

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

*Hedger file,
please*

Office of the Abbot

31 October 1992

Rev. Kevin McDonough
Chancery
226 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, Mn 55102

Dear Father Kevin:

Since we were not able to contact each other on the phone and since I am leaving for Rome on November 2, I thought it appropriate to send you a few comments on the Father Fran case.

Father Daniel told you, I am sure, that once the case became known in Cold Spring, at least to the civil authorities, I took Fran out of the parish immediately. Up to that point (1984) I had no knowledge of any abuse perpetrated by Father Fran.

Father Fran spent a number of months in therapy at Saint Luke Institute in Suitland, Maryland. The director, Father Michael Peterson, then indicated that he could return to the abbey and eventually take an assignment.

As you know I assigned him to Hastings. If I had the sensitivity then that I have now, I would have briefed the archbishop about the case. But that was 1985 when no questions were asked and no papers signed about previous sexual harassment or abuse. Today there would be no question about the need to provide information. Sorry if I didn't handle this situation properly.

Father Fran, I am confident, fulfilled his ministry in Hastings with great effectiveness and without any abuse. His therapy and continuing spiritual direction were significant in his life. It's unfortunate that his seven years of good ministry in Hastings must come to an end in this fashion.

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Father Daniel passed on your question about the other Benedictines presently working in the archdiocese. I have indicated to him that as far as I know no charges have ever been brought forward against any of the Benedictines presently on assignment in the archdiocese.

In fact, the only case we have had in the archdiocese was that of an assistant at Saint Bernard's who allegedly abused someone in the early 1070's. And I believe this case had no foundation.

Father Kevin, thank you for all your help and work in this delicate area. You have truly been a Godsend.

If you need to contact me in Rome, my telephone number is the following: 011-39-6-5791374 (this is the way you would dial from Saint Paul).

May the Lord continue to bless you.

Sincerely,



Abbot Primate Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/kr