

January 22, 1990

Wife of MS-6
[REDACTED]

Archbishop Thomas Kelly
John Ford, Atty.
Catholic Chancery Office
College Street
Louisville, Ky.

Dear Archbishop Kelly and Mr. Ford:

I had the pleasure to meet you both 3-4 weeks ago when I was there with my husband and my Mother and Father-in-law regarding an incident between my husband and Father Miller. Since yourself and Mr. Ford expressed your sincere concern for my husband's psychological counselling, and since we have not received any correspondence nor telephone follow-up regarding this incident, I felt the need to express my feelings. Time and the intensity of my emotions the day that we met, prevented me from rationally expressing everything that I needed to say.

First let me address the incident between my husband and Father Miller. My family and I are aware that Mr. Ford has made a statement that when it came down to the final line, on a scale of 1 to 10, that this incident definitely was not a 10. Even though the statement was made to our attorney friend and not to us personally, it made me doubt whether anyone in the Chancery Office was able to empathize fully with the enormous impact this incident has had on my husband's life and my family's. So I plan to tell you.

The first mistake was Father Miller's choice of young men. My husband is naturally shy, dyslexic, and always wants to please. Maybe another child would have come forward immediately and even asked Father Miller what in the hell he was doing. I believe it would have been much better for Father Miller if it had come out at the time of the incident. But it did not.

Over the years, my husband learned to deny incidences that were unpleasant or hurtful, instead of coping with them and being finished with them. Trust of people closest to him developed into an issue. Even after taking the vows of marriage with me, problems arose with attempts to prove his heterosexuality or self-worth with other women. Incidences with employers and other figures of authority through the years, has cost MS-6 valuable time and money lost from his career pursuits.

Through threats of suicide, severe anxiety and depression, hospitalization at Our Lady of Peace, numerous therapists, my in-laws and I have been at a loss to understand why MS-6 felt so tormented at times. It was only after I asked MS-6 for a divorce in December that this incident with Father Miller finally came out into the open. I understand now some of the reason for his feelings because, unfortunately, I have a lot of those feelings now too.

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Unredacted

For myself, as I look back over the last 5 years of my life, Father Miller always seemed to be there for me when I needed him. I hope that I got across to you that I thought Fr. Miller was basically a very good man, but a man with a problem. During the immediate period after MS-6 told me about Father Miller, I felt numb and incapable of feeling anything. The numbness gave way to anger, disillusionment, disappointment, betrayal, and melancholia. As I have begun to come to terms with my feelings, one thought will not go away. If Fr. Miller had not known of MS-6's problems over the last 4 years, then his blame in my eyes would be greatly lessened. But Louis Miller has held me when I've cried because of MS-6's infidelities and problems, and has known each crisis along the way, yet never came forward and said, "Maybe this incident will give us some help in sorting out MS-6's behavior". But he did not. And Archbishop, you mentioned the day of our meeting that "Lou" probably didn't even understand what kind of effect that this kind of trauma could have on a child. I questioned your statement that day and we discuss the "crumbling of pillars". I'll question it further today by asking what kind of moral human being, regardless of whether he was a priest or not, could watch a family be torn apart for years and not come forward with this information?

Most of these questions, maybe by the grace of God, I'll come to answers on my own some day.

My husband has retained an attorney to make contact with you. I feel that you have a moral obligation to make the first move. I do not understand why MS-6 would have to retain an attorney to assist him in negotiations with your Office. Perhaps my naivete' shows too strongly sometimes, but I would have thought in terms of what I feel is ethical, you would have contacted MS-6, instead of him having to suffer another humiliation insofar as having to ask for something that you promised verbally in our meeting.

So, Okay Mr. Ford, I'll give you that the act itself was not a 10. Not in comparison to today's world, where sexual abuse and torture of children is rampant, and the acts themselves are unspeakable. And you may have said that to make us aware that financially, compensation would more than likely be minimal. And Archbishop, maybe you brought up the near bankrupt Louisiana diocese to let us know that you will protect your own archdiocese from such scandal and financial ruin.

And as far as financial compensation is concerned, there is not enough money in the Catholic Church's coffers to make up for the despair my family has felt through this ordeal. During my childhood and up until now, my heart would always beat a little faster each Sunday as I received Communion. I have a difficult time now even going to Communion. I choked back sobs all through the Christmas holiday services because I felt so alone when I was inside a Catholic church. I look at every priest now with a cynical eye. Can your money give me back my faith in our beliefs of Holy Orders? Can you help me feel that joy again as I go to Communion? Can you give me back my husband and restore our marriage to any state that is liveable? Can you wave away my in-laws deep sense of betrayal and sadness after years of friendship and trust with Lou? And most importantly, can your money turn back time and let us see how MS-6 would have matured and grown without this incident to struggle with through his adolescence and young adulthood?

As I have written this, I have wished that I could be more articulate or eloquent because my purpose in writing this has been critical to my peace of mind and to your full understanding of this situation.,

My number one concern has to be that you take this seriously enough that to the best of your personal ability, you will protect our children from clergy with this problem. And since I've gone this far, when is the Church going to admit that sex is such a natural God-given gift, that He did not mean for any of us to live a life of abstinence? And doesn't that severe restriction of one of life's most basic functions turn some of our priests toward inappropriate releases of that need? Why can't a man have a fervent love for God and a passionate love for a woman? And because of a love for a woman, would he be any less a man of God. Please do not take for granted that because the vows of celibacy have been in place for 2000 years, that we can just ignore the problems it causes, and let that vow stand in the way of recruiting zealous young men and women into lives dedicated to each other and their God.

I feel that you need to know that my husband, his attorney, his therapist, nor my in-laws know that I have written this letter. This letter does not necessarily reflect any of these peoples' opinion. Only mine. And I sure feel a damn bit better for having written it.

I guess everything that I have wanted to say is finally out. Thank you for the time taken to read this letter. I hope that this is a first step for me in recovering from this ordeal.

Wife of MS-6
