

INDEPENDENT BOARD OF INQUIRY
Regarding St. Anthony's Seminary
P.O. Box 1065
Santa Barbara, California 93102

Dear student,

We are an Independent Board of Inquiry convened to investigate and assess instances of sexual conduct with students by faculty members of St. Anthony's Seminary, during the period from 1964 to closure of the school in 1987. Our purpose is to help victims get necessary therapy, to identify perpetrators, and to make recommendations to the Province of St. Barbara to ensure that such sexual molestations do not recur. The Board is composed of one friar and five professional and concerned lay people (please see the brief biographical statements enclosed for your reference).

In recent years, charges of sexual abuse have been made against Fathers Robert Van Handel and Philip Wolfe. The former priest is on administrative leave, and the latter priest entered a plea of nolo contendere in Santa Barbara Superior Court and served six months in the County Jail. Most recently, former students have come forward with allegations of physical and sexual abuse against Father Mario Cimmarusti.

While our purpose is to investigate incidents of sexual abuse, we recognize that victims sometimes remember or characterize such experiences in different ways. Therefore, if you believe you were the recipient of either physical or non-physical contact by a member of St. Anthony's staff or faculty, which hurt you or left you feeling confused, frightened, guilty or bad about yourself, we encourage you to make confidential (or even anonymous) initial contact with a member of this Board of Inquiry listed on the accompanying sheet.

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If you know of a former alumnus you think may not have received this letter, feel free to pass it on to him. We do want to be as thorough as possible. It is expected that the Board of Inquiry will continue its work at least through the summer of 1993.

We recognize that many former students and their family members have positive memories of their experiences with respect to St. Anthony's, and that the Seminary provided a quality education for many young men. It is not our intention to question or undermine those experiences, or to shock or upset any recipient of our letter. Rather, we write to you in the spirit of a continuing search for the truth and a commitment to integrity.

We thank you very much for your cooperation, and ask that you return the enclosed postcard.

Sincerely,

INDEPENDENT BOARD OF INQUIRY

By: _____
Geoffrey B. Stearns, Chairperson

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Enclosed please find a letter we have composed and are sending to former students of St. Anthony's Seminary. The letter should be self-explanatory.

We wish to extend an invitation to all former members of the faculty and staff of St. Anthony's to speak to us, and we would further greatly appreciate any cooperation or assistance you might be willing and able to lend us. If you know of any former faculty, staff or alumni you think may not have received this letter, feel free to pass it on to him or her. We do want to be as thorough as possible.

Please feel free to contact any member of our Board of Inquiry at the address or phone number listed on the accompanying biographical sheet.

Sincerely,

ST. ANTHONY'S BOARD OF INQUIRY

By: _____
Geoffrey B. Stearns, Chairperson

[Faculty/Staff Letter]

POSTCARD

The undersigned has received the letter from the
St. Anthony's Seminary Independent Board of Inquiry, and

_____ will respond further. Please contact me.

_____ will not respond further.

_____ will contact the Board by _____.
[date]

Date: _____

[signature of recipient]

[phone number]

[printed name]