

Re: Case of Rev Thomas Creagh

On March 8th Father Creagh came to see me about an incident that had already been brought to my attention by Father Williams after a conversation with Father Duerr. On March 6th Father Creagh sexually molested a 15-year old boy named MS-15. The incident occurred in the rectory of St Albert's parish. The two had been friends for some time, and Father Creagh had often expressed interest in the boy's schooling, religious practices, etc. While Father Creagh did not express remorse over the incident, he was clearly embarrassed at having to confess the incident, which the boy had revealed to his parents immediately after it took place.

On March 18th the boy's father, accompanied by his attorney, Norma Miller and her husband Bruce Miller, came to the chancery. They demanded \$150,000.00 in damages, the removal of Father Creagh from his parish, and absolute assurance that such an incident would not occur again in the archdiocese. Mr John Ford, whom I engaged on behalf of the archdiocese, joined the group. I found the demands extortionary, and the attitudes hostile and vindictive.

While I was visiting St Paul during the following week, I sought advice from archdiocesan officials. They made the following points:

- 1) it is necessary to have an exact description of what happened;
- 2) if the incident is overtly sexual in character, the priest should be removed from his assignment and sent out of the diocese (e.g. Via

DAR 01315

Coeli, House of Affirmation). His continued presence is likely to enrage the parents.

3) it is appropriate to offer some money to offer help for the medical expenses incurred by the victim ;

4) it is not always possible to stay out of court, but it is the victim who suffers the most from such action

5) if there is liability insurance, the insurance company must be involved from the beginning.

6) a statement must be kept at hand:
(I drafted the following message: It is with deep regret that I contemplate the events recently brought to public light. There is real tragedy here for everyone concerned, and I extend heartfelt sympathy to all who are involved. Beyond that I assure them of the Church's strong support in facing the current situation and our prayerful hopes for the future.)

7) if the incident gets any publicity, it is likely that more cases will follow.

8) the one who handles the case (bishop or chancellor) will likely require some counselling.

Around March 28th Mr Ford indicated to Mr Miller that the archdiocese would offer \$10,000 in damages, but would not meet any other demands. On April 4th Father Creagh left for the Holy Land on a previously planned pilgrimage. Because we had received no reply on the case from Mr Miller, I sought and received ^{from Father Creagh} the attached request

for a leave of absence from his pastorate.

DAR 01316

Meanwhile Fr Creagh, with the encouragement of Mr Ford, obtained his own lawyer, Mr Bob Jones. Mr Jones was approached by Mr Miller and agreed to raise some additional money. To date he has not been able to do this, but as of this date the following are foreseen: 1) the archdiocese will pay \$10,000.00, as agreed from the beginning; 2) Father Creagh will sign a note for \$10,000.00 payable in September, with Mr. Jones cosigning. Father Creagh never had to be absent from the parish, nor has there been any scandal so far.

Thomas C. Kelly NP

June 14, 1983

DAR 01317