

January 7, 2013

Update: Sexual Misconduct and the Church of Saint Joseph, MN

The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of recent claims of sexual and other misconduct perpetrated by members of the Saint John's Abbey community and other personnel (bold names, below) who served the parishioners in St. Joseph. The most recent claims were forwarded to Bishop Kinney and Abbot John Klassen last year. Kinney and Klassen, however, have chosen to keep you in the dark.

Over a dozen accused religious and other personnel have served the parish in St. Joseph. You, your parents, your children or one of your friends may have been victimized by one of these individuals.

It is my hope that this letter will lead to honest conversation within your family and with your insistence, will lead, finally, to full disclosure by Saint John's. However, members of the Saint John's community, including Abbot Klassen and **Father Jerome Tupa**, by their actions, seem to oppose full disclosure.

Why is full disclosure important? In 2010, I was contacted by a woman who shared her story of sexual abuse by a monk from Saint John's. Twenty years earlier, I spoke with her brother about the misconduct he experienced at the hands of a different monk from Saint John's. To this day, neither is aware of the other's abuse. Nor did the siblings' parents know of their abuse. The siblings' parents are buried at the Saint John's Abbey Cemetery. They, like you, deserved to know the truth before they made that choice.

As a former parishioner in St. Joseph and a survivor of sexual misconduct by a monk at Saint John's, I am writing this letter because Bishop John Kinney (Diocese of Saint Cloud) and Abbot John Klassen (Saint John's Abbey) have failed to provide the parishioners in St. Joseph with information regarding multiple credible (and very recent) allegations of sexual misconduct by two former priests at the parish.

Recently, three women shared with me their allegations of sexual misconduct against **Father Othmar Hohmann**. Hohmann served at the parish in St. Joseph from 1961-1966. One of these women provided a notarized statement to Bishop Kinney in late November. Her statement was forwarded to Abbot Klassen. The second woman's name and emailed statement were provided to both Kinney and Klassen in mid-December. A third woman shared her story with me but, because of her standing within the community, has decided to remain anonymous at this time.

Since October of 2012, two men and one woman have provided notarized statements alleging sexual misconduct by **Father Dan Ward**. Ward served at the parish in St. Joseph in 1996 after he replaced **Father Tom Gillespie**, who had been removed when allegations of sexual misconduct surfaced. Despite multiple credible allegations of sexual misconduct, Ward retains all of his priestly faculties and serves as the executive director of RCRI in Maryland. Ward, a canon lawyer, has defended many religious accused of sexual misconduct, including Father Dunstan Moorse (more on Moorse later) back in the early 1990s.

Mr. Matthew Feeney, who admitted to molesting children in the 1990s while serving as young minister in St. Joseph, is scheduled to appear in a Washington County courtroom on January 25, 2013. He is charged with engaging in sexual contact with a 9-year-old boy and for abusing a 15-year-old boy.

Parishioners in St. Joseph may also be familiar with Michael Weber. Weber was a seminarian at St. John's and a deacon with the Diocese of Saint Cloud. He has been accused of molesting at least sixteen children. According to Mary Jo Hughes, Michael Weber's therapist knew of Weber's issues with pedophilia when the therapist (Dan Carle) allowed Weber to share a tent with a young boy. Carle remains a counselor.

The bold names in this letter denote men who have served the parishioners in St. Joseph. You may recognize many of non-bold names in the lists below, including the two abbots, both of whom have credible allegations of misconduct made against them. If I have missed something, please let me know.

As part of a settlement with multiple victims in March of 2011, Saint John's Abbey agreed to send a letter containing the names of eighteen monks who had been credibly accused of sexual misconduct:

Br. Andre Bennett	Br. Isaac Connolly	Fr. Richard Eckroth	Fr. Thomas Gillespie
Br. John Kelly	Fr. Brennan Maiers	Fr. Dunstan Moore	Fr. Cosmas Dahlheimer
Fr. Michael Bik	Fr. Francisco Schulte	Fr. Allen Tarlton	Abbot John Eidenschink
Fr. Fran Hoefgen	Br. Steven Lilly	Fr. Finian McDonald	Fr. Bruce Wollmering
Fr. James Kelly	Br. Jim Phillips		

Note: 10 of these perpetrators remain at the Abbey, free to walk campus and travel with little restriction.

As part of the 2011 settlement, the letter was posted and was to remain on the Abbey's web site. However, during the summer of 2012, the Abbey removed the letter. The Abbey, however, updated the site to read: "... rigorous investigations deemed that allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct against 23 members of the Abbey were credible." **Who are the other five perpetrators of sexual misconduct?**

Over the past twenty years, I have spoken with more than 100 victims of misconduct by monks and other personnel at Saint John's. Each of the men listed below has at least one credible allegation of misconduct made against him. Saint John's has settled complaints against at least four of these individuals.

Fr. Tom Andert	Fr. Daniel Ward	Fr. Mel Taylor	Fr. Dominic Keller
Fr. Peregrin Berres	Br. Robert Burke	Fr. Othmar Hohmann	Fr. Augustine Cerezo Murillo
Fr. Robert Blumeyer	Fr. Mathias Faue	Fr. Howard Oak Mossier	Abbot Timothy Kelly
Br. Paschal Brisson	Fr. Alban Fruth	Fr. Aloysius Michaels	Fr. Jerome Tupa

Also, please be aware that court cases are currently underway in California and Minnesota regarding claims that Saint John's engaged in wrongful fundraising activities. I had the opportunity to hear testimony in 2012. The cases should be of interest to anyone whose parents left money to Saint John's.

My name is Patrick Marker. While attending Saint John's Prep in the early 1980s, I was sexually molested by Father Dunstan Moore. When Moore and Saint John's failed to take responsibility, a lawsuit was filed. I told my story publicly (as "John Doe") for the first time on August 7, 1991. In 1992, with an understanding that I would have input into the abuse policies at Saint John's, a settlement was reached.

Over the next ten years, I continued to research, advocate and listen. In 2002, I created a web site to disseminate information. In 2002, as part of a settlement between Saint John's and several victims, an External Review Board was created. I was asked to serve on that board -- and was asked to take down the web site. I complied. For three years, I flew from Seattle to Minnesota to attend monthly board meetings.

In 2005, Abbot John Klassen admitted that he had withheld information from the board regarding two monk offenders. By 2006, Klassen still refused to make public the offenders' names because of the effect that such an announcement would have on the capital campaign and enrollment. Klassen was also concerned that one of the offenders might be linked to the disappearance of Joshua Guimond, just as monks had been considered in the 1989 disappearance of Jacob Wetterling.

In response to Abbot Klassen's deception, I resigned from the External Review Board in 2006 and created a web site (www.behindthepinecurtain.com) to hold Saint John's accountable -- and to validate the stories of victims of misconduct. Please feel free to visit the site and provide whatever input you desire.

I will return to St. Joseph this weekend. I look forward to meeting you after mass. If you wish to speak privately, feel free to contact me via telephone (360-421-5849) or email (patrickmarker@gmail.com).

Very Sincerely,

