

September 4, 1989

"PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL"

The Most Reverend Donald E. Pelotte
P.O. Box 1338
Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Dear Bishop Pelotte:

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 31 years of age. During the years 1970-1976, I was a member of St. Peter's parish in Springerville, Arizona. Bishop, this letter is of a most serious nature and for reasons I am sure you understand, this letter will be kept as brief as possible and will avoid specific details. We will want to talk further in person or by phone.

In the spring of 1971 (I was 12 years old) I was a victim of child molestation by Fr. James Burns, then pastor of St. Peter's parish. The reasons for wanting to inform you and discuss this matter 19 years after the abuse, are as follows:

1. I had assumed the matter was properly taken care of in 1971 after briefly discussing it with my parents. It was a few months later that Burns was transferred to another parish.
2. During my first "SEARCH" in 1974 in Aztec, New Mexico, I again briefly discussed the matter with another priest during confession. I assumed that the matter would be further looked into by talking to this priest. At the time I did not understand the "seal of confession".
3. Over the years, I had a strong feeling that the matter had never been properly taken care of. I began to also feel guilty that I had not done enough to prevent this from happening to another child, and that responsibility was still on my shoulders. I know what this type of abuse can do to a person's life. The recent attention this subject has been given by the media, has also prompted new found knowledge in pedophilic behavior and the realization that the victims suffer lifelong consequences, and many times are stripped of a "normal" life.

4. I am not after money and have not sought legal counsel. For the reasons above, I feel God is directing me to do what I can to prevent any additional abuse and for the Diocese to seek out any past victims and offer proper therapy and counseling.

Bishop, I can offer the following references as to my character and credibility:

1. Fr. Larry O'Keefe - Fr. Larry is the priest I first discussed this matter with during the 1974 Search.
2. Monsignor Leo Gomez
3. Served on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for Diocese of Gallup, [REDACTED]

Bishop, I look for your immediate response by calling me at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to set up a phone conference or face-to-face meeting. Working together we can do our best to put an end to child molestation by priests that may exist today in the Diocese of Gallup.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

[REDACTED]



THE MOST REV. DONALD E. PELOTTE
DIOCESE OF GALLUP
P.O. BOX 1338
GALLUP, NEW MEXICO

87301

Received Sept. 11,
1989

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