



Released February 2014

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Diocese of Joliet

Tribunal

310 Bridge Street
Joliet, Illinois 60435-6399

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Diocese of Joliet

Office of the Bishop

425 Summit St.
Joliet, Illinois 60435

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June 9, 2010

His Eminence Claudio Cardinal Hummes, O.F.M.
Prefect
Sacred Congregation for the Clergy
Piazza Pio XII 3
00193 Rome, Italy,

Your Eminence,

I respectfully submit to the judgment of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy the attached petition of Michael Lawrence Gibbney, a priest of the Diocese of Joliet, to be reduced to the lay state and dispensed from all the obligations attached to Holy Orders, including that of celibacy.

Father Gibbney, now 62 years of age, was ordained to the priesthood on May 24, 1975. He withdrew from active ministry in June of 1992. He is currently working as a sales associate and lives in the Diocese of Joliet. He hopes to contract marriage with a Catholic woman, who is free to marry.

The following is preliminary information and background on Father Gibbney.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Michael Lawrence Gibbney was born on September 6, 1947 in Chicago, Illinois and is the second oldest of three children, having two sisters. His parents are deceased but they were active Catholics. Michael was educated in the following schools:

St. Alexander Catholic Grammar School, Villa Park, Illinois, 1952-1961
Quigley Preparatory Seminary, Chicago, Illinois, 1961-1964
St. Procopius Academy, Lisle, Illinois, 1964-1966
St. Charles Borromeo College Seminary, Romeoville, Illinois, 1966-1968
St. John Vianney College Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1968-1970
DeAndreis Seminary, Lemont, Illinois, 1970-1974

Michael repeated freshman year at Quigley Seminary after failing Latin. Generally, he was a below average student throughout his course of studies. Michael was ordained to the diaconate on May 31, 1973. However, his ordination to the priesthood was delayed in light of the concern of the seminary faculty regarding his poor academic standing and his lack of motivation in relation to spiritual exercises. Michael was ordained to the order of

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presbyter on May 24, 1975 at St. Alexander Catholic Church in Villa Park, Illinois.
After ordination to the priesthood, Father Michael was assigned as follows:

May 27, 1975, Associate Pastor, Immaculate Conception Parish, Elmhurst, Illinois
July 5, 1976, Associate Pastor, Visitation Parish, Elmhurst, Illinois
August 22, 1977, Associate Pastor, Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Elmhurst, Illinois
June 19, 1980, Associate Pastor, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Bolingbrook, Illinois
June 18, 1986, Associate Pastor, St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bensenville, Illinois
June 22, 1988, Associate Pastor, St. Liborius Parish, Steger, Illinois
June, 20, 1990, Pastor, Immaculate Conception Parish, Morris, Illinois
January 27, 1992, Resigned as pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish
June 1, 1992, Leave of absence

After his resignation as pastor, Michael spent time [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In April of 1992, Bishop Joseph L. Imesch wrote to Michael and granted him a leave of absence, effective on June 1, 1992. At the time, the reason for the leave of absence was in relation to Michael's unhappiness in ministry. However, by 1993, an allegation was made by a man who claimed that he had been sexually abused as a minor by Michael. There are eleven men who have alleged that they were sexually abused by Michael and financial settlements have been made. Since the charges were brought against Michael prior to the Dallas Charter, the Diocesan Review Board did not consider them.

CIRCUMSTANCES RELATED TO LEAVING MINISTRY

Father Michael Lawrence Gibbney is presently making this petition to the Holy Father for an indult of laicization. As to his reason for leaving ministry, it is necessary to examine his years of formation in the seminary. It is clear that he did not achieve academic success. He did not seem to ever work diligently. There is evidence that he lacked self-confidence. He involved himself in many outside activities as a means of avoiding responsibilities related to course work and even spiritual exercises. His superiors were also concerned about his grasp of theology and so it was recommended that his ordination to the priesthood be delayed for one year. Father Michael stated that he was unhappy in ministry. More significantly, it is evident that there were serious difficulties in his sexual adjustment. In his testimony which he provided for his petition, when asked if there were any problems in his sexual adjustment prior to ordination, he said that it was "not an issue." However, after ordination, when asked if he had any issues with sexual adjustment, his response was, "I do not think so." Given the subsequent allegations of abuse which have been made against Father Michael, it is clear that there indeed were serious issues in relation to his sexual adjustment which gravely affected his ministry. Thus, not only did Father Michael choose to request a leave of absence, it is clear that he could never be accepted back into active ministry.

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JUDGMENT ABOUT SCANDAL

Given the allegations of sexual abuse and the trend to laicize such priests, there will be no scandal given if the dispensation is granted.

VOTUM OF THE ORDINARY

Michael Lawrence Gibbney is presently making this petition to the Holy See for an indult of laicization. I support and endorse his request for the following reasons. First of all, it is evident that he struggled academically throughout his time in the seminary. His theological understanding was in question to the point that his ordination was delayed. Secondly, Michael's commitment to priestly ministry is questionable. His own insecurity had a major affect on his ability to focus on the needs of the laity rather than on himself. While not admitting to the perpetration of the sexual abuse of minors, his involvement with youth in compromising circumstances is without question. It is possible to state that Michael should never have been ordained and can never be permitted to exercise any priestly ministry.

Accordingly, your Eminence, may I recommend to the favorable judgment of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy the enclosed petition for Michael Lawrence Gibbney to be reduced to the lay state and dispensed from all the obligations attached to Holy Orders, including that of celibacy.

With renewed sentiments of highest esteem and personal good wishes, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend J. Peter Sartain
Bishop of Joliet-in-Illinois

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MANDATE

I, Bishop J. Peter Sartain, Bishop of Joliet-in-Illinois, hereby appoint the Very Reverend Joseph J. Tapella, JCL, Judicial Vicar, to instruct the petition of the Reverend Michael Lawrence Gibbney for a dispensation from all the obligations arising from Sacred Orders, including that of celibacy, so as to be returned to the lay state. I also appoint Reverend Richard L. Smith, JCL to serve as Notary in this case.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Joliet on this 31st day of March in the year 2010.

Most Reverend J. Peter Sartain
Bishop of Joliet-in-Illinois

Sister Judith A. Davies, OSF
Chancellor

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Michael L. Gibbney



April 1, 2010
Holy Thursday

Pope Benedict XXVI
The Holy See
Vatican, Italy

Your Holiness,

I humbly request your consideration in the matter of my laicization. I was ordained for the Diocese of Joliet in 1975. After eighteen years of ministry I left the priestly ministry in 1992. At the beginning of my priesthood I was very happy and felt the call to serve the Lord and the Church as a Priest. By 1992 I felt that I had given my self so entirely to the priesthood that I had no private life what ever and was no longer a happy priest. After several months of introspection, discernment and spiritual [REDACTED] counseling I asked for and received a leave-of-absence from the Diocese of Joliet.

I have been away from priestly ministry for eighteen years and have no desire to return. I have plans to marry a wonderful woman. She is free to marry in the Catholic Church and I would only want to be married in the Catholic Church. I have known her for sixteen years and we have become very close. At this time I cannot imagine life without her inspiration, help and love.

I therefore request to be released from all obligations of the priesthood including that of celibacy so I may continue my life, not as a priest, but in the good graces of the Catholic Church.

Humbly yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael L. Gibbney".

Michael L. Gibbney



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PETITION FOR LAICIZATION OF REVEREND MICHAEL L. GIBBNEY

Fr. Tapella: What is your name, current address and telephone number?

Michael Gibbney: Michael Gibbney



Fr. Tapella: What is your current occupation?

Michael Gibbney: Sales Associate

Fr. Tapella: What is the date and place of your birth?

Michael Gibbney:



Fr. Tapella: What was the name of your parents?

Michael Gibbney:



Fr. Tapella: Have they passed away?

Michael Gibbney: Yes.

Fr. Tapella: What is the diocese of your incardination?

Michael Gibbney: Diocese of Joliet.

Fr. Tapella: Would you describe your family background, such as the stability of your parent's marriage.

Michael Gibbney: Very stable. It was a great place to grow up. I never heard them argue to tell you the truth

Fr. Tapella: Do you have brothers and sisters?

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 610
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Michael Gibbney: I have two sisters, one older [REDACTED] and one younger [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Fr. Tapella: How was your relationship with your parents when you were growing up?

Michael Gibbney: Very good. Dad was the disciplinarian and mom was a mother.

Fr. Tapella: How was your relationship with your sisters?

Michael Gibbney: Well, my older sister and I fought when we were children; we get along much better now. We are all very close.

Fr. Tapella: What was the economic and social background of your family?

Michael Gibbney: I think it was like upper middle-class.

Fr. Tapella: Would you describe your religious practices and religious education in your home.

Michael Gibbney: We went to church every Sunday. I went to Catholic school, Catholic high school, and Catholic college. My parents were both daily communicants. They instilled that in me at a very early age.

Fr. Tapella: Would you describe your personal social development, for example your dating experiences.

Michael Gibbney: Not a lot of dating experiences. I took a girl to the prom once. I had a girlfriend for a little while when I was in St. Paul, nothing serious ever became of anything.

Fr. Tapella: When did you first consider becoming a priest?

Michael Gibbney: Probably in eighth grade when the priest came in and said does anybody want to take the entrance test for Quigley Seminary? That was directly after school and I did.

Fr. Tapella: What were your thoughts about becoming a priest at that time?

Michael Gibbney: It just seemed something I wanted to do and felt called to do.

Fr. Tapella: Did you consult anyone about your decision to enter the Seminary?

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Michael Gibbney: My parents obviously. They always supported me. At the parish I'm sure, I don't remember who it was, maybe Fr. Stempora was the parish associate, I talked to him. My parents always supported me. Whenever I would go back to school; my father would say now don't do this on account of us.

Fr. Tapella: Where did you study for the priesthood?

Michael Gibbney: I started at Quigley in Chicago and then transferred to St. Procopius in Lisle and then I was at St. Charles Borromeo for two years and then to St. John Vianney, St. Thomas College in St. Paul, Minnesota and then to DeAndreis for theology.

Fr. Tapella: Was there any interruption in your course of studies?

Michael Gibbney: No.

Fr. Tapella: During your Seminary years were there any serious moral problems that could have been considered obstacles to your seeking or accepting ordination?

Michael Gibbney: Not to my knowledge.

Fr. Tapella: Was there any undo pressure or influence in regard to seeking or accepting ordination?

Michael Gibbney: No, not at all.

Fr. Tapella: Would you describe the condition of the Seminary during your theology years; your opinion of the moral standard in the Seminary.

Michael Gibbney: Moral standard in the Seminary was by the book, I guess you would say..

Fr. Tapella: Was there regularity and quality in your spiritual exercises while in the Seminary?

Michael Gibbney: Yes, I spoke with my Spiritual Director regularly.

Fr. Tapella: What about in the Seminary itself as far as they offered Morning Prayer for example and daily Mass, etc.

Michael Gibbney: Yes, every day.

Fr. Tapella: And you participated in this?

Michael Gibbney: Yes. There might have been a couple of mornings that I over slept.

Fr. Tapella: How would you say the spiritual exercises in the Seminary affected your own spiritual growth?

Michael Gibbney: One thing it instilled was about the Office, it's always been, to me, a beautiful prayer.

Fr. Tapella: Was the obligation of celibacy fully explained to you prior to your ordination to the diaconate?

Michael Gibbney: I believe so.

Fr. Tapella: Would you say you fully understood the nature of that obligation?

Michael Gibbney: Yes.

Fr. Tapella: Did you freely assume the obligation of celibacy?

Michael Gibbney: Yes.

Fr. Tapella: Did you have any problems with sexual adjustment before ordination?

Michael Gibbney: No.

Fr. Tapella: Did you have any problems with sexual adjustment after ordination?

Michael Gibbney: I don't think so.

Fr. Tapella: How would you say your concept of the priesthood changed and deepened during your years in the Seminary?

Michael Gibbney: I was allowed to work in my home parish while I was at DeAndreis. I think that and the association with the priests there deepened my desire.

Fr. Tapella: Was there any hesitation in receiving orders?

Michael Gibbney: No more than anybody else.

Fr. Tapella: When were you ordained to the diaconate?

Michael Gibbney: 1973.

Fr. Tapella: That was in Joliet?

Michael Gibbney: That was at St. Charles Borromeo.

Fr. Tapella: Where were you ordained to the priesthood and when?

Michael Gibbney: I was ordained a priest at St. Alexander Church in Villa Park on May 24, 1975.

Fr. Tapella: Would you list your assignments.

Michael Gibbney: As a deacon I was at Notre Dame in Clarendon Hills, I was assigned at Immaculate Conception in Elmhurst, and to Visitation in Elmhurst, and to Mary Queen of Heaven in Elmhurst, and then out to Bolingbrook to St. Francis of Assisi, and then to Bensenville at St. Charles Borromeo, then to St. Liborius in Steger and finally pastor at Immaculate Conception in Morris. So I started and ended at Immaculate Conception.

Fr. Tapella: Would you say you enjoyed priestly ministry and its responsibilities?

Michael Gibbney: I did up until the end.

Fr. Tapella: Would you describe ways you took initiative in responding to pastoral needs in your priestly ministry?

Michael Gibbney: Basically anything that was asked I did whether it was by the pastor or people in the parish who needed help.

Fr. Tapella: During your priesthood how faithful were you to private spiritual exercises, such as rosary, breviary, and sacrament of reconciliation.

Michael Gibbney: Rosary not so much, but breviary everyday and reconciliation as often as I could.

Fr. Tapella: Did you have a Spiritual Director?

Michael Gibbney: Yes.

Fr. Tapella: You saw that person regularly?

Michael Gibbney: Yes.

Fr. Tapella: Were there any expectations you brought to the priesthood that were not met?

Michael Gibbney: I don't think so.

Fr. Tapella: In general, what failures personal or in your priestly ministry did you experience?

Michael Gibbney: At the end when I was in Morris I wasn't happy doing what I was doing. Morris was more of a fish bowl than any other parish I had ever been in and that's what kind of blew it I think.

Fr. Tapella: Could you expand on what you mean by it was more a fish bowl because we are talking about people reading this who won't necessarily understand what you mean.

Michael Gibbney: The rectory was literally wrapped around the inside of the church and the school. People would always have to know you were home. Once when I was alone and I had the flu and the police were knocking on the door because I had to go to the hospital and anoint a dead person. I believed I deserved a private life and that was stolen from me.

Fr. Tapella: Did you address that issue with anyone or try to resolve it?

Michael Gibbney: No, I did not.

Fr. Tapella: To what extent did you share with other priests difficulties you experienced in priestly ministry?

Michael Gibbney: I talked to Fr. Frank Vitus quite often. We commiserated with each other.

Fr. Tapella: Was there any alcohol or chemical dependency or serious illness whose consequences might have influenced your present decision in any way?

Michael Gibbney: No.

Fr. Tapella: Would you give the reasons you left the active priesthood.

Michael Gibbney: I was no longer enjoying being a priest. I was on sabbatical, I was waiting in [REDACTED] trying to decide what to do and it just came to me, I think I'd be happier someplace else and it was that I had no private life anymore. I guess that is one thing I didn't expect in the priesthood. It's one thing to be told you'll be twenty-four hours on call and it's quite another to actually live it. I applied for a leave of absence and it was granted and I never came back.

Fr. Tapella: So your long-range plans are to do what?

Michael Gibbney: To be married.

Fr. Tapella: Is the person you wish to marry free to marry?

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 615
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Michael Gibbney: Yes, she is.

Fr. Tapella: Do you plan to work and live in the area where you were known as a priest?

Michael Gibbney: No.

Fr. Tapella: Are you confident that those who know you are supportive of your desire to be laicized?

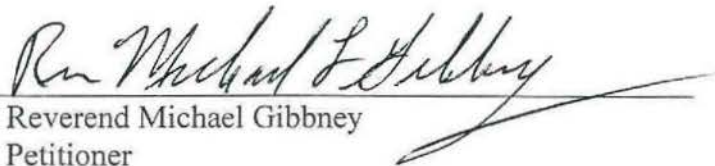
Michael Gibbney: Yes, when I mentioned it to Fr. Frank Vitus he said it's about time.

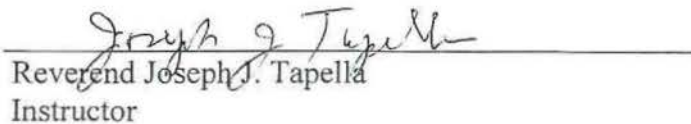
Fr. Tapella: Is there anything you wish to add or modify in your testimony?

Michael Gibbney: I don't believe so.

Fr. Tapella: Do you swear before God that your answers are wholly true?

Michael Gibbney: I do so swear.


Reverend Michael Gibbney
Petitioner


Reverend Joseph J. Tapella
Instructor

April 7, 2010

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MICHAEL GIBBNEY

1. Can you comment on Michael's family background?
2. Are you aware of the circumstance surrounding Michael's decision to be ordained?
3. When did you first meet Michael?
4. Did Michael seem to enjoy his priestly ministry?
5. Did Michael try to meet the needs of the people of the parish?
6. In what way did Michael take initiative in responding to pastoral needs in his priestly ministry?
7. How did Michael get along with other priests and with the laity?
8. Was Michael receptive to following the directives of the pastor?
9. In conflict situations could Michael compromise to solve differences?
10. Did Michael exhibit anger in an appropriate manner or did he hold it in or act out aggressively?
11. What serious problems were perceived in Michael's priestly ministry?
12. Did Michael have any difficulties with the obligations of celibacy?
13. Please set examples in which Michael failed to fulfill his priestly responsibilities.
14. Do you have anything to add?
15. Do you swear to the truth of your statements?



Signature


Instructor

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 617
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1. Yes. He is the middle child of loving and supportive parents.
2. Somewhat, I was very young at the time.
3. 
4. Yes.
5. Yes.
6. H tried to improve relationships and communication with is parishioners.
7. He seemed to get along very well.
8. Yes, as far as I know.
9. Yes.
10. Appropriate manner.
11. None that I know of.
12. Not that I know of.
13. I don't know of any.
14. Michael is a good man and I hope that he's given the chance to pursue the life he wants.
15. Yes.



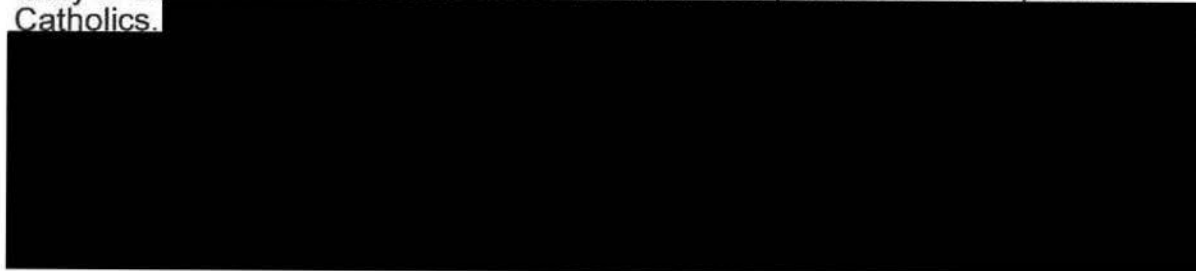
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MICHAEL GIBBNEY

1. **Can you comment on Michael's family background?** Mike has two sisters, Mary is older, and Rosemary is much younger. His parents were very devoted Catholics.



2. **Are you aware of the circumstance surrounding Michael's decision to be ordained?**

I am assuming that he was ordained for all of the reasons seminarians give for why they would want to be ordained.

I know Mike attended Quigley for either one year or two, and then he went to Benet when it was considered a high school seminary. He went on to St. Charles Borromeo for two years of college and then when St Charles closed he attended St. John Vianney Seminary in St. Paul MN. I know he valued those two years. I am sure he went there because his cousin was a tenured professor at St. Thomas College. He always spoke very fondly of his years in Minnesota. Michael then attended DeAndreis Seminary in Lemont.

Mike was a good student, and I think he had a desire to serve others and minister to their needs. He was extremely talented as a teacher, and he did get involved with those who he ministered to in the seminary.

3. **When did you first meet Michael?**

I first met him at a weekend to see what the seminary was like. I was a senior at Providence High School and I was discerning a vocation. I was invited to attend a weekend at St. Charles and I met Mike, John Stringini, Rusty Shaugnessy, and Mike Lane. All of them became priests. Those are the people that attracted me and helped me make my decision.

4. **Did Michael seem to enjoy his priestly ministry?**

Yes, He got along well in the parish, parishioners seemed to have liked his homilies, and he was good at teaching, and a willingness to be involved with his parishioners. His relations with his pastors however were another issue. More on that on question #8.

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5. Did Michael try to meet the needs of the people of the parish?

Mike was very creative in his approach to ministry, and he wanted to get involved with the parishioners in their activities. He was very active in the schools and when he was sent to a parish without a school, he missed it.

6. In what way did Michael take initiative in responding to pastoral needs in his priestly ministry?

For instance, He was asked to be a Fire Department chaplain, and he was able to set up briefing sessions with the firefighters to deal with difficult situations. This was done way before this became standard practice among police and firefighters. He did creative things with the children in the school. He used puppets in his homilies to the school children. Once at Morris he got a bunch of pumpkins donated and they had a carving contest. .

7. How did Michael get along with other priests and with the laity?

He got along well with the laity and he got along well with his associates in the parish. However, there were two exceptions both were priests who had other issues.

8. Was Michael receptive to following the directives of the pastor?

Ok, I need to preface these next questions with the following explanation. Please bear with me. I guess the question depends on how you define associate pastor, vs. assistant pastor. When Michael was given the opportunity to be a true associate to the pastor he flourished, however when he was considered an assistant, he bristled under authority of the pastor. Sadly to say Michael had only one pastor that treated him like an associate. He stayed at the parish for 5 years. It was a newly formed parish and he was given responsibility, and made to feel like a team player. In his other parishes he did not have pastors who either delegated authority or were more interested in being in charge and the boss rather than a co-worker. He did not stay at those parishes for very long.

9. In conflict situations could Michael compromise to solve differences?

He went along, we did a lot of sharing when he felt that something wasn't right but he went along, even if he was not happy.

10. Did Michael exhibit anger in an appropriate manner or did he hold it in or act out aggressively? As far as I know he dealt with it in an appropriate manner.

Yes I think he did. We did a lot of sharing and talking when he was angry with something but he always handled it in an appropriate way

11. What serious problems were perceived in Michael's priestly ministry?

Not as far as I can tell.

12. Did Michael have any difficulties with the obligations of celibacy?

No.

13. Please set examples in which Michael failed to fulfill his priestly responsibilities.

I can't think of any at the moment

14. Do you have anything to add?

When Mike became a pastor I felt he was very conscientious, and he was also the youngest pastor the parish had in many years. He was very eager to do things with the RE and the school. He was well liked by both groups. He had a good relationship with his staff. However, he did live with an older priest [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He was also consumed with the demands of the hospital and a number of nursing homes. One day he was upset that the hospital sent the police to wake him up so that he can respond to an emergency, when he himself was very sick with the flue. I felt that the parish ate him up literally and he had a hard time saying NO to people's demands. He left the parish after that telling me he had started to worry about his drinking. He went to counseling, and on Holy Thursday he wrote a letter to the bishop telling him he would not be coming back to priestly duties in the diocese.

[REDACTED] he got a job at St. Francis Hospice in Blue Island, [REDACTED]

15. Do you swear to the truth of your statements?

Signature: [REDACTED]

Instructor : [REDACTED]

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MICHAEL GIBBNEY

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2. Are you aware of the circumstance surrounding Michael's decision to be ordained?
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7. How did Michael get along with other priests and with the laity?
8. Was Michael receptive to following the directives of the pastor?
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11. What serious problems were perceived in Michael's priestly ministry?
12. Did Michael have any difficulties with the obligations of celibacy?
13. Please set examples in which Michael failed to fulfill his priestly responsibilities.
14. Do you have anything to add?
15. Do you swear to the truth of your statements?



Joseph J. Tynan
Instructor

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Mrs. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

To: Reverend Joseph J. Tapella

Witness Questionnaire for Michael Gibbney as answered by [REDACTED]

1. Michael's family background was a loving environment. Religion was a big part of the household. Michael and his two sisters, one older and one younger, were taught at a young age good manners and family values. He was very close to his parents throughout their lives.
2. The circumstance surrounding Michael's decision to be ordained was cultivated at a young age. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. I feel that Michael did enjoy his priestly ministry. This enjoyment was felt in how he communicated with parishioners and he had a gift for speaking which was reflected in the homilies he gave.
5. Michael did try to meet the needs of the people of the parish by having an active roll in parish activities and liturgies. I felt he made himself accessible to members of the parish.
6. In regards to how Michael took initiative in responding to pastoral needs, I am not familiar with this as I was not a member of his parish.
7. In my opinion Michael did get along well with other priests and the laity. He got along well with all people.
8. In regards to how Michael followed the directives of the pastor there are no conflicts I know of.

9. In conflict situations I feel that Michael was able to compromise and solve differences.
10. I felt that Michael's anger was used in an appropriate manner and he was very professional in emotional situations.
11. Any problems I perceived in affiliation with Michaels's priestly ministry were unknown to me.
12. [REDACTED] I am not aware of any difficulties he may have had with the obligations of celibacy.
13. I personally have no examples in which Michael failed to fulfill his priestly responsibilities.
14. In closing I wanted to express that Michael is a good person and he truly cares about people. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
15. I do swear to the truth of my statements.

[REDACTED]

TRIBUNAL RECORDS

Michael L. Gibbney has been able to do satisfactory work in his studies, by and by. He seems to be serious, sincere, and responsible. Mike is a bit difficult to get to know. He just does not seem to have anything to say. We saw an improvement in him after he had an accident with his car (serious for the car, minor for Mike), for it gave the community a chance to be concerned about Mike and I think Mike was encouraged. I think the lad is rather shy and lacking in confidence when among his peers. The faculty voted four in his favor, one against him, and one was doubtful. I would recommend that he be granted his requests for Tonsure and the first two Minor Orders.

1) Mike Gibbney: We believe that Mike is a good candidate for the Priesthood even though he is slow in studies. However, if he is going to get all the necessary information to be a successful priest, he is going to have to work hard and use the brains he has. That has been Mike's problem this year: he has given his studies only minimal attention. He has been distracted by many outside activities, especially work at Borromeo Seminary. Many have remarked, including his fellow Joliet students, that Mike is never around. I do believe that this denial of Orders at this time will be the incentive Mike needs to get him moving again.

Michael Gibbney has requested the Order of Acolytes. During this past year it seems that Michael has not been greatly involved in his major tasks of studying and being a good member of the seminary. He spent a great deal of time running about. As one of the faculty members said: "Mike is not preparing very well for the priesthood but will make a fine errand boy." I talked with Mike about these things and he seemed to recognize his mistakes. He accepted very well what I had to say and assured me that he will pursue the priesthood much more actively in the future. I tried too to build up Mike's own self-image, for I suspect that much of his shyness and lack of visibility is due to poor self-image. These matters were brought to Mike's attention just a month ago and I am sure that we are going to have to have much more time to observe Mike before we could vote positively for his advance. At the Faculty Meeting early in March the vote was: one in favor of Orders, four opposed and three doubtful. I would concur with the faculty and recommend that Mike not be advanced at this time.

Mike is better for this recent confrontation. He knows better where he stands and in what direction he should go. I would recommend that he be allowed to pursue his studies for the priesthood for another year, or at least the first quarter of next year. If we do not see improvement that promises final success in the priesthood I would then recommend that he be asked to terminate his studies.

Michael Gibbney. Michael Gibbney is asking for the ministry of Acolyte. Michael has grown a great deal during this year. He has ceased running out of the Seminary and has become a better student. While his openness with authorities still leaves something to be desired I think that he has made great progress. He seems to have a solid prayer life. He will become a better student when he learns to live with his limitations. He is not bright and is most reluctant to participate in class discussions. He is aware of this and trying to change. The Faculty voted six in favor of his advancement to Acolyte and one opposed. I would recommend his advancement. Mike is planning to ask for the Diaconate at the end of the year, but as I said above, the Faculty will look at that issue in due time.

CONFIDENTIAL

Rector Gaydos DeAnd.
2/25/71

Director Rohrich, DeAnd.
4/12/72

Rector Gaydos De And.
4/14/72

Rector Gaydos DeAnd.
3/3/73

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Released April 2014

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TRIBUNAL RECORDS

Redacted February 2014

TMJA
Released April 2014Rector Gaydos, DeAnd.
3/3/74

CONFIDENTIAL

Michael Gibbney: Since Michael did not indicate to me, or anyone else, what his mind was as to whether or not he asked the students the question, "Do you recommend Gibbney for advancement towards the Priesthood?" The response was: 27 saying yes; 1 saying no; 5 being doubtful and 18 abstentions. As you can see, the abstentions were significant for one who lives in such a small community. The complaints against Michael were that he was not around here enough, he was not interested in De Andreis, he contributed little, his attendance at common prayer and Mass was poor. I lowered the boom on Michael on February 13 of this year. I pointed out that he needed more balance between his work in deaconing at Clarendon Hills and his duties here. I asked him why he was so faithful there and so remiss here. He said that it seemed to be a matter of motivation. I then told him that if he were not at morning prayers every day for the rest of this year, I would see to it that he never got ordained. As Mike said to me, "That's motivation!" Mike has been quite faithful in his attendance at morning prayers. What is interesting is, that I did not say anything to him, specifically, about Mass attendance and while that may have improved, it was not the dramatic change that took place in regard to morning prayers.

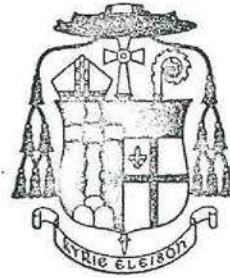
In the faculty discussion, there was a good deal of time spent trying to evaluate just what Michael has learned in a professional way. We seem to be of the opinion that Michael has advanced very little beyond the ninth grade catechism. He attempts to be glib but there is no substance to what he knows. He tells me that he spends an average of two hours in preparation for my classes. Either he is lying or he is extremely slow. The faculty is seriously doubtful that he will ever learn. In voting for him, 2 said yes; 2 said no; and 5 were doubtful. The two yeses were qualified; one being the provision that he ask for Priesthood and the other that this be only after a long probationary period.

Perhaps I should be apologetic about this situation, however, I am of the mind that preparing for the Priesthood is a long and gradual process. At any point in this process the recommendation of no further progress is to be expected. Just because a man is ordained a deacon and spends another year in the Seminary, there is no compulsion to advance him to Priesthood. Michael is a person who is most willing to give service. Perhaps he would make an excellent permanent deacon. We are afraid of what he would say to a parishioner if he were in charge. I suppose that while his transcript of credits is not very good, it does not reflect, as well as it should, the degree of dissatisfaction that I am now expressing. Quite frankly, this is the first year I had Mike in a small enough class to really see what makes him tick.

I was told by Mike that he is presently [REDACTED] and that he will not request the Priesthood until he "knows himself." I don't know any more about it than that. Perhaps Mike will, in the future, show enough interest and do enough private study that he could present himself as a worthy candidate for the Priesthood. I think that probably he has the basic intelligence but has never learned to use it to achieve what he must.

My recommendation, then, is that Michael Gibbney not be ordained to the Priesthood until a sufficient amount of time has passed for him to demonstrate his grasp of the essential elements of theology and until, of course, he gives evidence of such a grasp.

over



R O M E O

MISERATIONE DIVINA ET APOSTOLICAE SEDIS GRATIA
EPISCOPUS JOLIETTENSIS IN ILLINOIS

RAIMUNDUS IACOBUS VONESH, EPISCOPUS TITULARIS VANARIONENSIS

Omnibus praesentes litteras inspecturis salutem et in Domino benedictionem.

Notum facimus et testamur Nos Missam in pontificalibus celebrantes in oratorio

Ecclesiae Paroecialis S. Alexandri, apud Villa Park, Illinois,

dilectum Nobis in Christo

R.D. Michael Gibbney

omnibus de iure requisitis fideliter expletis, ad ordinem sacrum presbyteratus

die 24a mensis maii anno Domini 1975

rite, Deo iuvante, promovisse.

In quorum fidem has praesentes litteras a Cancellario Curiae Joliettensis
subscriptas, sigilloque munitas, dari iussimus.

Datum Joliettae

Die 29a mensis maii anno Domini 1975

+ R. J. Vonesh

Episcopus Joliettensis in Illinois
Auxiliaris

Thomas W. Tracy
Cancellarius

De mandato Episcopi

Redacted February 2014
TMJA
Released April 2014

Immaculate
Conception
Church 177 South York St. Elmhurst IL 60126

CONFIDENTIAL

24
000113

1876-1976

March 16, 1977

The Most Reverend Raymond J. Vonesh
Diocese of Joliet
425 Summit Street
Joliet, Illinois

Dear Bishop Vonesh,

In response to your phone call yesterday, I offer the following: Father Michael Gibbney came to Immaculate Conception and served the Parish as a Deacon for one year, and served here as a Priest for one year also.

My own personal appraisal is that Mike is really his own worst enemy. We all have problems in our relationships - he has more than the average, both in number and in size. He did not ask to leave Immaculate Conception, nor did I ask that he be removed. A year ago, there was a serious need for an associate at Visitation, and Mike was willing to go. He talked the matter over with me, and I had hopes that the "fresh start" might be good for him. In fact, I remember making the remark, "Jack will either make or break him."

I really suspect that he has been spoiled somewhat by his family, and has had his own way pretty much in life. He seems to be suffering from a kind of inferiority complex. He needs things to play with - e.g., photography, camping, mechanical things, etc. - and he displays considerable skill in some of these areas. I really think his life is made up mostly of "hobbies", including his priesthood.

To his credit, he related rather well with [REDACTED]. (But [REDACTED] was stronger than he, and perhaps "mothered" him somewhat). To his credit, he took a sincere interest in our high school seminarians and some other seminarian friends, and made them feel important.

My personal style in relating to Father Mike was to allow him freedom to move, and to be available to him if needed. I did not attempt to dominate nor manipulate him. Perhaps I failed to offer sufficient and adequate direct guidance. Recalling my own ^{five} years at Visitation, I felt that perhaps Monsignor Podesta could more comfortably offer such direct guidance. He is a head strong young man, and he does need guidance.

Perhaps, this is not much help. But it is what comes to my mind at this moment.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Art

Reverend Arthur J. Maher
Pastor

AJM/d

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 628
TRIBUNAL RECORDS

Redacted February 2014
TMJA
Released April 2014

REV. MICHAEL L. GIBBNEY

25
000262

April 16, 1992
Holy Thursday

The Most Reverend Joseph L. Imesch
Diocese of Joliet
425 Summit Street
Joliet, IL 60435

Dear Bishop,

I have been here [REDACTED] for two months now. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I have had a lot of time to
look into myself especially through prayer.

Although it will most likely come as a surprise to many, I have
been unhappy in my ministry for some time. When questions about my
vocation arose in the past I managed to shove them aside and keep
myself busy so I would not have to deal with them. I did this
subconsciously or course. Since I have been here my meditation has
been invaded by the thoughts of my vocation and whether I want to
continue in the active ministry. I have had the luxury of time to
think about this [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

People have asked me whether this questioning [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I have discovered that it has come about not because I
was "sent away" [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] in the quiet of my prayer my subconscious was able
to confront me with it.

[REDACTED] make a decision in
regard to continuing in active ministry. Being in the active
ministry is not the place to make that decision either.

I am therefore requesting a one year leave of absence from the
Diocese of Joliet and from active priestly ministry [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

You and my brother priests of the diocese are in my prayers in a
special way today.

Sincerely in Christ,

Michael L. Gibbney
Rev. Michael L. Gibbney

Redacted February 2014

TMJA

Released April 2014

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

April 24, 1992

Reverend Michael L. Gibbney
[REDACTED]

Dear Mike,

Thanks for the letter you wrote to me on Holy Thursday. I appreciated your prayers for myself and for our brothers in ministry.

I was glad that I had a chance to talk to you on the phone before receiving your letter informing me that you wanted to take a one year leave of absence at the conclusion of [REDACTED]. I guess it is always a shock for me when a priest says he wants to take a leave of absence, and your case was no different. I regret that we were not able to talk earlier about your unhappiness in ministry, but I realize that is not the easiest topic to bring up with one's bishop.

I can very well imagine that it was not easy to come to this decision to ask for a leave, and I give you credit for having the courage to do so. It will certainly not be easy re-entering the business world and finding a way to make a living. Yet, I agree with you that the best way to find out about returning to ministry is to not minister for awhile. I trust enough in the Lord that He will help to guide you in making the right decision.

You have been a good priest and have accomplished a great deal despite not being happy. I guess that means that you covered it well, even though I know it also means that there was considerable pain for you.

Mike, I plan on announcing your leave of absence, along with all of our priest assignments on the week-end of June 6-7. By that time we might know when to make it effective.

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 630
TRIBUNAL RECORDS

Redacted February 2014
TMJA
Released April 2014

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000207

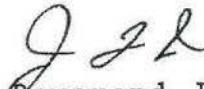
2.

As I mentioned to you on the phone, I plan on coming out to visit you on May 21st. I will be in touch with you before that time with regard to my plans, but I will probably fly in that morning and leave the next day. I believe a 4 o'clock appointment has been arranged for me on the 21st.

Mike, you are in my prayers each day. May this time be a time of growth and peace for you.

With every best wish,

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Joseph L. Imesch
Bishop of Joliet

He - Bishop Kopper

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 631
TRIBUNAL RECORDS

000379 32

Redacted February 2014

TMJA

Released April 2014

TO: Diocesan Review Committee
FM: Thomas A. O'Donnell *AO*
DATE: April 25, 2002
RE: Michael L. Gibbney

On April 25, 2003, at approximately 11:00AM, review committee member Thomas A. O'Donnell interviewed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The following is a non verbatim summary of the interview.

[REDACTED] was an eleven year old altar boy at Mary Queen of Heaven Church in Elmhurst, IL. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stated while he was an altar boy he was sexually abused by one of the parish priests, Father **MICHAEL L. GIBBNEY**, [REDACTED]. The first time Gibbney abused [REDACTED] was during an overnight trip to [REDACTED] Wisconsin [REDACTED] Gibbney, [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] on the trip and stayed overnight in a motel. That night Gibbney asked [REDACTED] if he would like a massage [REDACTED] During the massage Gibbney masturbated [REDACTED]

Gibbney continued to sexually abuse [REDACTED] approximately two times a month for the next three or four years. The abuse consisted of mutual oral sex and masturbation between [REDACTED] and Gibbney. Gibbney usually molested [REDACTED] in his room in the rectory at Mary Queen of Heaven Church. Gibbney would ask [REDACTED] to stay overnight when the pastor, Father Fleming, was out of town. [REDACTED]

Gibbney's parents lived in [REDACTED] and they had a swimming pool in their back yard. When Gibbney's parents were gone for the evening, Gibbney and [REDACTED] would swim naked in the pool. Gibbney often molested [REDACTED] on these occasions. Gibbney also owned a camper and he often took [REDACTED] and other altar boys, including [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], on extended camping trips. Gibbney would sleep with a different boy each night during the trip. On one trip, when [REDACTED] was approximately 15 years old, Gibbney took the boys to [REDACTED]. One day Gibbney took the boys [REDACTED] and met a friend. The friend accompanied Gibbney and the boys

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 632
TRIBUNAL RECORDS

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Released April 2014

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for the rest of the trip. The first night the friend slept with [REDACTED] and anally assaulted him.

[REDACTED] does not remember the friend's name and does not know if the man was a priest.

[REDACTED] stated that Gibbney left Mary Queen of Heaven abruptly and was assigned to a parish that [REDACTED] thought was called St. Andrew and was located in Bolingbrook. [REDACTED] visited Gibbney one time at the new parish and Gibbney sexually abused [REDACTED] in the rectory. That was the last time Gibbney abused [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] does not want Gibbney to hurt anyone else.

[REDACTED] had no other information at this time and the interview was terminated at approximately 11:45AM.

April 24, 2002

[REDACTED]

I received a call from Mr. [REDACTED] concerning abuse that took place from 1976 to 1980.

[REDACTED] was 11 years of age, a member of Mary Queen of Heaven Parish in Elmhurst. The abusive priest was Father Michael Gibbney.

Father [REDACTED] would take altar boys on trips, about 6 at a time. [REDACTED] said that he knew Father attempted to do something with those other boys but does not know if he succeeded.

The first incident occurred when Father took him on a retreat in Wisconsin. Subsequent incidents occurred at the parish rectory. [REDACTED] spent many nights at the rectory when Father Tom Fleming, the pastor, was away on retreat, etc. [REDACTED] thought that the housekeeper may have figured something was wrong since he stayed when Father Fleming was out of the rectory.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I expressed my sorrow at what he has experienced, told him that in accord with our policy the matter would be referred to the Chair of the Review Committee, and that someone from the Committee would contact him. I also told him that counseling would be made available if he felt it was needed.

Judith A. Davies, OSF
Sister Judith A. Davies, OSF
Chancellor

Redacted February 2014
TMJA
Released April 2014

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

000386

35

Vicar General



Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979
(312) 751-8271
Fax: (312) 337-6379

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 2, 2002
TO: FILE
FROM: BISHOP RAYMOND GOEDERT
RE: MR. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] called me on April 30. I was not able to return the call until today. [REDACTED]
is [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Both
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are deceased.

[REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED]. He is 35 years old now. As a child, he attended Mary Queen of Heaven school in Elmhurst and graduated from there. When he was in grade school, probably around the 4th or 5th or 6th grade, he said that the parish priest used to take the kids camping. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went with the priest on a particular occasion. Just where they went, he wasn't sure, but the priest used to take the kids to Yorkville which is an area out southwest near the Illinois River.

[REDACTED] said he thought the incident happened in a hotel room. At least, that's where he remembered the priest abused him (I did not ask the nature of the abuse). [REDACTED]

I asked [REDACTED] if he recalled the name of the priest. He thought it was something like Father Gidney, but he wasn't sure and was only able to guess at the spelling, but he said he was a young priest, probably in his mid-thirties at the time. He said that Father Fleming was the

FR. GIBBNEY SCAN FROM THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET NO. 635
TRIBUNAL RECORDS

Memo
Redacted February 2014
TMJA
Released April 2014

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000387

pastor. He also mentioned that this young priest was a chaplain or had something to do with the Elmhurst Fire Department.



After speaking to [REDACTED], I then looked up the Kenedy Directory for 1977 and 1978. In the 1978 directory, on page 416, Father Thomas Fleming is listed as the pastor of Mary Queen of Heaven and Father Michael L. Gibbney is the associate.

I then looked up in the 1999 directory and there was no Gibbney listed, so it could be that he is either deceased or left the active ministry.

I promised [REDACTED] that I would contact Bishop Imesch about this and the Joliet Diocese will take the matter from here on in.



Revised February 2014
T.M.H.
Released April 2014 Tribunal

Diocese of Joliet

310 Bridge Street
Joliet, Illinois 60435-6399

815-722-2256
Fax 815-722-6692

37

VOTUM OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Having instructed the case of Michael Lawrence Gibbney, who is petitioning the Holy Father to be dispensed from the obligations of the priesthood, including that of celibacy, I am certain, that Michael, like every other priest who so petitions, has a great love for the Church. Otherwise, it would be clear that there would be no desire on the part of any priest to make such a request. It is evident that Michael continues to attend Mass on a regular basis and views the dispensation as a means of attaining peace of mind and of being able to contract marriage in the Church.

Michael has been most anxious in the processing of his petition. At this point in his life, as one witness stated, he desires companionship and thus hopes to marry in the Church. Thus, his decision to make this petition is not an abandonment of the Church, but rather a desire to live in harmony with the Church.

Therefore, I humbly recommend that the Holy Father grant the petition of Michael to be dismissed from the obligations of the priesthood, including that of celibacy. Since it has been almost twenty years in which he has not sought to minister as a priest, and since the allegations of abuse which have been made would have to be further investigated, he seeks the dispensation in order to have peace of mind in the latter years of his life.

It is evident that no scandal will be given if the dispensation is granted. The large population in this area makes Michael's presence virtually anonymous. Also, people have the realization that it is not possible, nor is it wise, for some priests to continue in ministry.

In conclusion, it is Michael's sincere hope that the Holy Father will look with mercy on him and enable him to contract marriage in the Church. Thus, I join Michael in humbly requesting that his petition be granted and that he be dismissed from the obligations of the priesthood, including that of celibacy.


Very Rev. Joseph J. Tapella
Instructor

June 10, 2010
Joliet, Illinois

38



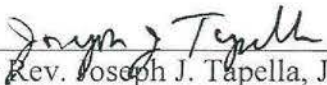
Restricted February 2014
TM3
Released April 2014 Tribunal

310 Bridge Street
Joliet, Illinois 60435-6399

815-722-2256
Fax 815-722-6692

SUMMARY

Diocese:	Joliet-in-Illinois
Petitioner's name:	Michael Lawrence Gibbney
Date of birth:	[REDACTED]
Date of priestly ordination	May 24, 1975
Date of petition for laicization	June 1, 2010
Reason for petition:	A desire to contract marriage in the Church
Present occupation of petitioner:	Sales manager
Marital status:	Single
Votum of Ordinary of incardination:	Affirmative


Very Rev. Joseph J. Tapella, JCL
Instructor

Given at Joliet, Illinois on this
10th day June in the year 2010.



Registered February 2014

Released April 2014

Diocese of Joliet

Tribunal

310 Bridge Street
Joliet, Illinois 60435-6399

815-722-2256
Fax 815-722-6692

39

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the acts of the above-cited case, beginning with the Table of Contents and ending with certificate, page , are the original writings or exact duplicates of original writings and form the authentic acts of this case to be transmitted forthwith to the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy.

Richard L. Smith
Rev. Richard L. Smith, JCL
Ecclesiastical Notary

Given at Joliet, Illinois on this
11th day of June in the year 2010.