

## The Priory

NASSAU - BAHAMAS

Nov. 13, 1933

*Fr. of All Saints O.B.*

Dear Father Abbot:

Well, your last letter to me was quite a disappointment, to say the least. However I decided to say no more about it for the present only hoping sincerely that the Missions will not be too much harmed by her return. More about this later, since this letter will be unpleasant enough regarding another person, before I finish. I have tried to put off writing this just as long as I could, but things have gotten to be just a little too ~~much~~ busy. The "casus belli" is Brother ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ I shall give you the story as I see it. Kindly bear with me. I dislike very much to take up your good time; much more so to unload any more grief and trouble than you now have by virtue of your office. Yet, I feel deeply you should be told of these things again, ~~and~~ <sup>since</sup> no one else here will take action.

Shortly after coming here a year ago, I noticed the trouble that Monsignor was having with Brother ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ I thought perhaps that he was "picked on". (He has a way of putting our people down here under that impression, and is the recipient of much sympathy tangible and otherwise in return.) You know, I have never put on any airs before inferiors. (At least I did not think so) I treated him as one of the family, as a fellow religious. Feeling some of his weaknesses, I even tried to be more than considerate when he answered me surly before people or altar boys. Monsignor himself told me last winter he wished he could get rid of him, and told me that he might not be quite right in the upper story. I did not take that seriously. That statement about anyone I have always tried to verify myself.

Well, I made a mistake again of being too kind. He has tried to "ride all over me." I felt it my duty to call his attention to smaller details in the church; as a rule I met with surliness and curses and mumbling under his breath. About a month ago I threatened to give him one in the jaw if nothing else would help, and especially if I would hear any more of his talking about and defaming the Fathers here. (I suppose he is not even conscious of doing that.) Since Monsignor has been gone, he has been quite on his "high horse", and acting as though he were boss, and I would not even be able to make a request or suggestion. Father Bonaventure communicated to me suspicions of a more serious nature about a month ago, and hinted to me that it was my duty to watch him. That was indiscretion cum puellis et feminis. I told him that I could not see where I had any responsibility for him; and I positively refused to play the detective; that grates on me and I have not the time. In fact up to a month ago I concerned myself not at all about things in the yard or the church; only, ~~the~~ <sup>they</sup> making suggestions in the interests of better order and economy. ~~I did not take the suspicions seriously about his hanging around with the women; I do not even do so now even though I have evidence I could construe against him. I don't think that there is anything serious or any malice on his part in his rebus.~~ I wish to be fair and just. But here are a few things that you should know, since Monsignor seemed unwilling to make any complaint, fearing possibly that

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to do so might cast a shadow on his record, I don't know. Excuse me for being uncharitable or cynical. I think he wanted one of us to make complaint. Father Bonaventure does not care to make complaint, and has given me to understand indirectly that he expects me to write you. So I suppose it's a case of "passing the buck". Well, I'll ride the buck and take also the odium of this onto me.

That brother has had very little good to say about any of the men that have been here; he is a born scandal-monger. I wonder, (and the other Fathers; also the Monsignor concur with me in this) what business he has to hang around the street gate by church by the hour and gossip with every odd woman that comes along, instead of minding his business. I fear that much harm has been done the cause of the Missions by his gossiping. Msgr., Fr. Bonaventure, and the others are convinced of this. I have a suspicion he is interfering with my influence in the parish; being malicious and vindictive as he is. Yet thus far, this is merely a suspicion, well rather something founded on incomplete evidence. He is a down right sneak; that we have found out more than once. He has done very little of real work since the Superior is gone; fooling around the yard all day just as and when he pleased. When one asks him to do a little job he seems insulted. When he gets angry at a person he will spill anything, ~~especially~~; especially when pumped by someone. This morning I heard him take me through with ~~and~~ some of the things said by him were not any too nice for lay ears. The consensus here is that he has done much harm by his uncontrolled tongue; I fear he will do much more. He seems just to be aching to get something on any of the Fathers and only too ready to take sides with any lying persons down here. He has flagrantly disobeyed my requests that I simply had to make, and then says that he heard no request made. *He displays very little respect for the priesthood.*

Now, that man is as religious as well as we are. Is he not bound to weekly confession just the same as we are? Is he not bound to his daily meditation and rosary and spiritual reading and thanksgiving the same as we are? What gives him the privilege to fritter away the entire day doing just what he pleases? And how about poverty? I do not wish to be harsh. Often he has boasted about receiving five dollars, ten dollars etc. from people. We deny ourselves practically every drop of beer or any other delicacy in the interests of economy and health. Where is he any better? As Father Bonaventure told me, the brother who will not take care of his spiritual exercises daily will slip. I am also charitably concerned about that soul's welfare. He seems to have a mighty peculiar conscience. You as his Abbot should know these things, I believe.

His tactics with our wash has made me lean toward the opinion that "not all is well in the upper" story. Father Arnold has very little left in the way of white suits. Some of them at least have since been marked with the brothers insignia. I did not take Father Arnold's suspicion seriously, until I found some of my odd pieces, one with my mark crossed out and the other with the mark cut out it seems, and his own substituted. I am keeping the two pieces for evidence. Too trivial to mention this perhaps, but a ten twelve dollar suit or two or three disappearing would make even patient Father Arnold rise up.

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Hence, upon consultation with Fr. Bonaventure I took the Sunday collections out of his hands. I felt it my duty to safeguard that as much as I could. Please pardon me for any false suspicions. This morning he called me a liar in the sacristy ending with: "Jah, Jah, Ich ab schon genug gehört!" Please make all due allowances if one of these days I lose patience and take the law into my own hands. Yet, what to do with a man with a warped conscience, ignorant as can be, and downright malicious?

If he is ever take back to St. John's the reputation of the Missions and any of the Fathers that have been down here is not going to mean much. He may find plenty of willing listeners with his convincing way of gossiping half truths. He is a dangerous man, to say the least. By the way, since is back he has made a coalition with her, and become friendly enemies. I suppose.

Now that I have written all this, it seems too puerile to send to you. No one else will make the complaint. Someone must do it. Monsignor will not, even when he comes back; he will have too many other things to attend to. Ergo, I am the Lastesel. The Missions are suffering harm. You must think me quite a crank by now, and perhaps worse. This letter may do nothing toward removing the evil; I at least have done my part.

I was very deeply pleased to hear of your visit to my dear ones at Waite Park. So were they. They are certainly courageous in the face of conditions, and I feel proud of them. I would like to write more to offset somewhat the "stuff" above, but you may realize to some extent the press of work down here. It is increasing weekly, and I can only trust in God. In your mementos for the Missions, kindly remember the cause of Catholic Literature and Catholic Action in all its phases down here. What can be done will have to be seen. Fathers Arnold and Ambrose are working like good fellows; Father Quentin is becoming somewhat used to things; and I have taken to riding a bicycle again.

My fervent prayers for the spiritual and temporal welfare of St. John's and its family. What a power can be ours at St. John's if we only make use of the means Providence gives us! Please pardon the haste.

Sincerely in St. Benedict,

*Fr. Edmund OSB*

December 2, 1933.

Rev. Othmar Hohmann, C.S.B.,  
Nassau, Bahama Islands.

Dear Father Othmar:

I am sorry my letter of October 6 was quite a disappointment to you. As it was written in an entirely Christian spirit and exhorted you to exercise a Christ-like gentleness, humility and patience, I can not but grieve that you were disappointed by it. And I am wondering what development you will take. You know, my dear Father, we can not resist the inspiration of Christ's principles without doing injury to our soul. When we run the risk of gradually losing our hold on them and getting further from Him in our lives. You indicate that you will write me again on this matter and meanwhile hope that the Mission will not take too much harm from Miss        return. Well, if you can keep your own self and your antipathy to Miss       out of the question, I am sure the Bishop will take action to remove her, if you can convince him that the work of the Mission is suffering from her presence. If his judgment differs from yours, the proper thing is to submit yours to his, as he is the superior and has the responsibility, and you have done all that is required of you, when you have clearly laid the matter before him. Don't trust your own judgment too much.

I am afraid this is a fault of yours--trusting your own judgment too much. That is the impression I got from your frequent reference to your experience; that is the impression also others got. Of course, that is a rather common thing with men. But the older we grow, the more we learn that not all wisdom is with us, and that we have many times been foolish when we thought we were wise.

Now, as to the burden of your letter of Nov. 25. After having written it, you thought it too quarrelsome, but decided to send it on since you felt nobody else would bring the matter to my attention, and you would, therefore, have to be the "lastesel." You took a similar attitude in the matter of Miss       . Just analyse this attitude for yourself, Father Othmar, and seek its source. Don't you think that there is at bottom a sense of self-importance and superiority over others, and perhaps less patience than others have, who may not think a given matter worth-while bringing to the attention of the superior?

But really you have been mistaken in your judgment of your brethren in both cases. They spoke to me about the case of Miss       ,--all except, of course, Father Bonaventure. Father Arnold, though he has not written me about the Brother since my visit down there, did bring him to my attention. So, too, on several occasions Msgr. and Father Bonaventure both on the occasion of my visit and repeatedly since then. Well, why has nothing been done? But I gave instructions and authority to

Rev. Othmar Hohmann, O.S.B.

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proceed even unto sending him back here to the Abbey, whenever, in their judgment, it was expedient to do so. If they have not done so hitherto, it was, I presume, from a motive of charitable consideration for the Brother and the hope that he would improve. Possibly they were too charitable and indulgent. But is it not better they should be that than too harsh in their procedure. You will invoke the welfare of the mission. But, my dear Father, the older we grow, the more we understand that it is God that builds the house, that He suffers the tares to grow up with the wheat, that He prefers mercy to judgment, and blesses the work of them that do likewise.

However, do not misunderstand me. I am solicitous for the welfare of the Mission and do not want any scandal that can fairly be avoided. I am solicitous also for the spiritual welfare of the Brother. Even if only the latter is endangered by the Brother's refusing to abide by the injunctions which I suggested both to Mgr. and Fr. Bonaventura be laid upon him, I have directed that he be sent North, even though at this time it may prove dangerous to his health.

I can do no more from here; I must leave it to the judgment of Father Bonaventura and the Bishop, if Fr. Bonaventura does not act previous to the latter's return to Nassau, to take the action which seems proper to the circumstances. I would, however, ask you, and through you the other Fathers, to endeavor to do for the Brother's welfare whatever charity may inspire as possibly productive of good results.

Taking advantage of this opportunity to express the hope that you will enter deeply into the spirit of the holy season of Advent that your Christmas peace and happiness may be the more abundant, and assuring you of my affection and prayers, I am

Your devoted Abbot,

St. Joseph's Rectory,  
Shawdon, No. Dak.,  
Oct. 30, 1936

Rt. Rev. and dear Father Abbot:

Being here already a month, I suppose it is high time to let a sound out of me, - it seems I only came yesterday. I left on the next train after receiving your message. Now, I have not felt so satisfied, contented and happy in years. Of course, I know the adage about "new brooms sweeping clean," but I certainly want to thank you for sending me here, believe me! A pastor of whom I think a lot and in whom I repose much confidence, the open country in sight, fine diet, and just loads and loads of darling children. A chance to break up in German again, a fine little town, - "Herr was willet du mehr?" I've just had 4 weeks of fun in spite of a bilious attack (or what ever it was) and nervous shivers. But I'm surely getting off easy at that. A few months of this bracing air will do a lot, I hope so. I do want to do much work, parochial, reading, writing and a little study again. It makes me a little impatient at times to be so short of endurance at continued mental work but it's getting better already, I think. Fr. Marcelus & I spend a good part of the afternoon visiting the Jewish census and to get into so many really Catholic families again with loads of kiddies is really a treat. These ~~are~~ German Russians may have their faults & peculiarities like the rest of us but there is certainly a lot of the old-time deep faith. I have been certainly edified & thrilled (really) with the school and its 660 little bursts of energy. The morning Missa Penitential and especially the Sunday children's High Mass has

been a treat. Like a real pessimist I'm peering around the corner, wondering what's going to happen to me this next year. If you wish to train me for the Mission Band next year, I'd have to try not to become too much attached. The way these kiddies respond in instructions etc. would indicate that the Liturgical Movement and modern methods in catechesis have done much; anyhow, I'm having lots of fun and I am thankful everyday that God has given me a deep love for His own little ones; and these are very dear indeed.

Well, I suppose it's the glamor of contrast from the former field of labor. If any of us younger fellows start "kicking up", how about sending him to Andros or Long Island a while?

I have only one suit which I got at Ordination and it's getting to look a little worn. Would you kindly give the Brother Tailor permission to send me goods for a suit? I can have it made here quite cheaply. Also, I shall need a few books. At Ordination I asked you to keep in mind the money received for books, typewriters etc. when I would need them. At Nassau I "granged" on Fr. Arnold & Bonaventura, but I really could use the following which I have put into a slip in case you wish to hand it to Fr. Lebrun to order & have sent here. Since I can rent a typewriter cheaply here, I suppose it would be best to do so for this year.

My worthy carpenter has been on the water wagon nicely; if it lasts I'll be happier yet. I wish you continued God's blessing and comfort of soul in the arduous discouraging tasks that fall to you lot.

Fidally in St. Benedict,  
Fr. Ethel

Immaculate Conception Church

NEW MUNICH, MINN.

Feb. 23, 1950

Rt. Rev. dear Father Abbot:

I will have to go to Minneapolis a few times during the next two weeks or so, due to a very aggravated rectal and anal infection besides a flare-up of long standing haemorrhoids. Doctor Zachmann at Melrose urged this quite some time ago and referred me to Drs. Fansler and Anderson who seem both very fine men and know their specialty. I don't think it will require hospitalization beyond a little bed rest after treatment. I suppose it will be O.K. to go for these treatments. Willing or not, I must begin Lent with an extra penance. (The Philistine hordes of old must indeed have been in a bad way if they were thus stricken.)

I would like to put to you also the proposition of a new car. The present one is eleven years old and is beginning to cost money in upkeep. I think I could get a fairly good price for it. The fact that cars are rather slow to get now, and the possibility of another war or rigid defense program and restrictions on cars makes me think that it would be wise to get a new auto this Spring or early summer, while they can still be procured.

Father [redacted]'s brother was just in with the proposition of having Fr. [redacted] spend some time around here while he is convalescing. I told his brother [redacted] that I would be glad to help Father in his morning Mass, but since Father is a sick man, I could not assume responsibility for him for various reasons. In case anything would go wrong, I feel the whole relationship might be on my back. I have had no regular housekeeper since New Years. The fine little one I inherited from Father Hugo had to go home to take care of her mother. My mother has been here helping out for the past weeks but she is 76 and not in the best of health. She is glad to be here for the time being and I have two very fine women past middle age whom I think I can get (either one of them) I have not made any deal with either as yet. I could hardly ask her to take care of an invalid. Besides, I have started making an improvement that Father Hugo had contemplated; namely putting in a bath room for the housekeeper and guests, (combined.) The equipment is all here and it simply meant the enlarging and finishing of a former linen closet. This is able to give some work to unemployed carpenter during these lean months. This is satisfactory with the trustees. I don't know as yet whether it will amount to over \$200 or not.

Another matter that has been pending for some years: Getting a new gas range for the school kitchen. Price roughly \$400. An old wood range was past its usefulness and present equipment is inadequate for occasional socials and dinners, especially in view of the coming First Mass dinner. This also is O.K. with trustees. We have already raised the cash with entertainments.

Rather [redacted] might be much better satisfied to stay with his brother in town anyhow, since I have no time whatever these days to entertain him. I hope I am not uncharitable.

Respectfully,

*Fr. Anton*



SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY • COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE ABBOT

February 6, 1953

Reverend Othmar Hohmann, O.S.B.  
Immaculate Conception Parish  
New Munich, Minnesota

Dear Father Othmar,

First of all, I wish to thank you for the check of fifteen hundred dollars which you sent to the Abbey for the support of the community and its projects. May we use this money in a worthy manner so that we will not be charged with waste or neglect some day. The amount of money sent to the Abbey by the expositi is a very substantial part of what we have for the purpose of repair and expansion. I hope that the members of the community will always appreciate the sacrifices made by the Fathers in the parishes so that they have something to send to the Abbey. I wonder if I may call your attention to the number of Mass Intentions sent to others. If you feel that these places need them more so than the places to which we send the intentions, I have no objections to your continuing your present practice. St. John's has, for the past eight or more years, tried to keep the Benedictine Abbeys in other countries above water financially with its excess Mass Intentions. Often we fall short because we do not have enough on hand to send to those who ask.

The other matter I wanted to talk to you about is something I would rather not put on paper, but you do not put in an appearance here very often, and I have not been able to contact you for this purpose. At least four months ago on two different occasions I was told that I ought to advise you to be more circumspect in letting one certain woman come to the parish house as often as she did. Nothing more was said or implied although I tried to find out whether any suspicion was being attached to this statement. I was satisfied that this might easily be gossip and waited to see if the same rumor would reach me from any other quarter. It didn't, and I said nothing. I was asked since then if I had talked to you about it, and I said that I had not. I give it to you in the hope that it will not disturb you any more than it should. If there is one thing that I have learnt since being prior it is this: there are two sides to every story. The one who spoke to me was well meaning and sincere, and I have now fulfilled any duty I have towards him and you.

I commend you for being so willing to make the necessary repairs, even though you may not have been encouraged by everyone. Not much credit goes to the one who keeps things in repairs, but all the more will the credit come hereafter. God's dwelling is deserving of the best.

With a prayer that your apostolic zeal will be the "good zeal that leads to God and life everlasting", I remain

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

September 20, 1960

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Rt. Rev. Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B.,  
St. John's Abbey,  
Collegeville,  
Minnesota

Right Reverend and dear Father Abbot;

Father Othmar was here yesterday afternoon, he said, at your suggestion, and we discussed his situation for over an hour.

I told him that I would write you and that he should get in touch with you some time after you have received my letter so he could receive his instruction from you.

He wanted to remain in Detroit Lakes to try to down the talk by the manner in which he would conduct himself in the future. I did not agree to this because the talk and the lack of confidence in him it has led to among the parishioners has greatly reduced the effectiveness of his ministry. The agitation against him has been going on for six months and some responsible members of the parish are represented in it. This would indicate the opposition is quite general.

Consequently, we wish you would proceed with placing Father Othmar some place else and placing a new pastor in Detroit Lakes.

With kindest personal regards and assuring you of my prayers, I am,

Bishop of Crookston

L.C. js

Most Rev. dear Bishop:

Enclosed is a sort of "defense brief", which I wrote up last Fall, then kept putting off sending it, not wishing to bother you any more with the matter, and somehow hoping that Father Abbot would somewhat acquaint you with these various "sidelights" on the case. I wrote all the enclosed to him shortly after leaving Detroit Lakes. Hence I am confident that you will not see any necessity of sending the enclosed to him. I have been in and out of clinic and hospitals during the winter, and besides complete dental surgery, went through major surgery last month for gall bladder, gall stones and appendix. Since I was rather apprehensive that the surgeons might find malignancy or advanced liver damage, and that my days might be numbered, I felt that there would not be much point in sending the enclosed, if that had been the case. It seems however that the good Lord is giving me some good years yet to work and make up for the past, for which I am most thankful.

Trying to make a comeback from the shock and disgrace of last September has been an uphill fight, day by day. I think that the expedient I suggested to Father Abbot at that time was still the best,--namely to get right back to mission work, of which there is plenty up here. This call over here came as an answer to prayer it seems. I have tried to resign myself to the status of being treated like a vitandus and a lucifugus by my confreres and others. It was quite a letdown when the usual number of Christmas greetings and other correspondence went drastically down this winter; so it seems that "word really got around!"

I was going to destroy the enclosed and may be making a mistake by sending it on. I know it will not help the situation one bit, nor remedy a fait accompli. However, I have confidence that you will bear patiently and not hold it against me. I know that the statements I make about my former assistant may look like "hanging dirty lines out in public" but feel you will understand, and I felt that I had to get this off my chest. I suppose I could have found out a whole lot more about undercurrents at Detroit Lakes, but was too heart-sick last Fall to do more about the matter. I know the enclosed may look like a case of "loghorhea." If I find I am doing unjust harm to Fr. Malachy or anyone else mentioned, I shall be the first to want to apologize and make amends.

I sincerely trust I am not giving any impression of unthoughtfulness or disrespect to yourself. You were indeed put into a very painful and embarrassing impasse last Fall with the entire affair. I regret having caused so much trouble. During the past nine months there have been constant prayers and Masses offered up by myself and friends for any souls that may have been hurt, and for all those who may have had a part in hurting me and bringing discredit and disgrace to me and the greatest sorrow of my life. I think I am "over the hump" now, but shall hardly ever be the same again. I am trying to live one day at a time and to offer up the entire matter as a penance for past transgressions and omissions. I admitted to you last Fall that I "stuck my neck out," and acted with customary naive and imprudent trustfulness of everyone.

Fr. Abbot indicated to me last Fall that I should give up all hope of further working in the Crookston diocese, and so there is of course an added limitation in his pacing me further. The future lies in the hands of God. At 61 it is difficult to start from the bottom again and to be reduced in effect, more or less to the status of a vitandus or a lucifugus, and a suspected "mental case."

I do not expect any kind of answer to this. I appreciate your kindness and patience last Fall, and trust you will accord the same to the enclosed, and think kindly of me.

Respectfully,

Othmar L. Hohmann, O.S.B.

Nov. 15, 1960

Most Rev. dear Bishop:

It must be dozens of times that I have begun to write the following: In affliction of spirit and complete dissilusionment I find it difficult to speak any more about the matter, but feel that I should "get it off my chest." For the past two months I have waited for more calmness of mind so as to be able to treat the whole distressing business more coolly and objectively. Talking things out, or writing them out is often a relief and a catharsis; so, right or wrong, here goes:

In the first place, may I beg you most earnestly, in the name of sweet charity, to delete from the records that indictment sent to Father Abbot last September, where it mentions that sinister word, "molesting." In law and newspaper parlance that word leaves little to the imagination. And I wish to re-iterate that I am NOT GUILTY as charged in that indictment. I realize that that self-appointed "committee" of two must have put up quite a lurid and convincing story and salestalk to get me out of Detroit Lakes. I can only imagine with what all sordid details, in order to precipitate such a sudden and final decision as to demand my immediate removal. I have reasons to believe that these two threatened or at least hinted at civil action in the case, so of course there was little else that you could do. It is quite obvious that both Mr.                      and                      acted on hearsay evidence. I would say that it was evidence which was rather hysterical, neurotic, exaggerated and "blown up," certainly induced and solicited, circumstantial, garbled, even "engineered" in the manner of brainwashing, suborned, or whatever one may wish to call it. Very probably Father Abbot never acquainted you with any details on "the additional litgt on the case," to which I referred in my last telephone conversation with you. Father Abbot is always swamped with work and problems, and no doubt this matter hit him pretty hard too. I feel I owed it to myself to acquaint you with further details surrounding the case, before it be closed entirely.

As to Mr.                      I told you last September that I never once have been at his house, nor hardly know his family at all. When pressed about this, he grudgingly admitted that, "well, he was delegated to bring those charges." Also that as a young man "he was kicked around and always had to play second fiddle, etc. etc." So it would seem to me that we have again a case of projection and rather evident "scapegoating" and

OSB HOHMANN\_00509

busybodying. During the past year I gave Mr.                      thousands of dollars worth of business, even in the face of lower prices elsewhere I believe, for the sake of his family. This

is the fellow who was reported to me as having said down at the Proctor Cafe "that I should be handed over to the police." (How would he like it if I were to see his salesmanager and contact all the Catholic institutions he sells to and acquaint them with such goings-on?)

As to Mr.                      , I was at his house only once, maybe 10 to 12 minutes last March 1960 when they were down with the flu and the children were absent from school. (                      was not home.) Yes, I may have been rather fond and affectionate with the kids, but certainly did NOT act in a way that                      could have made the case he did! He complained to Father Abbot about me shortly after; very probably in the hopes of my getting put out with little delay. At the time he also complained to Fr. Abbot about a sermon I preached some time before about vocations. That sermon was on the strong side, but nothing I could not put into writing, I am sure. I had reasons to say what I did to counteract the loose thinking prevalent on vocations. Fr. Malachy had the Mass. (Whether he or anyone else got the idea that I was casting reflections on him, I of course do not know.) Certain mentalities get things all twisted up when they don't like a fellow. Mr.                      also complained that in my Lenten talks de sexto to the 7th and 8th graders, I was too frank, or "shocking," or whatever else he may have mentioned. One of the older diocesan consultants with whom I talked the matter over did not think at all that I was too frank, and that plain talk was necessary in these times. Mr.                      had no girl in that group. The day I left Detroit Lakes, I found out that Mrs.                      had taken one of the Sisters over the coals for passing out "Mother's Little Helper" or whatever the booklet was for growing girls in the sixth grade, and really gave that good Sister a going-over. I mention the above re Mr.                      complaints since the whole business struck me as quite phoney. No doubt he had very good coaching when he made his complaints to Fr. Abbot! Mr.                      seemed to me to be a "confused convert" and spent long hours last winter with Fr. Malachy, "to get better acquainted with the Catholic Faith." My guess is, (and I have it on the comments of others,) that both Mr. and Mrs.                      seem to be rather on the neurotic side, and that Mrs.                      and a few other dames in the ring let this thing pyramid and run away with them. I have observed such phenomena more

than once in my long observation of human nature. And these people work up a case to diagnose a hard-working pastor as a "mental case."

To me it is rather passingly strange that the very people who made up that "lynching party" for their pastor, just happened to be the circle of bosom friends of my former assistant Fr. Malachy. Especially Mr.                    the evident ring-leader. The "lynching party" met on the very day after Fr. Malachy checked out; namely Aug. 29th. And the committee of two saw you just as soon as Fr. M. had departed for a California assignment. All summer I was being warned by layfolk, "that my assistant would "get" me; either while still in Detroit Lakes or after he would have left; and that he was discrediting me in the parish. I said little and figured that "least said would be the soonest mended." I know that an alert pastor should ferret out and take vigorous steps if an assistant or anyone else is discrediting him in the parish and undermining him and cutting down his effectiveness. Sleuthing is always revolting to me. I do know, on sure evidence that Fr. Malachy did call up the Abbot earlier this summer or Spring, sort of "pushing the panic button," and warning the Abbot that "something had to be done about me quickly or a big scandal would break!" When this mess broke in September, various laymen came to me with evidence and rumors, some of which I shall relate as they may pertain to the case. Probably they were retailed to you in some fashion by some of the "lynching party."

1. A very prominent and prudent citizen told me that the suspicion or accusation of my being "a mental case" was started by Fr. Malachy. Father M. is a master of innuendo. He himself admitted to a good woman in the parish that he himself had been in the psychiatric ward at Rochester for seven weeks, before being assigned as my assistant. I was told nothing about the matter a year ago, knew nothing about it and never investigated.
2. Another reliable parishioner brought the rumor to me "that Fr. M. had to lock his doors at night for fear of me (!) who was walking the floor at all hours of the night!" Well, that struck my funny-bone, until I was told it was no laughing matter! The explanation is very simple! The heating system and thermostat in the Rectory can be very noisy and eerie through the night. I myself have gotten up, thinking a prowler might be in the rectory. I leave it to anyone's guess how that rumor about me got started.
3. Fr. Malachy is to have gotten the rumor started that "I was out all hours of the night,

and Lord only knew where, etc." Again, false! I can account for every night I was out and they were very few indeed. Criticism was also adduced that I was "gone from the rectory so much." True! I went out almost every afternoon for two hours or more at parochial visiting and census taking. The people were informed of that by word and per printed bulletin. My assistant declined to go out on any census work and confined his visits, it seems, to a circle of more or less "big shot" bosom friends. And members of the "lynching party." Parochial visiting was about the only recreation I allowed myself while at Detroit Lakes, --even on Sundays! The records left ~~xxxx~~ there will prove this, I am sure.

4. And, I would like to know who got the rumor started in the parish that I was "abusing my assistant, etc." I practically let him do just as he pleased. When he complained to the Abbot last Spring that "he had to do almost all the work," I relieved him of every possible job, so that all during the summer he admitted to layfolk that "there just isn't anything to do around here!" I think you will agree that certain types of people are always looking for sides to take that way, and to go to bat for "a fine sharp intellectual and pious assistant" who would make ever so much better a pastor than I was! I have seen such time and again in other places. And this small group at Detroit Lakes certainly seems to have had their innings. Picking on something here and there where they thought they had some "hot stuff" on me and really "going to town" and blowing that up and really selling a bill of good like real salesman,--selling out their pastor and his effectiveness and good name and ruining his prospects for life! At any rate, the very evident vindictiveness with which this entire business was handled or negotiated would indicate that the group was under very able generalship and were out to make things about as unpleasant and agonizing for me as possible. In the past, when matters came up against any certain priest I myself have always tried to resolve and quiet such matters on the local level as far as possible, to cover up with the people and try to bring about a correction without blowing up the matters with harassed superiors. I thank God that in more than one case I have followed that procedure, when afterwards the true picture came out. Otherwise, drastic and irreparable harm might have resulted from mistaken "evidence" to wound and ruin for life.

When people motivated by envy or jealousy or ill-will, hysteria or some mawkish "sympathy" and forget all about the ramifications of the Eighth Commandment, and seem to

care even less,--why then most anything can happen! I very clearly remember the tragic lynching of those three colored boys at 2nd and 1st in Duluth on June 15, 1920. I can still remember an 8x10 newsphoto of that dead body of the one who was proven innocent. When the rope broke, his poor body was kicked into a mangled bloody mess!

I can of course understand why you took such immediate and final action in my case. I have reasons to believe that those two who called on you may have threatened civil action! It would be just like them. One can hardly expect to fight a whispering campaign as dirty and intransigent as that was! I think you will agree with me that people will rather swear any kind of false oath and use any dodge, rather than ever back down from any ill-considered charges of false testimony and admit that they might have been wrong! Actually, right now I cannot recall one case of anyone ever taking back or making amends for anything said about a priest or bishop, EVER! By the way, while I have know of such cases as pathological or infantile and imaginative lying on the part of children, I do not think and surely sincerely hope there was none such in this deal. There was a neighbor living close to the rectory, whose kids I liked very much and vice versa. The dad admitted to me that he had "nervous trouble" and confusion and jitteriness and needed help etc. etc. Since this Mr.        seemed to be having trouble in making a living, I was specially interested in his struggling family and lovable kids. He said that I might be some kind of "Jekyll and Hyde" character. I don't think he originated that idea himself. I wonder who insinuated that into his thinking?? Very probably this neurotic unfortunate was also brain-washed by the few who were out to get my hide.

For the life of me, I cannot see where any of my accusers can, with their hand on the Bible, charge me with "molesting." I have always loved kids very much, and vice versa I think,--all kids. The rumor that "they would run away when I came around" is just another hysterical falsehood! They would run all right, but not AWAY from me. Through the years I have always been cordial and yes,--affectionate with children. I wish now that I had kept the stacks of letters that have come to me through the years when these kids were grown up. Such letters would surely not be written to a mentall sick "molester." My guess is that the        and        and a few others I could mention, and whoever coached them, have just been reading too many lurid fictional accounts and some very damaging news items

that appeared in the Minneapolis paper about the same time that this whole sordid debacle and tempest in a teapot was blown up last summer. As I mentioned at my interview with you last November, this is again a case like carelessly setting a snowball running down a mountainside to end in a devastating avalanche. In my years I have seen such happen to teachers, doctors, and pastors and others. And am thankful that I was able to stop unfounded and rash rumors that were snowballing to the ruination of such people. It seems that the                decided they did not like my perhaps unrepossessing appearance over against their bosom friend, my dapper sharp brilliant and "much abused" assistant. So a snowball did grow into an avalanche and it seems they decided to "get me" when they figured they "had something on me." I have no doubt that                and                and a few others are patting themselves on the back now for exposing and bringing to justice a dangerous "Jekyll and Hyde" psychotic personality,--a wolf in clerical clothes.

Well, in my long experience I have seen all too often what ill-will and vindictiveness and frustration and hatred can do. I have tried not to become bitter, but I do hope that those people are satisfied and can feel very justified at ruining the nerves and health of a hard-working pastor, who spent himself for just a short year at Detroit Lakes, and was hardly settled in that fine parish. Even a cursory examination of the records will substantiate that, I think. What other rumors all got around about my "abusing the poor assistant" etc. etc. I do not know. I am sure that Mr.                and Mr.                of the parish could say more about that. When Mr.                went to Father Abbot last March 1960 with the various complaints before mentioned, no doubt he had good "coaching" and was disappointed that Fr. Abbot did not oust me with the coming of summer. No doubt then they again had good coaching to take up the matter with the Bishop. Last February I put my troubles up to Father Abbot since I already then had some inkling of what might all eventuate with a disgruntled, cynical, bitter and vindictive and brooding assistant in the house, whom it was just impossible to please. Nothing was said or done in the matter until the end of summer, by which time the harm was done and the "oust Othmar" campaign was well under way, and very shrewdly timed and coached, I have no doubt about it. Those who were behind this lynching deal seem to have salted down things pretty thoroughly. What I mean is that I have no doubt that this has gotten around the Abbey. Hence I cannot go

back there with any peace of mind. I have seen and heard much through the years. To ex-claustrate would no doubt mean the forwarding of rumors and charges to any diocese I might want to work in. So it does seem that a shrewd and thorough job has been done. That seems to be the silent re-action from my circle of friends. Various letters I have written to Detroit Lakes about a few bills and unfinished business have just gone unanswered. My relatives seem puzzled and shocked and confused at my sudden removal from a fine parish where they felt I was doing the best work of my career. So it seems that I have been forced into a corner, an impossible spot and dilemma, a real cul-de-sac. Well, through the years I have seen other confreres,--much better men than myself,--good men and hard-working men broken for the rest of their days. Most of them are dead by now. It seems people can take much more in stride, charges of drunkenness, or even running off with someone. But those charges brought against me, --well once things like that get around, I say right now, then a man is through, finished, kaput! To survive at all I must be a realist and look for no "vindication" of any clearing up of things until Judgment Day. As I mentioned before, people seldom back down in these matters. Even at worst, this entire business could have been handled by these men much more wisely and charitably, had they at all had the good of souls and the parish at heart. (At least I have always tried to handle such painful matters as quietly as possible.) I had never anticipated that I could become as anti-social as I find myself now, trusting no one, and suspicious even of children! I shall try to fight up from this knockout blow, since I have always loved ~~my~~ people, especially the simple folk, the little people, the poor and struggling "proletariat" and their dear children. I am confident that my record through the years will prove that. I have been urged to take a long rest, but have begged my Abbot to let me get back soon to the work I like,--with prospective converts, the lax and fallen-away and any interested Protestants. I am sure I have proved that in the two years I was in the Crookston diocese. In my present state of mind and shattered nerves there is not much I can do besides short spurts of effort here and there. To have one's life ruined this way after I have worked to exhaustion many and many a time in the face of ingratitude and opposition,--well to say the least it is a trial of one's Faith and hope in the extreme. I can only take Father Abbot's advice to try to see things the way God sees them and has allowed them to happen.

I may as well mention a few other rumors and particulars while I am at it and may have forgotten. Rumor also reached me from reliable source I think, that Fr. Malachy had become frantic whenever the telephone rang, for fear that the police might be at the other end! I wonder who got that started? I don't know what was all reported to you. I do remember police being at the house to trap thieves at the votive stands. We did catch a 7th grade girl and took her to the rectory for questioning. I tried to keep the matter as quiet as possible. Did someone make some "evidence" of this, I wonder? Also I had to call the cops one night when a demented fellow got me out of bed past midnight and was carrying a gun. The police car cruised past the rectory for a while while I got rid of the fellow. (They were very appreciative.)

Fr. Malachy mentioned to the housekeeper on leaving "that her troubles would soon be over." All Spring and summer mysterious phone calls came in for my assistant. Perhaps I should have monitored the calls as pastor. I did not. When I answered often they quickly hung up. I never asked where he spent his time when he was out of an afternoon or evening. It was also reported to me that Father M. is to have mentioned that "I was getting a lot of riff-raff into the Church, and of the 18 I baptized in June, very few ever came back to Mass." This is false since I checked on them all summer. Three cases of prospective converts which seemed a little messy, he gave the brushoff too. My neighboring priests and myself had to save the situation, and it is a wonder that the Catholic partners did not leave too! I am merely mentioning these incidents to throw some light onto what states of mind I had to deal with. Father tried subtly to discredit me in every way possible and to impress people with his superior intellectuality, education, world travel, and spirituality! Often he would characterize other priests as "vacuous, stupid and incompetent etc. I am sure that was his estimate of me too. He seemed to resent bitterly that I was appointed pastor of Detroit Lakes. When he was not accepted for re-enlistment in the Air Corps, he grew more bitter and resentful and perhaps suspected I had something to do with his rejection. I don't know. As one good confrere characterized the man: "He is sick!" I am quite certain that he worked up ~~awkish~~ maudlin sympathy among the parishioners for being so mis-used. (Even going, it seems, on sort of hunger strikes, and making things just as unpleasant for me as he could. I have never met a more bitter,

frustrated and vindictive confrere ever! Or more brooding and taciturn. So it almost seems as though he projected the accumulation of years of ill-will and frustration and brooding onto a slow-witted third rate pastor! As he seemed to characterize me. I know such continued states of mind can blind even intellectuals and the sharp and bright boys. (Fr. Roger possibly could throw some light on this phase of the matter.) Other rumors were reported to me to about myself, the odium of which penetrated way up to Mahanomen. Mostly childish things but most uncomplimentary, to say the least. In the past I have mostly tried to ignore such in the hope that time would take care of things.

On another angle, could it be that the movement to oust me (mostly by K of C men) was aggravated by fear of a proposed building fund drive? At least at the first K.C. meeting (to which by the way I was not invited) in September, the subject was most inappropriately brought up at that meeting. Laypeople also reported to me that the Knights were talking about "getting that guy out!" May be just hearsay evidence again. One of the big shots in the Knights is rather elderly who I understand really went on the lynghing party against me. I was at his house only once to visit his aged Mother. My good assistant was there once a week for long morning coffee sessions. One might put two and two together. Another bosom friend was the family where I was only once briefly. Why he should agitate against me, I also do not know; I barely knew his family. And so I could go on.

Before I left there was quite a bit of agitation to get up a petition in my favor and I was assured that "97 to 98 percent of the people would go on record for me." I begged them to do nothing, at least not while I was there, and thus not embarrass the Bishop and that we should abide by the decision of the Bishop. I am quite sure that is the way things were handled. There was also for some time a neffer-dowell "salesman" a one in town who I understand peddled around innuendos against me and the parochial school. He left town but I had the dope on him from his former pastor. At least he was reported to me as peddling around cheap undounded gossip. Why, I don't know.

What do I expect to prove or accomplish by this lengthy "Defense brief"? Exactly nothing, beyond the satisfaction of having my say. Such disgrace and discrediting is more or less permanent, and I see no little or no possibility for making good the harm done. I have been praying much that the harm done to souls may be neutralized in God's own good time and Providence!

Box 395, Mercer Wisconsin,  
Dec. 7, 1960

Dear

I think you had better send me a renewal of prescription No. 269481 for sod nembutol sleeping tablets. I hope that is the right number since things got mixed up a little in all this moving around. While I still have some equanil, you had better send also a renewal of this, My record shows it is No. 268354. I don't have to take these things as much anymore as last Fall when I was kicked out of your fine parish. I hope to get away from drugs entirely before long but it seems a long and arduous pull to get back to normal. Up here it is quiet and leisurely, a vacation wonderland of endless forests and lakes. A regular winter fairyland, much as N.E. of Det. Lakes. I was sent over here to help out about Nov. 1, to fill in with an emergency since they are very short of priests, also in this diocese. How long I shall be here I don't know. Have been rather on the anti-social side since leaving Det. Lakes and it's hard on me. But am starting to visit loose end cases here, prospective converts, lax and fallen-away, and thus far the results are very encouraging. Lots of mission work to be done up here in these far-flung settlements. I would not mind devoting the rest of my days to this work. Honors and dignities and "big shot" assignments really have never interested me. Life is just too short for that for one of us.

Well I just wonder whether the members of the "lynching party" who rather hysterically broke their pastor's neck last September, have ever come to more sane way of thinking I wonder whether they realize one whit what they have started??? Salted things down with calumny and slander and false accusations, based on evidence that was to say the least, hysterical, induced, garbled, circumstantial, solicited, distorted, suborned, "engineered" (rather cleverly, not?) and what have you. I wonder whether they ever think of the irreparable harm they have done in immobilizing a hard-working priest, and to the damage of many many souls, no doubt??? And how about the clever boys who started or abetted and encouraged or even master-minded the deal?? Pretty awful I think. I have no doubt that they have been patting themselves on the back for exposing a dangerous "mental Case" and giving him his just dues!! I have seen a lot of twisted-up human nature through the years, believe you me. It is a pastor's duty to ferret out and scotch rumors, whispering campaigns and scandal-mongering undermining and discrediting that goes on in the parish to destroy his effectiveness. Well,--I was just too busy to follow those rumors and have always try to follow the policy: "Least said, earliest mended." It was surely putting you the mayor and a businessman and I into one hell of a spot, instead of letting you handle the matter on your level as trustees. ( of course is above all trustees.) Anyhow, many prayers and Masses have been offered up for the members of the "lynching gang." God knows, they are going to need it! I was definitely NOT GUILTY AS CHARGED! But I have found out again that a priest's word means little or nothing over against any concerted action of determined laymen, especially when masterminded by one "out to get the pastor ousted!" The evidence brought to me during my last days there came too late. I could have found out a lot more, but was just too heartsick and shocked and worn out to to much. After all, I worked as hard and harder at Det. Lakes during my year there as I have even in my career. I think my records will prove that conclusively. All, enough of that! I just wonder whether all those responsible ever realize that there simply cannot be any forgiveness of sin EVER! until they at least try to make good the incalculable harm done in ruining the character, the work and effectiveness and health of a hard working pastor!!! I would not want to be in their shoes in years to come. Hasn't that ever struck these men who were acting like a lynching gang on purely hearsay evidence???? God help them. But their duty to make good harm done may be forgotten but not absolved. Hell is going to be full of such, I'm sure! Well, lots more I could say. Thanks for everything you tried to do in a most painful situation that was initiated by none less than the devil! I have forgiven but to forget is simply an impossibility. How blind and crazy can people get? Well please destroy this as soon as you have read it. Right? May God bless you and yours always. Send me bill for the medications please.

Cordially,

OSB HOHMANN\_00507

DIocese OF SUPERIOR

1201 HUGHITT AVE.  
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 22, 1961

The Right Reverend Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B.  
Saint John's Abbey  
Collegeville, Minnesota

Dear Father Abbot:

I am most grateful to you for allowing me to have the use of Father Othmar Hohmann, of your Abbey, at Mercer with Father Dabruzzi. I am wondering if it is agreeable to you if I have Father Othmar assist Father Gutzler at Boulder Junction and his two missions beginning after Easter. I understand that Father Othmar is very happy in the work that he is doing, and since he can give me valuable assistance I would like to ask if I may keep him until after Labor Day of this year. It will help me a great deal if you can see your way clear to permitting this extended stay for Father Othmar as I will have only two young men to ordain this spring and none at all in 1962, which will only accentuate my problems a year from now.

I shall be very grateful for your kind consideration of my needs.

With kindest personal regards and best wishes, I remain

Very sincerely in Christ,

+ *Henry A. Hammer*

Bishop of Superior

Box "D" Merceſſ Wisconsin,  
June 7, 1961

Rt. Rev. dear Father Abbot:

On re-reading your kind letter of May 15th, I see that you naturally expected an answer from me before this. I assumed that you felt "no news is good news." I was indeed fortunate in getting a top-notch surgeon, a good Catholic, a St. Louis and Mayo Clinic man. This is rather late to express my appreciation for your calling Dr. Tucker, the day of the operation or the day after. Dr. Tucker told me and I was quite "woozy" for some days after. He may have told you what he found. Anyhow, it was gall stones of various sizes and an infected malfunctioning gall bladder, which was removed. There was also a chronic diseased appendix which evidently had been going on for a long time; that also was removed. I have been having gall trouble for many years and the distress in the appendix region, I always thought was some bowel irritation. After Dr. Tucker had made his final diagnosis, he expressed the hope that I would wait no longer. I am indeed fortunate and blessed that I am getting by with nothing worse apparently than a somewhat damaged liver,--which Dr. Tucker thinks is not so bad if I take care. After many years of neglect and malfunction, he might have found advanced cirrhosis or malignancy, and I think he was apprehensive of that. All in all, I am blessed and it seems that the good Lord will give me some good years yet to work in. I was down last Friday for a post-operative checkup and to have the dressings changed. Everything looks very good indeed., and much credit is due I feel sure to the skill of Dr. Tucker and his fine young assistant, Dr. Larsen, and the fine hospital care.

I have of course been quite weak, but each day there seems some improvement. Dr. Tucker says that I should expect nothing else at my age and insisted on at least six weeks of convalescence. I have been able to help with the summer school last week and this week, and it gets a little easier each day. Summer school will last until the end of next week. I am sorry that it will hardly be possible to make the retreat next week. As I say, I am quite weak yet and must rest frequently. Also, I can be of considerable help in the summer school of Catechism. Then I must move out of here by end of this week to Boulder Junction. Changes of pastors hereabout have also changed the picture somewhat. I would like to make my retreat later in the summer when I feel up to it again. I would be very welcome at Benet Lake Wisconsin with Fr. Abbot Felix. Or I might make a retreat with the diocesans, later in the summer. I did make a private retreat last September after being removed from Detroit Lakes. I made that at Our Lady of the Snows at Levis, and have tried to make the winter and the time before the surgery some kind of retreat. I do want to make a retreat later in summer. Under the circumstances, I feel confident that this arrangement will be satisfactory. I would like to stay around ~~the~~ near to Dr. Tucker for another week or two. While everything looks splendid, he did mention to watch things.

How do I feel after the surgery? The past few days life looks pretty good again. I do feel a lot of infectious matter in all teeth, gall bladder and appendix seems to have been eliminated. No distress after my meals. No serious headache since the day I went in for surgery. A number of people who have gone through this tell me that in a few weeks I should feel better than in many years. Pain in surgery area has pretty well subsided, and each day gets better. By next Sunday I think I can get through the program quite nicely. The first Sunday back on the job was of course rough. Both Fr. Dabruzzi and Fr. Gutzler have been most considerate and kind, and that helped matters along a lot.

The bill at the Ashland hospital was \$473.00 for all services, diagnoses, pre-operative stay etc. They cut that exactly in half to \$236.50 The best of attention. I think it would be nice if a word of thanks and appreciation would come from the Abbey to Sr. Claudia, the superior of St. Joseph's Hospital, Ashland, for their kindness and generous discount. Dr. Tucker has sent no bill yet; his office girl hinted that very probably there would be no bill! I shall wait a while yet. If he was kind enough to do all that gratis or for a nominal fee, it would be nice if we from the Abbey would thank him to and assure him of our inclusion of him and his intentions in the prayers for benefactors. He

*(Gutzler)*



SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY • COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE ABBOT

June 11, 1961

Dear Father Othmar,

In answer to your letter of June 7th I grant you permission to make a retreat later on in the summer. The one that was given by Fr. Jean Leclercq was unique. There is no doubt that he understands Benedictine spirituality very well and he has written well of it. One of his books, THE LIFE OF PERFECTION has just come off the press (Liturgical Press) in translation. However, his use of English is going to be a problem for those who do not find it easy to follow the speech of a foreigner. I had the conferences taped and hope to be able to give the material out to those who are interested in reading the conferences.

I was glad to hear your complete report on how you are feeling and also on the treatment you received. I will write the letters you suggested I write to thank the various ones responsible for such good treatment.

Fr. Egbert asked me to replace him because he finds the work at Detroit Lakes too much now for his physical condition. I hate to remove him because he has very effectively calmed the troubled waters I think. Abbot Cuthbert is still in such condition that he could fade out quickly. Fr. Eugene will be going to Conception Abbey again to complete his Fifth year program. Fr. Roderic will be going to Rochester in July for a check-up. (Fr. Aubrey is desperately trying to make a come-back; all will depend upon whether or not he wills to do so. He wants a psychiatric examination.

Devotedly yours,

Box 2, St. Anne's Rectory,  
Boulder Junction Wisconsin,  
July 23, 1961

Rt. Rev. dear Father Abbot:

It's about time that I answer to your kind letter of some weeks ago. I hope you will be tolerant of my delay in answering. I have had somewhat of a setback in my condition, and especially neurally, but seem on the way up again. Guess I went back to work too soon after recent surgery. The tentative appointment to St. Joseph Minn. comes as a surprise, and I don't know just what to say. As my Abbot I should speak my mind out and then abide by your decision:

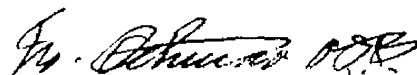
As you indicate, my heart has always been with work among non-Catholics, "the other sheep" of which there are so many that would require just a little attention and time to consider the true Church. I have a nice group here that I am trying to finish during the summer, or at least get them as far along as I can. So if I have to go back to Stearns Co. it will require quite a re-adjustment, as I am sure you understand. I think it is very kind and thoughtful and charitable of you to offer me such a place as St. Joseph, and thus perhaps get me into somewhat better standing again.

I am not "out of the woods" yet from the surgery for a condition of many years' standing. That I can snap out of I feel confident, but the tragic upset of last September is still with me, and some days it still hits me pretty hard. It has been a long battle not to grow despondent. My heart is still in Detroit Lakes, where I thought I was doing and was to do the best work of my career. I am sure you must realize what it means to be booted out of a fine parish and a diocese with such finality and ~~xxxx~~ under such circumstances. (Which I daresay could have at least been mitigated by my assistant and another neighboring confrere.) It seems that Bishop Glenn remained intransigent in his attitude of "quod scripsi scripsi" and "quod feci, feci." I had asked him to delete from his records those incriminating references, and ask you again in all charity, that the same be done as to the monastic archives. I have no doubt that word got around to the confreres,--garbled and exaggerated,--and feel that such is going to be pretty difficult to live down. So you can realize the state of utter embarrassment and chagrin that I still find myself in.

I note what you have to say about being much in need of men. To state the matter briefly, I think I would feel very ill at ease to turn you down or make things difficult for you. I would rather take the assignment, trusting in the good Lord that things will work out. Would it be out of line just to appoint me as "administrator" of the parish, just to provide some margin in case things don't work out? In any event, I think I can make a decent job of administering until other arrangements are made. In case your decision stands, how soon would you wish me to take over? Fr. Gutzler will be gone from here for some time to recuperate a little and Fr. Dabruzzi has been transferred to Washburn and Fr. Torkellson, our alumnus is now at Mercer. All this has of course affected my position and my work here somewhat. I miss Mercer and Fr. Dabruzzi very much.

Dr. Tucker seemed rather displeased that I went back to work two weeks after surgery, when he and Dr. White spoke of "taking the entire summer off, etc." I have tried to keep occupied up here and to "earn my keep." As you indicate, I would find Choquet more than I could take right now. Even here trination with travel, and no responsibility, is a chore. I find concentration still difficult, but think I have manifested most of my misgivings to you herewith. As I mentioned before, I do not want to make your position more difficult nor be an obstructionist. If the appointment stands, I hope that my work and petitions will in some way affect the many fine souls not of the Faith that I have contacted during the past three years. Well, I hope this states my case. Thank you for the Feastday Greetings.

Sincerely and respectfully,





SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY • COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE ABBOT

July 29, 1961

Dear Father Othmar,

Thank you for your letter of July 23rd. I have decided to make the most of your willingness to accept the appointment as pastor at St. Joseph, Minn., even if it is an appointment which could be terminated when something else comes along. I don't think that Bishop Bartholome would approve of your being appointed as "administrator". I have to set the date for your taking charge of the parish as August 11th because earlier that week Fr. Hubert must leave St. Joseph for his new assignment, the hospital at Cambridge, Minn.

Fr. Prior will send Fr. Gervase I think to take your place at Boulder Junction on August 11th. Fr. Alban is at present the assistant at St. Joseph. I had thought of not having an assistant in residence, but Fr. Hubert advised against this. Bring along the car you have. Krebsbach has been giving the pastor a new car each year (or rather giving the parish the car).

I don't think your confreres think any differently of you because of Detroit Lakes; I mean confreres who deserve the name.

Devotedly yours,

*Diocese of St. Cloud*  
CHANCERY OFFICE  
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA

August 9, 1961

Rt. Rev. Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B.,  
Abbot  
St. John's Abbey  
Collegeville, Minnesota

Dear Father Abbot:

In reply to your letter of August 3, I hereby approve all of the changes that you have suggested in the various parishes and the chaplaincy at St. Benedict's.

We will put all of the appointments in the paper for the issue of the week of August 13, even those that become effective later in the month. I hereby grant the Faculties to all of the newly appointed priests working in the diocese.

The parish of St. Joseph is, perhaps, in need of someone with a temperament of Father Othmar. I am definitely relying on Father Hubert's going to the State School at Cambridge. That appointment will not be made until the week of August 27 and it will be effective the following week because several other changes are involved with the resignation of Father Funk at Greenwald who will not be leaving until the week of September 3.

I presume that Father Gunther has the Faculties of the diocese. You might tell him to come in to see me during the first few weeks after his appointment to discuss certain matters.

I am sure that Father Bundo will do good work at Cold Spring. Kindly impress Father Aquinas that his work at the high school in Cold Spring is not to be neglected because of his work at Ss. Peter and Paul Parish in Richmond.

I would also like to call to your attention that St. Augustine's Parish in St. Cloud is in need of another assistant and I was in hopes that you would appoint an additional priest there this year.

Rt. Rev. Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B.  
Collegeville, Minnesota

August 9, 1961  
Page #2

I also would like to have you tell Father John that I will not offer up the Pontifical High Mass facing the people on the day of the Dedication. My reason is this: I have refused this permission to a few priests in the diocese and in one instance I had to stop one of the priests from saying Mass facing the people and, thus, you can readily see that in order to be consistent in this matter it would not be proper for me to offer up Holy Mass facing the people on the day of the Dedication. This, of course, will not inconvenience anyone.

With best wishes and God's blessing, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "F. J. C. Battaglia".

Bishop of St. Cloud

PWB:cjc

INFORMATION FOR THE ARCHIVES OF SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY, COLLEGEVILLE

NAME: Othmar (LeO) Hohmann, O.S.B.  
                     (Religious)                                      (Baptismal)                                      (Family)

BIRTH: Richmond                      Stearns                      Minnesota                      January                      28,                      1900  
                     (City)                      (County)                      (State)                      (Month)                      (Day)                      (Year)

YOUR PATRON SAINT: St. Othmar                                      NAMEDAY: November 16, 1

TRIENNIAL VOWS: St/ John's Abbey                      Sept 22, 1926                      Rt. Rev. Alcuin Deutsch O.S.B.  
                                     (Place)                                      (Date)                                      (Before Whom)

FINAL VOWS/OBLATION: St. John's Abbey                      Sept. 22, 1929                      Rt. Rev. Alcuin Deutsch O.S.B.  
                                     (Place)                                      (Date)                                      (Before Whom)

ORDINATION: St. John's Abbey.                      June 7, 1931                      Most Rev. Joseph F. Busch.  
                                     (Place)                                      (Date)                                      (Bishop)

FATHER'S FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE: St. Cloud Minn.

FATHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: Bavarian

FATHER'S RELIGION: Catholic                                      DATE OF DEATH: Jan 5, 1939

HIGHEST LEVEL OF FATHER'S EDUCATION: St. Cloud Normal School. Rural School Teacher

FATHER'S OCCUPATION: (deceased)                                      Great Northern Railroad  
                                     (Now)                                      (When You Entered Monastery)

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE: Fountain City Wisconsin

MOTHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: Swabian

MOTHER'S RELIGION: Catholic                                      DATE OF DEATH: April 2, 1957

HIGHEST LEVEL OF MOTHER'S EDUCATION: 8th Grade Parochial School

YOUR CAREER BEFORE ENTERING THE MONASTERY: Work at Electrical Business and for the  
Great Northern Railroad at various jobs.

EDUCATION	SCHOOL	FROM	TO	MAJOR	DEGREE	DATE
Rural Schools		1906		1911		
ELEMENTARY:	St. Joseph's Minnieapolis (5 x 6)	1911		1912		
	St. Mary's St. Cloud (7 x 8)	1912		1914		

SECONDARY: 4 years at St. John's Preparatory

UNDERGRADUATE: St. John's University B.A. 1928

THEOLOGY: St. John's ~~xxxx~~ Seminary

GRADUATE: \_\_\_\_\_

POST-DOCTORAL: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER: One Summer at Catholic University Preachers Institute and auditing drama course.

[Over Please]

DATE FILLED OUT: July 1, 1964

  
(Signature)

LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY ALL THE MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS (lasting six months or more) YOU HAVE RECEIVED SINCE PROFESSION AND ORDINATION. Give (a) the type or nature of the work, e.g., assistant pastor or plumber or math teacher in Prep School, (b) the location, (c) the duration, (d) any special achievements or items of note, e.g., built parish hall in 1948.

Assisted in Speech and Drama Dept. at St. John's from 1927 to 1932 (Mostly high school)  
Prefect in St. Gregory Hall, 1927-1929  
Taught College German 1931-32  
Bahama Island Missions Dec. 11, 1932 to Sept. 1, 1936. Most of this time stationed at St. Francis Xavier church, Nassau Bahamas.  
Assistant at St. Joseph's Mandan No. Dakota, Oct. 1, 1936 to April 22, 1942. In addition, engaged in youth work and dramatics and radio drama there.  
Assistant at St. Boniface, Hastings Minn. April 24, 1942 to Aug. 14, 1947. "returned to Abbey.  
Assisted Fr. Celestine Kapsner on Mission Band Sept. 1947 to Dec. 10, 1947  
Assigned to the Utah Missions from Dec. 1947 to Dec. 1948. While there helped to build the church at Vernal Utah and took care of Artesia and Rangely Missions in Denver diocese.  
January 22, 1949 to Aug. 18, 1954, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, New Munich. While there, renovated and decorated the church, renovated school and convent. Organized an adult, young peoples' and childrens dramatic club.  
From Aug. 18 1954 to August 1957 pastor at St. Boniface, Cold Spring Minn. While there, enlarged and renovated rectory, renovated convent. Considerable repairs and renovation in grade and high school buildings.  
From August 1957 to June 1958 worked in Fargo diocese, mostly at Oakes No. Dakota helping in the parish and chaplain in the hospital there.  
Summer 1958 stationed at Mercer Wisc. and attached missions. Sept. 1958 to Sept. 1960 in the Crockston diocese at Mahanomen, Bejou, Island Lake and Detroit Lakes.  
GIVE YOUR PARENT'S PRESENT ADDRESS, IF LIVING. (deceased) (See below for additional)

LIST YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE ORDER OF THEIR BIRTH. INCLUDE YOURSELF.  
For those still living give their present address; for those who have died write "deceased." Put an asterisk before those whom you want contacted immediately and directly by the Abbey when you die.

Othmar L. Hohmann, §6.S.B.

\*  
\*

IN THE REMAINING SPACE AND ON AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY PUT DOWN ANY OTHER ITEMS OF INFORMATION OR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF YOURS THAT YOU THINK SHOULD BE PERMANENTLY RECORDED.

(Continued from above) At Detroit Lakes did some remodeling of school and convent. After that one year in the Superior diocese, helping out at Mercer and Boulder Junction Wisc., and missions attached to same.

Since Aug. 11, 1961, pastor of St. Joseph's, St. Joseph Minn. During 1963, remodeled and modernized the school (\$80,000) and started an adult and childrens' theatre.

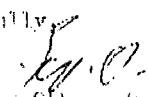
Rt. Rev. dear Father Abbot:

With your permission I would like to attend a First Mass next Sunday at St. Boniface, Hastings of a young man I had in the grades years ago at that parish,--Father [REDACTED]. That is if I feel up to it, since things have not improved much, healthwise. Father Prior suggested that three clerics go with me in our car here, since I cannot safely drive that distance. That will also make it much more convenient for me. I have had to miss so many First Masses of former pupils, and the parents have urged me to come. The Mass is at noon so I can take a Sunday Mass here.

I know I should have come up weeks ago, as I had promised, to explain details of the doctors' findings and opinions. I have been putting it off as an embarrassing and unpleasant job, and telling the dispositions "to go away, go away!" and hoping that would happen. For the time being, Dr. Keening does not want to undertake eye surgery. I intend to see you shortly after the holy days, or write to you in detail. The latter might save time for you. (Frankly, I dread being put to a place such as Fr. Harold or Valerian are at.) Well, Fiat Voluntas, and I shall try to be resigned. The doctors suggested "quitting, at least for a while!" The troubles may be more a complex of neural and emotional troubles of recent years, I just don't know. Well, at any rate, I shall get in touch with you soon. I greatly appreciate the help for one Mass Sundays for the time being.

And thanks so very much for your kind note of sympathy on the recent death of my sister. It was very consoling to me and the relatives. Good Fathers Julig and Jacques gone too,--in their best years. Well, "so it goes". I trust you will have a most happy and peaceful Christmastide. I still recall fondly the Christmastides spent at the Abbey years ago. I shall try to be there for the party next Tuesday. "Froehlichste Weinachten!"

Respectfully,

  
Fr. Climer C.S.B.

July 11, 1966

Record of Father Othmar L. Hohmann O.S.B.

Simple Profession: September 22, 1926  
Solemn Profession: September 22, 1929

Ordination: June 7, 1931

During the Clericate, prefect for two years in St. Gregory Hall, for '27-'28 and '28-29

In charge of High School Dramatics from 1929 to 1932 and assisted in the College Dramatics Dept.

Was sent to the Bahama Island Missions from the fall of 1932 until the Fall of 1936. Was mostly stationed at the Cathedral at Nassau during this time but also helped out in the other Nassau Missions.

Appointed assistant at St. Joseph's, Mandan No. Dakota from Oct. 1, 1936 until April 22, 1942, when I was transferred to St. Boniface Church, ~~(Hastings)~~ Hastings Minn. until Aug. 15, 1947. Helped out on Mission Band occasionally.

Returned to the Abbey at this time to prepare for the Mission Band, on which I functioned until Dec. 8, 1947, when I was suddenly sent out to the Utah Missions, headquartering at Vernal Utah.

(The summer of 1938 was spent at the Catholic University, Washington D.C. with the Preachers' Institute, and some work with the ~~Black~~ Blackfriars' Drama Course.)

I stayed in the Utah Missions from Dec. 11 1947 until ~~xxxxixxxix~~ Jan. 19, 1949, when I took over Immaculate Conception Church at New Munich Minn. as pastor, until I was transferred to:

St. Boniface, Cold Spring Minn. from August 1954 until August 13, 1957 as pastor.

Helped out in the Fargo Diocese from Aug. 15, 1957, for the greater part of a year at Oakes No. Dakota as chaplain of the hospital there and assistant to Fr. Edward McDonald there.

June July August and part of September 1958, helped out in the Superior diocese Missions, headquartering at Mercer Wisconsin.

Assistant at St. Michael's, Manohmen Minn. and took care of the Bejou and Island Lake Missions in the Crookston diocese from September 1958 until August 1959, when I was transferred to take charge of:

Holy Rosary Church, Detroit Lakes Minn. as pastor until September 1960.

From September 1960 until August 1961, assisted in the Mercer and Boulder Junction Missions in the Superior diocese.

Appointed pastor of St. Joseph Minn. and took over there Aug. 11, 1961 and left there July 7, 1966, due to worsening eyesight and generally impaired health. Assigned to a year or so of "semi-active duty" to help out Fr. Ignatius Candrian O.S.B. in the Grand Marais Missions, in the hopes of successful eye surgery for cataract and general recovery of better health and energy.

*Othmar L. Hohmann F.S.B.*

OSB HOHMANN\_00602

June 23, 1972

Reverend Othmar Hohmann, O.S.B.  
Box 218  
Grand Rapids, Minnesota 55744

Dear Father Othmar,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st, which arrived yesterday, and for sending me the copy of "Shepherds on the Shelf", which arrived this morning. I have had time only to glance through the play, but it does seem to be well done and I think that it could be a real asset to our annual Christmas get-together if the Juniors would put it on. I am sure the whole community will enjoy it. After I have had time to read it, I will pass it on to Father Prior, and he could then pass it on to Brother Kevin. Possibly the latter or even Father Dominic would be interested in putting it on for Christmas for the community.

I enjoyed also reading about how you have been putting into practice Doctor Braceland's ideas for the past six years, since leaving St. Joseph. I am sure that the work you have been doing in parochial visitations has been a real help not only to the pastor but more so to the people themselves. I hope that you will be able to carry on this work for a long time yet, along with your work for the Childrens' Theatre during the time of the year when it is not possible to go out for the daily calls.

All is going well here and all of the community at the moment are quite well. Brother Paul, who had spent some time in the hospital, is back at the abbey and able to resume his daily walks up and down the corridor with the aid of a chair. Father Basil has been confined to his room for a couple of weeks, but seems to be improving now, and I am sure he will feel better as soon as the weather warms up a little more.

With greetings also to Monsignor Hogan, and with all good wishes and the prayer that God continue to bless you and your work, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

St. Paul  
MPLS

Parishes, Missions, Chaplains						
CITY	CODE	ASSIGNMENT NAME	NAME	POSITION	DATES	NOTES
NASSAU	BA	ST. AUGUSTINE'S	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1932 - 1936	
MANDAN	ND	ST. JOSEPH	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1936 (OCT. - APR.) 1942	
HASTINGS	MN	ST. BONIFACE	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1942 - 1947	
ARTESIA	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947	
LAPOINT	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947	
MYTON	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947	
OGDEN	UT	ST. BENEDICT'S HOSPITAL	OTHMAR HOHMANN	C	1947	
OURAY	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947	
RANDLETT	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947	
RANGELY	CO	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947	
DUCHESNE	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	
FORT DUCHESNE	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	
HANNA	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	
JENSEN	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	
ROOSEVELT	UT	ST. HELEN'S	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	PASTOR OF ROOSEVELT, UTAH MAR., 1948 - DEC., 1949

Parishes - Missions - Chaplains						
CITY	CODE	ASSIGNMENT NAME	NAME	POSITION	DATES	NOTES
ROOSEVELT	UT	ST. HELEN'S	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	PASTOR OF ROOSEVELT, UTAH MAR., 1948 - DEC., 1949
VERNAL	UT	ST. JAMES	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1947 - 1949	CARED FOR MISSIONS AT VERNAL, BONANZA AND IN COLORADO ARTESIA AND RANGELY
WHITEROCKS	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1947 - 1949	
BONANZA	UT	STATION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	M	1948 - 1949	
SC NEW MUNICH	MN	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1949 - 1954 (JAN. - AUG.)	
SC COLD SPRING	MN	ST. BONIFACE	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1954 - 1957	BEGAN PLANS FOR AN ADDITION TO SAINT BONIFACE HIGH SCHOOL FOR NEW GYM, CAFETERIA, BOWLING LANES ETC
Crookston OAKES	ND	HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN AND ASSISTING	OTHMAR HOHMANN	C	1957 - 1958	FROM MAHNOMEN
Evankston BEJOU	MN	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1958	FROM MAHNOMEN
Craddock ISLAND LAKE	MN	ST. AGNES	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1958	FROM MAHNOMEN
Craddock MAHNOMEN	MN	ST. MICHAEL	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1958 (SEPT. - AUG.)	
Craddock DETROIT LAKES	MN	HOLY ROSARY	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1958 - 1960 (OCT. - SEPT.)	FR. OSWALD JOHANNES WAS FIRST RESIDENT CHAPLAIN OF ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL FORMERLY CARED BY PARISH.
MERCER	WI	ST. ISAAC JOQUES AND COMPANIONS	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1958 (SUMMER)	HELPED OUT AT MERCER, WISCONSIN AND ITS MISSIONS.
MERCER	WI	ST. ISAAC JOQUES AND COMPANIONS	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1960 - 1961 (SEPT. - AUG.)	HELPED OUT AT MERCER, WISCONSIN AND ITS MISSIONS.
SC ST. JOSEPH (STEARNS)	MN	ST. JOSEPH	OTHMAR HOHMANN	P	1961 - 1966	AUGUST 11, 1961-JULY 7, 1966

*Duluth*

*Duluth*

Parishes - Missions - Chaplains						
CITY	CODE	ASSIGNMENT NAME	NAME	POSITION	DATES	NOTES
GRAND MARAIS	MN	ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1966 - 1967 (AUG.-AUG.)	ST. FRANCIS XAVIER WAS NAME OF A MISSION OUTSIDE OF GRAND MARAIS AND SERVED BY ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.
GRAND RAPIDS	MN	ST. JOSEPH	OTHMAR HOHMANN	A	1967 - 1975 (AUG.-AUG.)	"ON LOAN" AND BECAME CENSUS TAKER OF THE ENTIRE TERRITORY OF 500 SQUARE MILES.
					Nov. 1975	Retired to Saint John's

ON THURSDAY, 8:30 P.M., JANUARY 24, 1980

## Father Othmar Leo Hohmann, O.S.B.

BORN IN RICHMOND, MINNESOTA, JANUARY 28, 1900;  
PROFESSED SEPTEMBER 22, 1926; ORDAINED JUNE 7, 1931;  
DIED PEACEFULLY IN THE LORD.



Father Othmar was born into a pioneer Central Minnesota family at the turn of the century. After finishing high school at St. John's in 1918, he was an office worker for five years, being employed at one time by the Great Northern Railway Company. He never lost his interest in railroads and remained a "buff" throughout the rest of his life. In 1924 he resumed his duties and starred as the leading actor in *The Silver King*, one of the most memorable plays ever presented on the local stage. As a young monk he taught German and moderated literary societies and dramatics. His subsequent career was spent in pastoral activity. He served first as a missionary in the Bahamas, then later in Utah and among the Chippewa Indians in Northern Minnesota. He was also a member of the St. John's Mission Band and held pastorates in New Munich, Cold Spring, and St. Joseph in the diocese of St. Cloud. Other parish appointments were in Mandan, North Dakota, and in Hastings, Detroit Lakes, and Grand Rapids in Minnesota. Wherever he was stationed, he made house-to-house visitations which he jovially referred to as his "door-bell and coffee-cup" apostolate. His zealous efforts encouraged many to renew or recover their Faith. Many parishioners still recall the morality and children's plays, such as *Everyman* and *Heidi*, which he found time to stage. He also composed a radio drama, *Sacrifice*, a treatment of the Mass, which had its premier presentation over the Mandan station in 1938. While in retirement since 1975, he prepared a notable collection of children's poems. Older confreres will long remember how he regaled them with Stearns County German folk tales. Father Othmar died quietly three days before his eightieth birthday, ready to greet the Savior Whom he heralded so well in speech and song while in our midst.

FOR THE REPOSE OF HIS SOUL WE ASK EACH NOVICE AND PROFESSED MONK OF OUR ABBEY TO OFFER TWO MASSES IN THE MANNER ALLOWED BY HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST. WE ALSO RECOMMEND OUR CONFRERE TO THE USUAL PRAYERS AND MASSES IN OTHER HOUSES OF OUR FEDERATION. THE CONCELEBRATED MASS OF RESURRECTION WAS OFFERED ON MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 1980, AT 3:00 P.M., IN THE ABBEY CHURCH, FOLLOWED BY BURIAL IN THE ABBEY CEMETERY.

ST. JOHN'S ABBEY  
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

*Jerome P. Theisen, O.S.B.*  
ABBOT



OTHMAR LEO HOHMANN, O.S.B.

KOPON  AIRDO  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

RECEIVED

JAN 22 2013

January 17, 2013

VIA REGULAR MAIL

Rev. James B. Bissonette  
Vicar General  
Diocese of Duluth  
2830 E. 4th Street  
Duluth, MN 55812

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Re: *Fr. Othmar Hohmann, OSB*

Dear Father Bissonette:

I represent Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, and I am writing to you on behalf of Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B. I write to ask if you will share any information you possess with respect to Father Othmar Hohmann, a monk of Saint John's Abbey, who passed away in 1980.

Late last year, allegations of sexual abuse by Father Othmar were brought to our attention by two women. Both women allege that they were abused by Father Othmar in the 1960s. As part of our commitment to victims of such abuse, we are in the process of conducting an investigation into Father Othmar's past work sites. From our records, we believe that, from 1966 to 1975, Father Othmar was assigned to two parishes within the Diocese of Duluth, St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph. Thus, we would like to know if the Diocese is in possession of any records pertaining to Father Othmar. If so, we would greatly appreciate the opportunity to examine those materials. If you are able, please copy the personnel file of Father Othmar or any other related materials, and forward it to my attention. We would, of course, be willing to reimburse you for copying and postage expenses.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Very truly yours,

  
Michael A. Airdo

MAA/BDF

cc: Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B.

**KOPON AIRDO**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

RECEIVED

JAN 22 2013

Michael A. Airdo

January 17, 2013

**VIA REGULAR MAIL**

Rev. Robert Rolfes  
Vicar General  
Diocese of Saint Cloud  
PO Box 1248  
St. Cloud, MN 56302

**PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Re: *Fr. Othmar Hohmann, OSB*

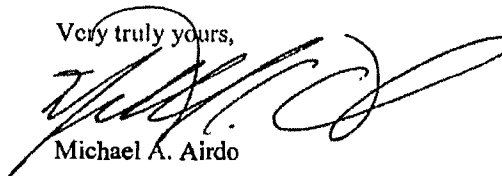
Dear Father Rolfes:

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Your assistance is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Very truly yours,



Michael A. Airdo

MAA/BDF

cc: Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B.

KOPON  AIRDO

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

RECEIVED

JAN 22 2013

Michael A. Airdo

January 17, 2013

VIA REGULAR MAIL

Msgr. David Baumgartner, JCL  
Vicar General  
Diocese of Crookston  
PO Box 610  
Crookton, MN 56716

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Re: *Fr. Othmar Hohmann, OSB*

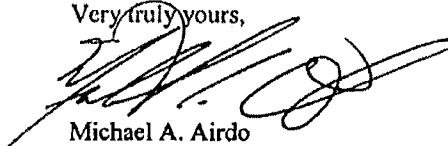
Dear Monsignor Baumgartner:

I represent Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, and I am writing to you on behalf of Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B. I write to ask if you will share any information you possess with respect to Father Othmar Hohmann, a monk of Saint John's Abbey, who passed away in 1980.

Late last year, allegations of sexual abuse by Father Othmar were brought to our attention by two women. Both women allege that they were abused by Father Othmar in the 1960s. As part of our commitment to victims of such abuse, we are in the process of conducting an investigation into Father Othmar's past work sites. From our records, we believe that, from 1957 to 1960, Father Othmar was assigned to several parishes within the Diocese of Crookston, including Immaculate Conception, St. Agnes, St. Michael, and Holy Rosary. Thus, we would like to know if the Diocese is in possession of any records pertaining to Father Othmar. If so, we would greatly appreciate the opportunity to examine those materials. If you are able, please copy the personnel file of Father Othmar or any other related materials, and forward it to my attention. We would, of course, be willing to reimburse you for copying and postage expenses.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Very truly yours,



Michael A. Airdo

MAA/BDF

cc: Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B.