

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

To: Fathe Brian Flatley

Date: September 26, 1995

From: Father Richard Lennon RGL

Re: Reverend John Picardi

I am writing in response to the Cardinal's request that you discuss Father Picardi's request to the Bishop of Paterson, Most Reverend Frank J. Rodimer, that he conduct an internal Church investigation of the allegation of sexual abuse made by a parishioner of Holy Spirit Parish, Pequannoch, New Jersey.

Having reviewed the file, it is my considered opinion that the Cardinal not grant the authorization requested by Bishop Rodimer for him to open the investigation.

The reason for this opinion is that I see no benefit to such an investigation for either Father Picardi to work in New Jersey nor for the Church; in fact, opening such an investigation runs the real risk of negative fall-out both for Father Picardi and for the Church.

I can only presume the reason for his requesting this investigation is in light of his lawyer's letter of July 31, 1995, wherein the lawyer advises Father Picardi that "the Diocese should either accept or reject the allegations". It seems to me that this is not the fundamental issue. Rather, Since Father Picardi is a priest of the Archdiocese and since an allegation was made, the Archdiocesan Policy must be implemented, which indicates the need for an assessment. Without such an assessment in light of the allegation, and past incident and "reported other incidents", it would be inadvisable for the Archdiocese to consider granting Father Picardi permission to exercise priestly ministry either in the Archdiocese or somewhere else.

Thus, the requested investigation in Paterson should not be authorized; rather, efforts to have him receive an assessment should be continued, so that a proper response by the Archdiocese can be made vis-a-vis Father Picardi's future as a priest.

RGL:rw

PICARDI, JOHN M.
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