

House of Affirmation

Webster Groves, Mo. 63119

May 16, 1984

Dear Bishop Genebra,

Having now been at the House of Affirmation for five months and having worked extensively with Dr. Genner. During that time, I have felt the need to communicate with you the substance of what has been happening with my life. Please excuse the handwritten format, as it is difficult to come by a typewriter for personal use. Please also understand that I am writing in consultation with Dr. Genner.

I am deeply grieved & ashamed at what I have put you through personally & the diocese through collectively. Much time & suffering has gone into my wrestling with the consequences of my actions of the last year. Frankly, I feel a great sense of embarrassment & loss because of what I have done. I am sorry that

I have violated your confidence & the trust that was placed in me at ordination.

As I have worked through the House of Affirmation program, I have discovered the deep emotional hurts that I've carried all my life. Much of the love & support that I needed growing up was denied me at home, so I've sought it elsewhere. Perhaps it is that love & support, through its absence, that has caused me the greatest suffering as an adult. Here in Missouri I have learned that I can relate to adults on a meaningful & supportive level.

I have learned about the good that is within me while emerging from the suffering & darkness that has left me afraid for so many years. I feel very good because there is no more darkness - nothing left to hide. I cannot express the freedom that comes as a result of that.

I am grateful for your support in allowing me or, in fact, in sending me to the House. You have given me the opportunity to deal with my hurts so that I need not hurt anyone else again. You have, in a very real way, given me the freedom to become untapped from my inadequacies & to realize myself as a worthwhile & good person.

The heart of my struggle has been a strong sense of the presence of our loving, healing & forgiving God. It is He who has given me the motivation to work hard at overcoming my inappropriate behaviors. Consistently I have felt the continuing call to priesthood, have examined it painstakingly, & had it affirmed by many others here. It really does seem right.

I have also felt a great sensitivity to you & to the Diocese. I do not wish to cause you

any hardship beyond what I have already done. I do not wish to cause further scandal by my presence, or to be unable to function because of the fear of meeting the people who were involved in the case, or those who may have some knowledge of the circumstances. Therefore I am willing to serve in another Diocese if that is suitable to you. Needless to say, I would be upfront about my circumstances to any prospective Bishop.

Dr. Gorman & I look forward to a visit from you, Bishop Melroe or whomever you might designate. Be assured that I am grateful for your ongoing support. I look forward to continuing in this program, which has been a blessing, & to continued communication with you for a fruitful & beneficial resolution to all these issues.

God Bless You!

Peace,
Mark