

JUAN J. VACA
199 Philip St.
Holbrook, N.Y. 11741
U.S.A.

October 28, 1989

HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

Vatican City.

RE: Laicization

Your Holiness:

I have been ordained into the priesthood for the Legion of Christ in November 1969, and incardinated in the Diocese of Rockville Centre in October 1982. I officially left the active ministry on March 27, 1989. This letter is written with the intention of respectfully requesting my laicization in order to rectify the error made by being ordained into the priesthood.

Since the date of my ordination I have been painfully struggling with some of the priestly responsibilities, in particular with those related to intellect adherence to some disciplinary norms and celibacy life. I was not properly trained to live up to them because of two main reasons. First, because I was recruited from my home for the Order of the Legion of Christ when I was just ten years old. Second, because of the serious traumas I suffered for years of being sexually and psychologically abused by the Superior General and Founder, Marcial Maciel.

Back home in Mexico I was a happy child -the oldest of four (two sisters and one brother), active and involved in school and church activities, like altar boy and boy scout. My parents were parishioners of outstanding good reputation, very active in various parish programs and projects. Love, concern and responsibility were the values in our happy family. I soon felt deprived of all the benefits of a good family life, because at the age of ten

I was taken from my home by the priest Marcial Maciel, who at that time was founding the Legion of Christ. In October 1949, being just twelve years old, this priest convinced my parents to let him take me to Spain, with promises of getting for me the best education in Europe.

Few months after my arrival in the seminary of the Legion of Christ (at that time, in Cobreces and Comillas, Santander, Spain), this priest and founder, Marcial Maciel, started to abuse me sexually, in the same way I soon realized he was doing to other seminarians. For the next twelve years I couldn't get away from suffering his abuses and the impact of his shocking behavior. Due to the confinement, strict community discipline and cultist control of mind and conscience this Founder exercised on all of us, there was not a way for us to inform the proper authorities about him.

In 1963, I made an attempt to inform some bishops in Rome, who were attending the Vatican Council and staying at our quarters in Via Aurelia. Marcial Maciel knew from one of his informants that I have written down such information to be delivered to the proper Vatican authorities. He reacted with such an anger that, from that moment on, I was not considered any more "his son", his secretary and travel companion, instead he interrupted my Theology studies at the Gregorian, and sent me to Spain to work for long six years as dean of discipline at his Minor Seminary in Ontaneda, Santander, as well as vocational director and fund raiser.

For those twelve years I was kept in Europe away from my parents and family. I was not allowed to see them or keep close contact with them. When this Founder was

convinced, after six years, that I would keep silence about him, he induced me to be ordained in order to keep me in his Community and, in this way, making impossible for me to reveal to outsiders his aberrations and unspeakable way of life.

At that time, I accepted to be ordained because, being already 33 years old, I believed it was too late for me to do anything else in the world outside of the priesthood. At the same time, I was afraid of causing pain and grief to my parents if I ever left the priesthood.

After my ordination, Marcial Maciel kept me continuously occupied with higher and higher responsibilities, afraid that I may abandon his Order some day. But, after being the President of the Legion of Christ in Orange, Conn. for five years, I could not stand any more the corruption and personality disorder of this Founder. I started to feel very desilussioned with the Order and with my priestly condition. Under these circumstances I decided to leave the Order and see if I could continue in the priesthood as a diocesan priest.

From March 1976 to January 1980, I made all efforts to enjoy my priestly ministry in a parish setting (St. Christopher's, Baldwin, N.Y.). I could not find satisfaction, and felt more and more distant from my priestly character. I realized, at that point, I was never called to be a priest, just forced into it by the circumstances of my life with the Founder of the Legion of Christ. I did not succeed at finding happiness and peace of mind as a priest. Then, in August 1978, my father dies and, for the first time, I started to experience a deep sense of relief and liberation. I could now leave the priesthood, and get eventually married. I always wanted to be free to love

a woman who could be my companion and wife for the rest of my life. I was never morally free to make a personal option for myself before. Then, four months after my father's death, I took a leave of absence, with the intention of marrying this person I have been in love with for more than six months. At that point, I requested the processing of my laicization.

Every thing seemed to go well, when suddenly my mother started to get very sick and upset because of my decision of leaving the priesthood. I was not ready to see my mother under such a condition. At that time, I did not understand that she was unconsciously forcing me to go back to the active ministry. Besides, I did not get the employment I was promised to have, which made me see the fact that I was not prepared to deal with the uncertainties of the world of work. So, instead of following my feelings and last decision, I went back to the active ministry for another nine years.

During those nine years, I felt more and more unhappy, frustrated with the priesthood, and painfully yearning for a married life. I tried to commit myself to my ministry, helping and serving those who had any need. On doing this, I started to help a family in particular (father, mother and six children -ages 10 to 25, back in 1980). The father was unemployed, always drinking and unconcerned for his family and wife; they had stopped living as husband and wife ten years before. Little by little I became the substitute father and provider for this family. I felt a deep sympathy and compassion for the mother and, after a while, we fell deeply in love. All the family members and relatives regarded me as their best friend and the provider for their financial and emotional problems. Since I so seriously took upon me

the responsibility of providing for all their needs and I wanted so much for them to feel happy, I started to borrow money from different sources in order to meet my growing monthly bills. This situation placed myself in bankruptcy, caused me a serious depression and, finally, precipitated a nervous breakdown that sent me to the hospital for two weeks. I felt like my entire world has collapsed. Three times I wanted to die. I could not take life as it was any more. I felt like betrayed and abused by my own mother the Church, because the authorities in Rome knew since 1956 some of the unspeakable personality disorders of Marcial Maciel, like his drug addiction, criminal sexual conduct, and the founded charges made by the Spanish Police against him in 1956. There I was about to die in a hospital, victim of the sexual and psychological abuses made by a man who enjoyed the highest reputation in the Church, highly esteemed by the Pope and Vatican dignataries, and who was able to deceive them all.

Why Rome never did any thing to do justice for so many of us, victims of the horrendous abuses committed by this Founder, Marcial Maciel? - I was in his bedroom of Salvator Mundi Hospital the day when Cardenal Valeri came and saw him in the pathetic state of drug addiction. I myself, as President of the Legion of Christ, signed checks and money orders to be delivered to Vatican dignataries and officials in the name of Marcial Maciel. His intention with these "Mass intentions" and "charity donations" was obvious, to secure their influence and approval for him and his organization.

After my hospitalization on April 1989, I accepted to be a resident at the Albuquerque Villa, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, program of renewal and rehabilitation for priests, conducted by the Servants of the Paraclete and a staff of

psychologists, psychiatrist and counselors. As a result of this three months experience, I accepted to try once more the active ministry, this time in the Diocese of Honolulu, Hawaii. I tried the best I could, I prayed more than ever, cultivated healthy friendships among priests and religious, sustained a regular spiritual guidance with one of the best priests of the Diocese and professional counseling with an excellent psychologist, Dr. Csaba. After eight months of these efforts I became convinced that my peace of mind and happiness was not in the priesthood. I could not find them as a priest, because I never choose myself to be a priest; others, like Marcial Maciel directly, and my parents, indirectly, made that choice for me.

After all those years of consultation, guidance and prayer, I asked again for a leave of absence. On march 27, 1989, I officially left the active ministry and started the painful process of looking for a suitable job. Four months of anxiety and frustration ended, when I finally was employed by this State educational institution , as counselor and case manager. At that point, for the first time in my life, I started to have this inner peace of mind and true happiness.

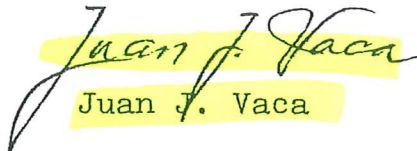
In these past and painful two years, my only support, besides my trust and faith in God, has been one person whom He has meant to be my life companion and wife. I have known her since 1985. I only started to think of her as a possibility for me in November 1988, when I became convinced in Hawaii that the priesthood was not for me. We both cared for each other very much, and started to date more seriously when I left the active ministry in March 1989. She received an annulment in 1984 and has a 15 year old son from her previous marriage. We are both

very compatible, and our love for each other is deep and strong. She is for me the best God-sent blessing in my life.

Because we both felt the same for each other, and for the best care of her son, we decided to get civilly married on August 31, 1989. Since that date, every day is a new experience of happiness and peace of mind for me. I feel closer to God now than when I was an active priest. Married life is what He intended for me. Of this reality I am totally convinced.

Holy Father, all we want, my dear wife and I, is our complete peace of mind by You granting me my laicization. We strongly desire to receive the sacrament of marriage and, on closing this petition, I respectfully request Your blessing for our happy married life.

Respectfully submitted,


Juan J. Vaca

Encl.: Curriculum Vitae.

His Holiness Pope John Paul II
Vatican City.

JUAN J. VACA

CURRICULUM VITAE (1)

BORN: Date: March 7, 1937 Place: Zitacuaro, Mich.,
Mexico.

PARENTS' NAMES: Father: Juan Vaca
Mother's Maiden Name: Mariana Rodriguez

BAPTISM: Date: March 13, 1937
Church: Ntra. Sra. de los Remedios, Zitacuaro, Mich.
Address: Ocampo 19 Pte., Zitacuaro, Mich., Mexico

SCHOOLS: From 1941 to 1947: Elementary School
Name: Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez (3 yrs)
Privada El Hogar (3 yrs)
Address: Zitacuaro, Mich., Mexico

From 1947 to 1949: Minor Seminary (In Mexico)
Name: Escuela Apostolica Legionarios
de Cristo
Address: Tlalpan, D.F., Mexico

From 1949 to 1953: Minor Seminary (In Spain)
Name: Colegio Mayor Legionarios de
Cristo, and Apsotolica L.C.
Address: Cobreces, and Ontaneda,
Santander, Spain.

Entered Novitiate: Date: Sept. 15, 1953
Name: Novitiate Legionari di Cristo
Address: Via Aurelia 677, Roma, Italy

First Profession
of Vows: Date: Sept. 15, 1955
Place: Same in Roma

Final Vows: Date: Sept. 15, 1960
Place: Same in Roma.

From 1955 to 1957: Juniorate Legionari di Cristo,
(Studies of Humanities)
Place: Same in Roma

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JUAN J. VACA

CURRICULUM VITAE (2)

From 1957 to 1960: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana,
Licentiatus in Philosophia
Address: Piazza della Pilota, Roma, Italy.

From 1960 to 1963: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, Roma.
and
Licentiatus in Theologia.

From 1969 to 1970 (Interruption due to personal resentment
of Superior General, Marcial Maciel)

From 1963 to 1969: Work as Vocational Director, Teacher,
Dean of Discipline, Dean of Studies
Place: Apostolica Legionarios de Cristo,
Ontaneda, Santander, Spain, and
Novitiate L.C., Dublin, Ireland.

ORDINATION: Date: November 26, 1969
Place: Roma, Italy
By Whom: Card. Ildebrando Antoniuti
For which Order: Legionari di Cristo.

ASSIGNMENTS AS PRIEST:

1969 to 1971: Vice Rector of Minor Seminary
of Legion of Christ, Ontaneda,
Santander, Spain.
Vocational Director, and Spirit-
tual Director for same place.

1971 to 1976: Rector of Novitiate Legion of
Christ, Orange, Connecticut.
President of The Legion of
Christ, Inc, for U.S.A.

1976 to 1979: Pastor Asst., St. Christopher's,
Baldwin, N.Y., Diocese of RVC.

1980, Jan. to June: Leave of Absence. First
intent for laicization.

1980, June to Nov.: Pastor Asst., St. Mary's,
Roslyn, N.Y.

1980 to 1981: Pastor Asst. St. Jude's, Mastic
Beach, N.Y.

1981 to 1987: Pastor Asst., St. Anne's,
Brentwood, N.Y.

Incardination in the Diocese of Rockville
Center. Date: October 6, 1982

(Cont.)

JUAN J. VACA

CURRICULUM VITAE (3)

ASSIGNMENTS AS PRIEST (Cont.):

1987 to 1988: Pastor Asst., St. Martin of
Tours, Amityville, N.Y.

1988 May-Agt.: Albuquerque Villa Program,
Albuquerque, N. M.

1988 Agt. to 1989 March: Asst. Pastor, Our Lady
of Sorrows, Wahiawa, Hawaii.

OFFICIALLY LEFT THE

ACTIVE MINISTRY: Date: March 27, 1989

ATTEMPTED MARRIAGE: Date: August 31, 1989

Name of Spouse: Migdalia Rivera

Place: Holbrook, N.Y.

By Whom: Judge Walter A. Saxton, V.J.

CHILDREN OF ABOVE UNION: None.
