REDACTED].
2. In that meeting she described sexual encounters that she claimed occurred when she was a [REDACTED] about [REDACTED] years of age. She is now about [REDACTED]. She described Clark as fondling her breasts, touching her genitals, and rubbing his erect penis against her body through his clothing. I believe that she described two such encounters. She also described a confusing series of interactions with him, in which he alternately was affectionate and nice to her, on the one hand, and then cold and dismissive to her, on the other. She also told me that she was sexually abused by her physician from the time she was [REDACTED] until she was about [REDACTED]. I believe (my recollection is vague on this) that she told me that she had discussed this with Father Clark in the sacrament of penance. She told me that she either had already initiated an [REDACTED] complaint against the [REDACTED] or was about to do so.
3. I found her to be sincere in her telling of the stories. It seemed clear to me that she believed what she was telling me. Nevertheless, I was skeptical because I had a recollection of Father Clark having had one or more adult homosexual encounters. I promised her that we would take the complaint seriously. I said that we would distance him from the school at Saint Agnes, if he was involved in it. I told her that it was likely that we would ask him to return to his diocese. I asked her permission to use her name in confronting him. She told me that she was reluctant to let me do so. We scheduled a phone call again later in the week.

4. I consulted Archbishop Flynn later that day or on the following day. He told me that he was seeing the pastor of Saint Agnes that week, who wanted to propose Clark as headmaster of the school. The Archbishop already had serious doubts about his suitability, but said that the information from [REDACTED] was obviously enough to convince him to refuse the appointment to the school. He told me to go ahead with a confrontation.
5. I called [REDACTED] again on Thursday, April 5. She was still reluctant to permit me to use her name in confronting Clark. By the way, she never did give me permission to use her name, and my ability to confront Clark was somewhat limited by that non-disclosure.
6. I called Father Clark that day or the day after and scheduled to meet with him on Tuesday, April 10. We met on that Tuesday of Holy Week. I described the information I had received, although omitting details that would identify [REDACTED]. Interestingly, he visibly relaxed as I told the story, and responded almost immediately that the story could not be true, since he was clear – and had been for years – that his sexual attraction was only to men. He offered to have his therapist testify to that point to me. I cautioned him to stay away from the school at Saint Agnes until the matter was cleared up.
7. We scheduled a follow up meeting, which took place on Monday, April 16. He brought a letter from his therapist, indicating that she did not believe that the accusation was consistent with anything she knew about Father Clark. I am embarrassed to say that the letter from his therapist is one of the documents I cannot find.
8. Father Clark also told me that he had thought through his experience in [REDACTED] and that he had called a friend who was on the school staff there with Father Clark. The friend had immediately said to him: "That must be [REDACTED]. She told Clark that she had run into [REDACTED] in a store about two years before and that [REDACTED] had told her what she considered a wild tale about being abused by her doctor. Clark gave me the former colleague's name and the name of the doctor.
9. I called the former colleague within a few days. Again, my lack of notes prevents me from providing you with other information about her. She repeated to me the story that Father Clark had told me. She added several observations. She had known Clark for years, stayed in regular touch with him, and had found him always clear and honest about his homosexuality. She also had observed [REDACTED] as a [REDACTED] and saw her as isolated and often disorganized in her thinking. She thought it likely that [REDACTED] was in the early stages of a thought disorder already while in [REDACTED].

10. I reached the physician after several days of calling back and forth. I believe we ultimately scheduled a phone call, although my calendar does not indicate that we did. My recollection is that he and Father Clark had spoken before I spoke with him. I explained the purpose of my call. He told me that he was not free to discuss any of his patients without a release. He told me, however, that he had no ethics complaint and no lawsuit filed against him for any such violations.
11. I called the professional responsibility office that investigates physicians. The person I spoke with there would only confirm that there had been no finding against the physician. She told me that she could give me no further information, including whether a complaint had been filed against a physician and was in process.
12. I met again with Father Clark and told him that I thought the investigation had come to an end. I asked him to stay out of the teaching functions of the school. I told him that I would recommend that we consider the complaint against him to be a closed matter unless the complainant were to come forward with new information or corroboration. The memo that you see attached was generated some time thereafter.
13. I called [REDACTED] and we made contact after several attempts. I told her that Father Clark would not be involved in the school at Saint Agnes. She asked no other questions and seemed disinterested in pursuing the matter further.

Father Grams, that is the information that I can reconstruct from my calendar and from memory. I will continue to look for my notes and other materials. I apologize for the incompleteness of the record. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions.

5 April 2002

Memo To: Father Doug Grams

From: Father Kevin McDonough

Re: Complaint from a Young Woman Against Father Robert Clark

Doug, I am enclosing the only note I can find in our file concerning the complaint you called about. I am embarrassed to say that I cannot find my working documents on that matter. I recall having some other notes, and I imagine that I will come across them soon. Meanwhile, permit me to offer this reconstruction from memory. It is only a reconstruction (except for what appears in my calendar), and so I may get some of the information wrong:

1. I received a phone call from [REDACTED] in late [REDACTED]. She described briefly that she was concerned about Father Clark. We then had a meeting at the Archdiocese offices on Monday, April 2. She was accompanied by her therapist and by a friend/advocate. My records show that her phone number was [REDACTED].
2. In that meeting she described sexual encounters that she claimed occurred when she was a [REDACTED] about [REDACTED] years of age. She is now about [REDACTED]. She described Clark as fondling her breasts, touching her genitals, and rubbing his erect penis against her body through his clothing. I believe that she described two such encounters. She also described a confusing series of interactions with him, in which he alternately was affectionate and nice to her, on the one hand, and then cold and dismissive to her, on the other. She also told me that she was sexually abused by her physician from the time she was [REDACTED] until she was about [REDACTED]. I believe (my recollection is vague on this) that she told me that she had discussed this with Father Clark in the sacrament of penance. She told me that she either had already initiated an ethics complaint against the physician or was about to do so.
3. I found her to be sincere in her telling of the stories. It seemed clear to me that she believed what she was telling me. Nevertheless, I was skeptical because I had a recollection of Father Clark having had one or more adult homosexual encounters. I promised her that we would take the complaint seriously. I said that we would distance him from the school at Saint Agnes, if he was involved in it. I told her that it was likely that we would ask him to return to his diocese. I asked her permission to use her name in confronting him. She told me that she was reluctant to let me do so. We scheduled a phone call again later in the week.

4. I consulted Archbishop Flynn later that day or on the following day. He told me that he was seeing the pastor of Saint Agnes that week, who wanted to propose Clark as headmaster of the school. The Archbishop already had serious doubts about his suitability, but said that the information from [REDACTED] was obviously enough to convince him to refuse the appointment to the school. He told me to go ahead with a confrontation.
5. I called [REDACTED] again on Thursday, April 5. She was still reluctant to permit me to use her name in confronting Clark. By the way, she never did give me permission to use her name, and my ability to confront Clark was somewhat limited by that non-disclosure.
6. I called Father Clark that day or the day after and scheduled to meet with him on Tuesday, April 10. We met on that Tuesday of Holy Week. I described the information I had received, although omitting details that would identify [REDACTED]. Interestingly, he visibly relaxed as I told the story, and responded almost immediately that the story could not be true, since he was clear – and had been for years – that his sexual attraction was only to men. He offered to have his therapist testify to that point to me. I cautioned him to stay away from the school at Saint Agnes until the matter was cleared up.
7. We scheduled a follow up meeting, which took place on Monday, April 16. He brought a letter from his therapist, indicating that she did not believe that the accusation was consistent with anything she knew about Father Clark. I am embarrassed to say that the letter from his therapist is one of the documents I cannot find.
8. Father Clark also told me that he had thought through his experience in [REDACTED] and that he had called a friend who was on the school staff there with Father Clark. The friend had immediately said to him: "That must be [REDACTED]. She told Clark that she had run into [REDACTED] in a store about two years before and that [REDACTED] had told her what she considered a wild tale about being abused by her doctor. Clark gave me the former colleague's name and the name of the doctor.
9. I called the former colleague within a few days. Again, my lack of notes prevents me from providing you with other information about her. She repeated to me the story that Father Clark had told me. She added several observations. She had known Clark for years, stayed in regular touch with him, and had found him always clear and honest about his homosexuality. She also had observed [REDACTED] as a student and saw her as isolated and often disorganized in her thinking. She thought it likely that [REDACTED] was in the early stages of a thought disorder already while in [REDACTED].

10. I reached the physician after several days of calling back and forth. I believe we ultimately scheduled a phone call, although my calendar does not indicate that we did. My recollection is that he and Father Clark had spoken before I spoke with him. I explained the purpose of my call. He told me that he was not free to discuss any of his patients without a release. He told me, however, that he had no ethics complaint and no lawsuit filed against him for any such violations.
11. I called the professional responsibility office that investigates physicians. The person I spoke with there would only confirm that there had been no finding against the physician. She told me that she could give me no further information, including whether a complaint had been filed against a physician and was in process.
12. I met again with Father Clark and told him that I thought the investigation had come to an end. I asked him to stay out of the teaching functions of the school. I told him that I would recommend that we consider the complaint against him to be a closed matter unless the complainant were to come forward with new information or corroboration. The memo that you see attached was generated some time thereafter.
13. I called [REDACTED] and we made contact after several attempts. I told her that Father Clark would not be involved in the school at Saint Agnes. She asked no other questions and seemed disinterested in pursuing the matter further.

Father Grams, that is the information that I can reconstruct from my calendar and from memory. I will continue to look for my notes and other materials. I apologize for the incompleteness of the record. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions.

Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102-2197
651-291-4434
FAX: 651-290-1629

The Chancery

FAX TO: Fr. Doug Grams

DATE: 4/16/02

FAX #: 507.354.8414

Sent
4/16

FROM: FR. KEVIN M. McDONOUGH

MESSAGE: _____

NOTICE: The information contained in this facsimile message is **PRIVILEGED and CONFIDENTIAL**. It is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient or the employee or agent responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you are strictly prohibited from disseminating, distributing, or copying the information contained in this facsimile message. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by telephone and return the original message to us at the above address.

NUMBER OF PAGES: 4
(including cover page)

TRANSMITTED BY: Judy Delaney PHONE: 651.291.4434

PLEASE CALL IF THERE ARE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSMISSION.

Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102-2197
651-291-4434
FAX: 651-290-1629

The Chancery

FAX TO: Fr. Doug Grams

DATE: 4/16/02

FAX #: 507.354.8414

Sent
4/16

FROM: FR. KEVIN M. McDONOUGH

MESSAGE: _____

NOTICE: The information contained in this facsimile message is **PRIVILEGED and CONFIDENTIAL**. It is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient or the employee or agent responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you are strictly prohibited from disseminating, distributing, or copying the information contained in this facsimile message. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by telephone and return the original message to us at the above address.

NUMBER OF PAGES: 4
(including cover page)

TRANSMITTED BY: Judy Delaney PHONE: 651.291.4434

PLEASE CALL IF THERE ARE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSMISSION.

Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

June 7, 2002

The Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

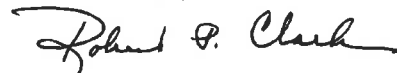
Your Excellency,

At your behest the Clergy Review Board of the Archdiocese of St. Paul issued a document on March 19, 2002 that bears the signature of Bishop Richard E. Pates. This document unanimously recommended my immediate termination as an associate at the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul, Minnesota; that no further assignment be given, and should a future assignment be given that "the strictest of limitations of his ministry as appropriate under the circumstances" be in effect.

Since the document and its numerous unexplained statements have a direct effect on my civil and canonical rights, I am requesting that the specific reasons and "circumstances" for the board's decision be detailed to me in writing.

The entire process has been one that has caused me great pain and trauma.

Sincerely yours,



Reverend Robert P. Clark

cc: Jerry A. Burg, Esq.
Rev. Ronald Bowers, canonical advocate

INTEROFFICE MEMO from
ARCHBISHOP HARRY FLYNN

TO:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abp. Roach | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. La Valla |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bp. Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Laird |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bp. Pates | <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Lucid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Kevin McDonough | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Mondragon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Baer | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Mullin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Baker | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Nickelson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Brennan | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. O'Connell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Burke | <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Piche |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bro. Champine | <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Rask |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Cherek | <input type="checkbox"/> Deacon Riordan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Dawson | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Selleck |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Dease | <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Snyder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Domeier | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Soderlund |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Donnelly | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Vanden Plas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Errigo | <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Wajda |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Fallon | <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Ward/Ms. Giefer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deacon Friesen | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Willenbring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Ganley | <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Willerscheidt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Herrera | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Willis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Hennen | <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Wilson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Houge | <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Wojda (Bio-medical) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Howell | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Zyskowski |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fr. Jaroszeski | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Klima | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Krietemeyer | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> action | <input type="checkbox"/> recommendation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> see me | <input type="checkbox"/> prepare draft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> call me | <input type="checkbox"/> note & return |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prepare reply | <input type="checkbox"/> read & file |
| <i>either</i> <input type="checkbox"/> your signature | <input type="checkbox"/> information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> my signature | <input type="checkbox"/> as requested |
| <input type="checkbox"/> comment | <input type="checkbox"/> per conversation |

REMARKS:

DATE: 6-9-02

14 8:11

June 19, 2002

Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411-2341

Dear Father Clark,

I wish to acknowledge and respond to your letter of June 7, 2002.

Shortly after the first of the year, in light of the concerns that originated from the experience of the Archdiocese of Boston, I asked the Clergy Review Board to systematically review the files of all priests either incardinated or otherwise serving in the Archdiocese in which there were issues of sexual misconduct. It is my understanding that this had not been done with your file when you first came to the Archdiocese.

After a careful review of the documentation on file and consultation with the administration of the Archdiocese, the Clergy Review Board offered its recommendation. Since you are incardinated in the Diocese of New Ulm, it was my determination to then refer you to its bishop for further consideration.

Naturally, I regret the pain this has caused you, a reality that is experienced by so many as we try to address this scandal. I do assure you of my prayers with the hope that God will guide you in these troubling times.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

cc: Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt

June 19, 2002

Reverend Robert P. Clark
2131 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411-2341

Dear Father Clark,

I wish to acknowledge and respond to your letter of June 7, 2002.

Shortly after the first of the year, in light of the concerns that originated from the experience of the Archdiocese of Boston, I asked the Clergy Review Board to systematically review the files of all priests either incardinated or otherwise serving in the Archdiocese in which there were issues of sexual misconduct. It is my understanding that this had not been done with your file when you first came to the Archdiocese.

After a careful review of the documentation on file and consultation with the administration of the Archdiocese, the Clergy Review Board offered its recommendation. Since you are incardinated in the Diocese of New Ulm, it was my determination to then refer you to its bishop for further consideration.

Naturally, I regret the pain this has caused you, a reality that is experienced by so many as we try to address this scandal. I do assure you of my prayers with the hope that God will guide you in these troubling times.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

cc: Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt

MEMO

TO: Archbishop's Council
FROM: Fr. Kevin McDonough
DATE: March 12, 2004
Re: Forthcoming lawsuit concerning Fr. Robert Clark

Robert Clark is a now-resigned priest of the Diocese of New Ulm. For a period in the late 1990s and the early part of this decade, he worked in the Archdiocese at Saint Agnes.

I heard from Father Douglas Grams, the Vicar General in New Ulm, that they have been notified that they will be served with a lawsuit concerning Father Clark. It concerns misconduct that is alleged to have taken place before Father Clark ever came to the Twin Cities, so we are unlikely to be named in the suit. Nevertheless, if there is publicity, it is likely to include Saint Agnes.

You may recall that I investigated this matter two or three years ago. Frankly, it did not seem to be very substantial at the time. Nevertheless, people have the right to bring lawsuits if they want to.

I will keep you informed if I learn anymore.

FILE COPY

MEMO

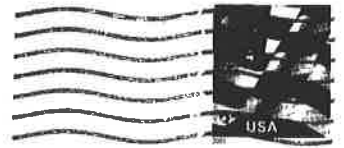
TO: Archbishop's Council
FROM: Fr. Kevin McDonough
DATE: March 12, 2004
Re: Forthcoming lawsuit concerning Fr. Robert Clark

Robert Clark is a now-resigned priest of the Diocese of New Ulm. For a period in the late 1990s and the early part of this decade, he worked in the Archdiocese at Saint Agnes.

I heard from Father Douglas Grams, the Vicar General in New Ulm, that they have been notified that they will be served with a lawsuit concerning Father Clark. It concerns misconduct that is alleged to have taken place before Father Clark ever came to the Twin Cities, so we are unlikely to be named in the suit. Nevertheless, if there is publicity, it is likely to include Saint Agnes.

You may recall that I investigated this matter two or three years ago. Frankly, it did not seem to be very substantial at the time. Nevertheless, people have the right to bring lawsuits if they want to.

I will keep you informed if I learn anymore.



Vicar General
Archdiocese of St Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Ave
St Paul, MN 55102

CONFIDENTIAL-Filed Under Seal

55102+2121 35



ARCH-043471

File, please

May 15, 2004

Vicar General
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Vicar General,

Thank you for your service to our Archdiocese and to the entire Catholic church. As a lay Catholic, I am always impressed on how well Priests and others in authority in the church, carry out your challenging jobs. I am gratefully for your service.

I am an active Catholic in 'good standing' and am a member in one of the western suburban parishes.

I have recently read the 'Trembling to Reckoning' report of perpetrators of Priest sexual abuse. It reminded me of a previously nagging question that I have never received an answer for. It saddens me greatly not only that these allegations occurred, but that the church continues to seem to be less than forth-coming with specific information.

I do not want to belabor my Parish office or my Parish Priest about this information, so I decided to contact you. I previously requested the following information from Mrs. Phyllis Willerscheidt, and she recommended that I contact you. I would like to know the status of the following two priests.

Fr. Robert P. Clark, who originally was servicing various parishes in the New Ulm diocese and then was moved to the St. Paul Minneapolis diocese around 1998 or so.

Fr. [redacted], or possibly the last name of [redacted] or [redacted] who served at Our Lady of the Lake in Mound for six or nine months in 2002 or 2001 or in that vicinity. He left Mound very quickly when the abuse scandal news broke in the Boston area. He was around 60ish and had come from a Wisconsin diocese. He was residing at the rectory in Mound while he was

receiving treatment for some medical condition which was unavailable in Central Wisconsin.

Were any claims made against either of these two priests? Are either of them in active Priest assignments today anywhere in the country?

As a mother, a catechist, and a Catholic interested in the future good of our church, I need to know the status of these two priests to satisfy my own peace of mind.

I truly do appreciate your assistance in this matter. God bless you in all of your work. Thank you in advance, for your help.

Sincerely,

FILE COPY

June 1, 2004

Ms.

Dear Ms.

I received your letter of May 15. I am sorry for some delay in responding to you, but I have been struggling to keep up with my correspondence recently. Thank you for your patience.

I can provide only limited responses to your questions, since I have not had extensive involvement with either of the priests about whom you wrote. Permit me to summarize what I know.

I know the situation of Robert Clark better. Like you, I cannot recall the name of the priest from La Crosse Diocese but I believe I know to whom you are referring.

Their situations are very similar. Both of them were priests of other dioceses (Clark of New Ulm and the other fellow from La Crosse). Both had been accused of anonymous sexual misconduct. That is, to my understanding they were accused of sexual contact with anonymous adults not under their pastoral care. As a result, what they were accused of would certainly be immoral for any Christian and a violation of celibacy for a priest. In neither case, as I understand it, would their behavior have been a violation of civil law. If I am wrong in this final point, the violation would probably have been of a misdemeanor status.

Both of these priests served briefly here in the Twin Cities, and we have received no complaints that either of them committed misconduct while present here. Both men subsequently returned to their home dioceses.

My understanding is that Robert Clark has subsequently left the active priestly ministry. I do not have any information on the other fellow.

I hope that this is helpful to you. If you need further information about either of them, I suggest that you contact the diocese to which they belong. If, however, you have reason to think they committed misconduct while here, I very much want to know about that. Please feel free to contact me.

On a personal note, I wanted to inquire if you would have known a friend of mine, Mrs. . Mrs. was a very active member of Saint Leonard of Port Maurice in South Minneapolis, where I worked as a seminarian. She was very gracious to me, and also very much a part of the parish's life. I still think of her frequently when I see fresh garden flowers placed on an altar. That was one of her regular gifts to Saint Leonard's.

I hope that this information has been helpful. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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

McGrath, Dennis

From: Mary Charles Mayer [mcharlesmayer@dnu.org]
Sent: Friday, December 10, 2004 4:43 PM
To: McGrath, Dennis
Subject: heads up

File

Hi Dennis,

I just got word that we have a civil sexual misconduct case pending against Robert Clark which may be going to a criminal status. Please don't do anything with this information regarding the media but you can talk to Bill O'Fallan. We are waiting to see where things are going. Clark has a record of misconduct with adult males and his faculties were removed. Our lawyer suggested this information about his faculties be taken out of the press release but this release will have to be reworked if it goes the route of a criminal case. The new case is regarding a woman claiming she was abused when she was [REDACTED] I just wanted you to know what was happening about Clark.

If you should need to contact me I won't be back in the office until Tuesday but you can call me at home if necessary at (507) 847 -5498 or my cell is (507) 840-1500.

Have a good weekend.

Sister Mary Charles, RSM

NEWS

Contact: Sr. Mary Charles Mayer, RSM
Office of Communications
(507) 359-2966; FAX (507) 354-3667

NOTICE TO AREA MEDIA
For Immediate Release
Release #???
?????, ??, 20??

Statement Concerning Robert P. Clark, Jr.

New Ulm, MN - The Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, MN has been named in a lawsuit against Robert P. Clark, Jr., an inactive priest of the New Ulm diocese, alleging sexual misconduct with a female minor while Clark was Associate Pastor at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Winsted, MN (1984-1989). The diocese was first made aware of this allegation in March of 2001.

Clark was ordained for the Diocese of New Ulm on February 18, 1984. His assignments in the diocese include: Associate Pastor, Church of the Holy Redeemer, Marshall, March 1, 1984; Associate Pastor, Church of the Holy Trinity, Winsted, June 13, 1984; Associate Pastor, Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm, June 13, 1989; Pastor, Church of St. Anthony, Watkins, August 22, 1990; Sacramental Minister, Church of Our Lady, Manannah in addition to his assignment in Watkins, December 1, 1992; Parochial Administrator, Church of Our Lady, Manannah, May 1, 1993; Pastor, Church of St. Patrick, Kandiyohi, and Pastor, Church of St. Thomas More, Lake Lillian, August 8, 1996. Clark also served in the Archdiocese from 1998-2002 at the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul.

The Diocese of New Ulm has been diligent in its efforts to establish a "safe environment" program which educates clergy, teachers, parents and students, and helps them identify and prevent sexual misconduct. We are committed to offer help and healing to anyone who has been a victim of sexual misconduct and to prevent this terrible wrongdoing in the diocese.

Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse, exploitation, or harassment by a priest, including Robert P. Clark, Jr., a deacon, or pastoral administrator of the Diocese of New Ulm is asked to report such misconduct to the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop's Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct, 1400 Sixth Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; phone: (507) 359-2966.

##

NEWS

Contact: Sr. Mary Charles Mayer, RSM
Office of Communications
(507) 359-2966; FAX (507) 354-3667

NOTICE TO AREA MEDIA
For Immediate Release
Release #???
????, ??, 20??

Statement Concerning Robert P. Clark, Jr.

New Ulm, MN - The Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, MN has been named in a lawsuit against Robert P. Clark, Jr., a priest of the New Ulm diocese, alleging sexual misconduct with a female minor while Clark was Associate Pastor at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Winsted, MN (1984-1989).

Clark was ordained for the Diocese of New Ulm on February 18, 1984. His assignments in the diocese include: Associate Pastor, Church of the Holy Redeemer, Marshall, March 1, 1984; Associate Pastor, Church of the Holy Trinity, Winsted, June 13, 1984; Associate Pastor, Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm, June 13, 1989; Pastor, Church of St. Anthony, Watkins, August 22, 1990; Sacramental Minister, Church of Our Lady, Manannah in addition to his assignment in Watkins, December 1, 1992; Parochial Administrator, Church of Our Lady, Manannah, May 1, 1993; Pastor, Church of St. Patrick, Kandiyohi, and Pastor, Church of St. Thomas More, Lake Lillian, August 8, 1996. Clark also served in the Archdiocese from 1998-2002 at the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul. In March of 2002, Clark was placed on administrative leave.

In response to this allegation, the Most Rev. John C. Nienstedt, bishop of the Diocese of New Ulm, emphasized that "While even one act of clerical sexual abuse is one too many, since 1992 this diocese has

- MORE -

taken steps to reach out to victims, to get help for perpetrators, to remove offenders from ministry and to set up a review board of lay representatives to assure greater transparency in dealing with this issue. I deeply regret the long-lasting and devastating effects of sexual misconduct on the part of clergy. Such misconduct requires positive action and the Diocese of New Ulm has been strengthening our systems and procedures in order to address this grave issue.”

The Diocese of New Ulm has been diligent in its efforts to establish a “safe environment” program which educates clergy, teachers, parents and students, and helps them identify and prevent sexual misconduct. We are committed to offer help and healing to anyone who has been a victim of sexual misconduct and to prevent this terrible wrongdoing in the diocese.

Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse, exploitation, or harassment by a priest, deacon, pastor or pastoral administrator of the Diocese of New Ulm is asked to report such misconduct to the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop’s Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct, 1400 Sixth Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; phone: (507) 359-2966.

##

Sexual abuse
lawsuit (age unknown)
McD thinks adult non-porn
sex.) while at New
Ulm before
at ArchyPM

Renew
Main

File @

Briggs

Morgan