

October 26, 1992

Dear Mr. MS-7 :

Your letter of October 19th arrived this morning. I am so deeply sorry for the pain you experienced as a youth at Holy Spirit and at St. Joseph's. It is some relief to learn that you have received psychological counseling and therapy, but you are right to acknowledge the full extent of the damage. My prayer is that you will continue to seek whatever help is necessary. For my part I beg forgiveness from you both on behalf of this arch-diocese which I serve and on behalf of those who harmed you.

As soon as I received your letter I called your parents. Your mother was not at home, but [redacted] and I talked for a while. I expressed to him my deep regret over what had happened to you and the pain they must have felt learning of this even thirty years later.

It is important for me to know the names of those who victimized you. I urge you to inform me, first of all so that no more harm may be done and secondly so that they may be helped through therapy if that is possible. If you allow me to deal with this appropriately and to your satisfaction, it may be possible to provide an alternative to the public course of action you currently contemplate. While I recognize that this is a matter for you to decide, I am also anxious to spare your parents the pain of public disclosure. Nonetheless, I freely acknowledge that therapy and counseling may well have brought you to the point where such disclosure is necessary for your own well-being, and that I would regard as having the highest priority in a matter that has been a source of so much pain to you for so many years.

It is hard for me to describe my own feelings in this matter. Recently I was interviewed by a reporter who wanted to know about these emotions. I answered--he had to work a while to get this out of me--that I had wept when I saw the television reports of Father Porter. The violation of trust and the enduring pain of his

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victims seems to me to be about the worst thing I can imagine. I write this not to deter you from any course of action but only that you may know how deeply I regret what happened to you, in this city and in this archdiocese where my ministry depends totally on the trust that others place in me and in those who share my ministry to be a force for good in their lives. It is impossible to be sincere about my work without feeling deeply the pain that you have experienced.

With prayerful best wishes,

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Archbishop of Louisville

MS-7