

St. Eugene Church
Route 1, Box 31
Grand Chenier, Louisiana 70643

January 14, 1994

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Jude Speyrer, D.D.
Bishop of Lake Charles
Post Office Box 3223
Lake Charles, Louisiana 70603

Your Excellency:

This is to submit my resignation, effective immediately, from the pastorate of St. Eugene Church, Grand Chenier, Louisiana, and to request return to the lay state, including a dispensation from the obligation of celibacy.

As you know, I was ordained to the priesthood May 17, 1986, and have been active in the priesthood in this diocese, ever since.

As has been made known to you during our recent conversations, it appears that at the time of ordination, I was not sufficiently prepared to accept the obligations of the priesthood, even though at the time, I honestly thought I was. As you also know from our previous conversations, a large part of this had to do with doubts about the obligation of celibacy, which doubts I was not completely aware of at the time, probably through no one's fault.

As you also know, there was an incident involving a sexual relationship with a young man, in 1982, in the parish where I was working as a seminarian. At the time of ordination to the priesthood, I had been feeling during my remaining time in the seminary that I should not become a priest. But I asked for ordination, anyway, because I felt that I had the gifts of being able to serve, to be committed, etc., and that I should use the gifts in the priesthood, and "let go" or stop being concerned about things in the past. In fact, in the seven and a half years of priesthood, I have never really been able to "let go" or stop being concerned about these incidents in the past.

As you also know, in 1988, I was confronted by the young man with whom the incident took place in 1982, and by his mother. At that time, he and his mother assured me that nothing more would come from them about it. Within a week or so after this, there was an attempt at acting out feelings with him, which resulted in attempted fondling (the actual fondling did not take place), on my part. It was then that I approached you, to ask for help, and that you assisted me in getting into intensive therapy with the Servants of the Paraclete, in Jemez Springs, New Mexico.

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Since then, I have been afflicted with frequent, if not constant doubts about myself and my priesthood, usually accompanied by moderate to severe depression. This has been allayed to some extent—sometimes to a very considerable extent—by throwing myself as completely as possible into the work of being a good pastor.

But the doubts are still there, and the kind of psychological freedom with which I should have entered the clerical state, and which I should still possess, is not there, and, as I can now see, never has been.

For these reasons, and other details mentioned in my conversations with you, I am herewith, as stated above, submitting my resignation as Pastor of St. Eugene Church in Grand Chenier, and am requesting a return to the lay state, and a dispensation from the obligations of the clerical state, including a dispensation from the obligation of celibacy.

My reasons for requesting this return to the lay state, and dispensation from celibacy are that I should not have been ordained to the diaconate and priesthood, even though I thought, in good faith, at the time, that I should have been; and that those in charge of me during the years of seminary formation, were unable to judge that I was unsuited for the priesthood, even though, in good faith, they thought that I was so suited.

If you choose to accept my resignation as pastor, and to endorse my petition for return to the lay state, and for dispensations, I shall be happy to answer any questions, including those to be made under oath, as may be required.

Please be assured of my gratitude for your understanding and support during this trying time for me, as it must also be a trying time for yourself.

With expressions of respect, I am

Sincerely, in Christ



Reverend Mark A. Broussard

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