

that I should be the one to confront Father Houle directly since the woman called me and not the Diocese. I did not feel that I had the authority to do so, but agreed that I would try. I then confronted Father Houle with the information, and he agreed that he would cease calling and trying to see the woman. From that point on, however, Father Houle became highly secretive and ceased all interaction with me in the parish and rectory. When it became clear that he was again drinking heavily his mother blamed me for it saying that I had alienated her son.

25. In the Spring of 1985, I again learned that [REDACTED], the Hampton youth who had accused me of inappropriate behavior two years earlier, had made yet another claim. This time he had been expelled from a Catholic high school (for which I learned that the Diocese had been paying his tuition) for bringing a knife to school and threatening another student whom, he claimed, had been stalking him. At the time of his expulsion [REDACTED] accused a male teacher at the school of making sexual advances to him, and then claimed that two years earlier he was unable to tell the entire story of his accusation against me and added that I also fondled him. This time the matter was investigated by a Hampton Police Detective, Arthur Wardel. Detective Wardel then wrote a report (which I did not see until many years later) which stated his strong conviction that this was a young man who basked in the attention which such accusations brought him, and that there was no basis to the charge. The matter was then officially dismissed as "unfounded" by state officials. In both 1983 and 1985 when these allegations surfaced I was never questioned by any official involved in investigating them. The only person who ever spoke with me in any official capacity about [REDACTED] claim was Msgr. Christian. I again, in 1985, contacted Father Boucher, and again he told me that no one from either the state or the diocese had ever contacted him about [REDACTED] claim that Father Boucher had walked in on and witnessed an inappropriate incident. Father Boucher also again denied [REDACTED] claim that he had complained to Father Boucher about my behavior. (In 1993 [REDACTED] added yet another claim that he also brought his complaint in 1983 to the new pastor at the Hampton parish, Father James Watson. Father Watson also indicated that there was no truth to this claim). The matter now seemed over, but I was troubled by the seeming lack of interest on the part of both state and diocesan officials in ascertaining the truth. I would not hear of this matter again until two years later, in 1988.

26. Later in the Spring of 1985 I received a telephone call from a New Hampshire State Police officer who told me that the night before he had arrested Father Houle for driving while intoxicated. The officer was very concerned that Father Houle had a drinking problem which was not being addressed. I told the officer that I had discussed Father Houle's drinking problem with diocesan officials in the past, but got no where. I gave the officer the name and telephone number of Msgr. Christian and asked the officer to contact the Diocese himself. A week later, in late April of 1985, Father Houle announced that he was being transferred immediately to a small parish in the town of Ashland in the north of New Hampshire. I was very concerned about the isolation of this area, and expressed that concern to Msgr. Christian, but again he did not seem very interested in my input. Father Houle left quickly after a hastily organized farewell party in the parish which was well attended. Father Houle's mother was placed in a diocesan' nursing home in Manchester. Father Bombardier, the elderly priest who lived in the rectory and assisted in the parish, was also moved to the northern town of Berlin. I was appointed administrator of the parish and remained there alone for two months until the appointment of another pastor. A year later Father Houle died in the rectory in Ashland.

27. In early June of 1985 I received a telephone call from Msgr. Christian who informed me that the bishop had named Father Stephen Scruton, formerly pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Littleton and St. John's Parish in Hudson, as pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Keene. Msgr. Christian did not mention Father Scruton's arrest in Hudson eighteen months earlier and the publicity which ensued from that incident. Msgr. Christian also indicated that another priest, Father Michael Barrett who had been ordained the year before, would also be assigned to the parish with Father Scruton and me.

28. Fathers Stephen Scruton and Michael Barrett arrived at the parish in mid-June, 1985. Immediately there was much rumor and gossip in the parish and the Keene community over the fact that Father Scruton had been arrested on a morals charge a year and a half earlier. Most of the comments and concerns were directed to me since I had, by this point, been assigned at the parish for two years. Father Scruton did not help matters since his attitude and leadership style were somewhat caustic. He immediately invested large sums of parish money into the renovation and re-furnishing of his rectory office and living quarters. In a huge city parish in which money was tight

this caused much controversy. At the same time he fired the parish religious education director, Sr. Theresa Bolduc, who had been employed there for many years, and in her place he hired a part time coordinator who had far less training and experience. Most of the savings on the salary difference were then spent on the rectory renovations. Father Scruton also brought a full time secretary with him to the parish, a young single mother named Gina, and she and her five-year-old daughter moved into the rectory living quarters formerly occupied by Father Houle's mother. These, too, were renovated. Rumors abounded about the relationship between father Scruton and Gina, but I believed this to be some sort of "smoke screen" in that these rumors were preferable to Father Scruton than the previous set of rumors about his arrest for homosexual activity. Gina was an attractive woman of about thirty years of age, but she had no secretarial skills or training, could not type, and was terribly disorganized.

29. The most obvious and immediate crisis in the rectory surrounded the fact that Father Scruton and Father Barrett could not get along. Michael Barrett was a young priest with a handicap; he had extremely poor vision and was considered legally blind. As a result, he could not drive and depended on Father Scruton and me to cooperate in providing him with transportation. I had no difficulty with this, but Father Scruton constantly complained about it. At times he would humiliate Father Barrett in public with statements about his handicap. There was also a sort of competition between them. A male high school student, [REDACTED], moved to Keene at about the same time father Scruton did. [REDACTED] formerly lived with his parents in Hudson where Father Scruton was pastor at the time of his arrest, but [REDACTED] was originally from Keene and his grandparents lived there. At the time Father Scruton came to Keene, [REDACTED] moved in with his grandparents and visited Father Scruton on a daily basis. Father Barrett also seemed to have known [REDACTED] and there was a strange competition between the two priests over this young man.

30. There were many complaints about Father Scruton which came to me from parishioners and parish employees. His obvious arrogance was chief among these, but after a few months I began to receive repeated complaints about Father Scruton's constant use of sexual innuendo and inappropriate language. The parish was next to Keene State College, and a number of college students attended Mass there or came to pray in the Church on occasion. Two years earlier I had begun the practice of opening the parish hall until late in the evening on weekdays to give students living in

the dorms a quiet place to study. Father Scruton halted this practice, but then invited a number of male students to come to the rectory to study. One of these students then complained to me of his belief that Father Scruton made a sexual advance to him. I asked the student to permit me to bring this complaint to diocesan authorities, but the student would not allow me to use his name. I also received an anonymous note from a student who claimed that Father Scruton made a sexual advance to him in the confessional. I finally did contact Msgr. Christian about my concerns, but was told that I had to find a way to work with Father Scruton and that I should confront Father Scruton myself. I then attempted to do so. Following a weekly staff meeting (which was attended by all parish employees) I asked Father Scruton and Father Barrett to remain. I then told Father Scruton of the complaint, the anonymous note, and of the other complaints I had been receiving about his constant sexual innuendo. He was very defensive, and denied that any of this was true. I then asked Father Barrett if he shared this concern, and he agreed that he had also heard complaints. Father Scruton then told me that I was "sexually anorexic" and "repressed" and needed therapy to "get in touch with myself". He claimed that his behavior was normal and healthy. On another occasion I brought my concern to him again, and he then retaliated by saying that he had heard several complaints about "my drinking problem". The reality was that I did not use alcohol at all and hadn't for several years. Father Scruton knew this, and also knew that my abstinence was a personal choice and not based on any problem I had with alcohol.

31. By the Summer of 1986 the rectory situation had become unbearable. Father Scruton was incommunicative and would leave the rectory almost every evening, stay out all night, and then sleep for most of the day. The relationship between he and Father Michael Barrett had deteriorated to the point at which they would not speak to each other. Finally, near the end of the Summer of 1986, Father Barrett resigned and suddenly left the parish. This was precipitated by an incident in which he had exercised poor judgment. I had been away from the rectory over night, and while Father Scruton was also away for most nights Michael invited a thirteen-year-old boy to spend the night in his room at the rectory. When I returned to the parish Fathers Scruton and Barrett were arguing about this. Father Scruton accused Michael of a sexual involvement with the boy. Michael denied this vehemently, but defended himself by saying that the boy was having problems at home and Michael merely wanted to intervene by offering a

cooling off period. I felt that Michael's decision was a poor one, but there was also no evidence that he had been in any way sexually inappropriate. Finally, at a staff meeting, Scruton brought this up and again accused Michael. I had talked at length about this with Michael, and took his side. I said that I felt that his judgment was poor, but that Father Scruton's accusation had more to do with his issues than Michael's. Father Scruton was furious, walked out of the meeting, and did not speak with me for days. Father Barrett called the Diocese and requested an immediate transfer. He left the next day.

32. A few days later I called Father Barrett at his new parish assignment in the City of Nashua, N.H.. He expressed his dismay at his experience with Father Scruton, and he told me at that time that he had reason to believe that it was Father Scruton who had been sexually involved with minors. Father Barrett told me that he, himself, was gay and had been attending a weekly gay support group near Keene in the town of Brattleboro, Vermont. He said that at one of those meetings a young man told him that Father Scruton had been sexually involved with [REDACTED] in both Hudson and Keene. [REDACTED] was the high school student who often came to the rectory often to see Father Scruton. I then told Father Barrett of the earlier complaint I had received from a college student, and of the anonymous letter by another student who claimed that Father Scruton made a sexual advance to him in the confessional. I told Father Barrett that I attempted to bring these concerns to Msgr. Christian, but that he would not act on an anonymous complaint. I urged Father Barrett to call Msgr. Christian at the diocesan chancery office, and to be very clear with him about the accusation, and about his experience with Father Scruton. Father Barrett assured me that he would do so. Nothing happened. Five years later in 1991, however, [REDACTED] filed a lawsuit against Father Scruton and the Diocese claiming that Father Scruton had sexually molested him on several occasions including in the spa at the Keene YMCA where Scruton was a member. Father Scruton was brought back to Keene, charged with sexual assault, entered a guilty plea, and was given a suspended sentence. The lawsuit was settled out of court by the Diocese in 1993 for an undisclosed sum.

33. Father Barrett was not replaced in the parish so, for the first time in many years, St. Bernard's had only two assigned priests. In the months after Father Barrett's departure, Father Scruton's behavior became increasingly dysfunctional. I gave serious thought to requesting a transfer, but I had resigned from my last parish in

Hampton. This was well known throughout the Diocese, and Father Scruton once commented when I threatened to resign, that I am going to have a "reputation" in the Diocese if I resign from every assignment. Finally, in the late Winter and early Spring of 1987 a series of incidents took place which, I had hoped, would force Father Scruton into some form of professional treatment. I had been away from the parish for two consecutive days. When I returned late in the evening I was surprised to see Father Scruton's car in his garage since he was seldom in the rectory at night. I went to my office on the first floor and began to read my mail and look at telephone messages. After a few minutes, Father Scruton came into the office. He looked frightened, and closed the office door. He said that he needed my help and that there was an intruder in the rectory with what he believed was a gun. I asked him to explain and he said that on the previous evening he met a young man in a park in Manchester. He said that he and the man had spent some time together but he did not elaborate.

34. Scruton then said that this man was upstairs in Scruton's bedroom and threatened to kill him. I asked Father Scruton how the man came to be here in the rectory the day after they met, and Scruton said he didn't know. I asked Scruton how he got out of the room and he said that he heard my Garage door close, and then pretended to use the bathroom which had doors on both sides between Father Scruton's bedroom and study. I told Scruton that I would have to call the Keene police, but he begged me not to. I then said that after the incident years earlier in Littleton during which Father Joe Sands was killed while replacing Scruton I was not willing to risk not involving the police. I then called them and told them that there was an intruder in the rectory who may be armed. I asked them to come to the rectory and to just wait outside for now. They agreed that they would do so. I then opened the office door and the man was standing there listening at the door. He was about nineteen or twenty years of age, and was wearing an overcoat. He had his hand in one pocket as if he had a weapon there. I quickly tackled him, knocked him down, and restrained his arms. The weapon turned out to be a plastic toy gun. The young man was very frightened, and said to Father Scruton "I thought you said you were alone." I then let him up. The young man said that he had a sexual encounter the night before with Father Scruton at a park in Manchester. He said that they had met there before, but that he did not know Scruton was a priest. He said that they met again earlier on this day, and that he followed Scruton back to the rectory with the intention of asking him for more money. I