

REC'D MAR 6 2002

Dear Vicar General,

I am writing this letter with a sad heart. I recently read about the dismissal of Rev. Michael Pecharich, or Father Mike as I remember him, from his position due to an admitted relationship with a young man 19 years ago. I was stunned to see his name, and shocked to hear that he was being removed due to an old "isolated" incident.

You see all this brings back a sad time in my life, when Father Mike betrayed my and my twin brothers trust, and molested us. I cannot speak for my brother on facts, as pride and embarrassment never let us talk about what went on more than "he tried to molest you?" "yeah me too". Twenty-two years ago I was an alter boy at San Antonio De Padua Catholic Church in Anaheim Hills, and Father Mike was the leader of the Youth Ministry Group. It was over the course of several meetings where he was counseling me through a tough spot in my adolescence, where he progressively, with each meeting, became more and more physically aggressive. I was at a place in my life where I needed to hear and know how much I was loved, as my father never told me or showed me. My parents at the time did not believe me, and accused me of fabricating the story so as to avoid talking to a priest who would tell me the "right" things to do. I let it go and figured when he left the parish it was over. It wasn't until some of the other alter boys started talking, that we found out someone had told their parents and their parents had addressed the Pastor at the time (Father Shamus) and Father Mike was removed (actually just moved). All I remember was how relieved I was never to have to see him again.

I have used this experience as an incident that "happened" to me, and it has taught me that priests are just men, and they have nothing to do with my "Faith". It actually helped me deepen my personal relationship with God.

I know that as a believer in Christ I follow a path that will lead me to Heaven some day, and I know that there is a reason for everything. Please know this letter has not been written out of anger, but a sense of responsibility I feel towards the statement that this was an isolated incident. The man I remember did not act accidentally, or apologize, but let me know that as close as we were we couldn't tell anyone as they would not understand.

I don't think I ever will
[REDACTED]

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