

FR. MASSIMO GHILARDI

DEAR

FEBRUARY 14, 2003

MY APOLOGIES FOR NOT GETTING BACK RIGHT AWAY AND
THANKING YOU FOR THE LETTER YOU SENT LAST YEAR. I WAS
VERY PLEASED TO HEAR OF THE SUCCESS OF YOUR BOYS,
I ALWAYS REMEMBER THEM TO BE OUTGOING, HARD WORKING,
AND GOOD RESPECTABLE BOYS

THIS IS ONE OF THE HARDEST LETTERS I HAVE EVER
WRITTEN, MAINLY BECAUSE I AM ADDRESSING EVENTS THAT
TOOK PLACE BETWEEN 1975 AND 1977. TO GIVE YOU
SOME BACKGROUND, I AM FINISHING UP A PRISON
SENTENCE FOR TALKING MY STEP-DAUGHTER. I AM ALSO
IN TREATMENT FOR THIS CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR.

AS PART OF THE TREATMENT PROGRAM I WAS ASKED TO
WRITE MY BIOGRAPHY, GOING OVER IN DETAIL EVENTS FROM
MY PAST. THIS WAS HARD BECAUSE IT MEANT FACING GHOSTS
AND EVENTS FROM THE PAST. SOME OF THESE EVENTS, WHICH
ARE VERY PAINFUL, I HAVE SUPPRESSED SINCE 1977. THE
REASON I AM WRITING IS TO FACE THIS, AND COME TO
TERMS WITH, A VERY SERIOUS EVENT THAT TOOK PLACE
AGAINST ME AND HOPEFULLY BRING PEACE & CLOSURE
TO MY LIFE.

THE SUMMER OF 1976, JUST BEFORE MY SEVENTH GRADE
SCHOOL YEAR, I WAS SEXUALLY MOLESTED BY FATHER
GHILARDI SEVERAL TIMES. I WAS 12 YEARS OLD AND
HAD JUST STARTED HELPING AS AN ALTERBOY WHEN
THESE ASSAULTS FIRST STARTED. HE SEXUALLY MOLESTED

PD-HO 0007

II

ME SEVERAL TIMES BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12 AND 13. AS A PRIEST, FATHER GHILARDI WAS ALWAYS OPEN AND WILLING TO TALK AND WHEN HE WAS DRINKING HE SEEMED TO TAKE A LIKING TO ME. HE WAS ALSO A FAMILY FRIEND TO BOTH MY PARENTS.

I REMEMBER HIM AT TIMES WHEN HE WOULD COME OVER TO THE HOUSE FOR DINNER, OR JUST TO DRINK WINE WITH MY PARENTS. HE WAS ALWAYS VERY TOUCHY, FEELY WITH ME; A HAND ON THE SHOULDER OR SOMETIMES A RUB ON THE BACK, A COMPLIMENT, OR SOMETIMES ASKING HOW THE FISHING WAS OR SCHOOL.

THE SEXUAL ASSAULTS TOOK PLACE AFTER MASS, AFTER HE WOULD ASK ME TO STAY BEHIND AND HELP PUT CHAIRS AWAY OR CLEAN UP. IT ALWAYS HAPPENED ON THE SUNDAYS I RODE MY BIKE TO MASS. WITH RESPECT TO YOU I WILL NOT GO INTO THE SPECIFICS OF WHAT THIS MAN DID TO ME, HOWEVER SOME OF THE SPECIFIC DETAILS ARE DOCUMENTED WITH THE TREATMENT STAFF HERE AT THE PRISON.

FATHER GHILARDI CAUSED ME IRREPARABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HARM. BECAUSE OF HIS CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR, HE CONTRIBUTED TO THE THINKING PROCESS THAT LED ME TO MY CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR. IT IS THIS PART OF MY LIFE I AM TRYING TO HEAL, AND COME TO TERMS WITH.

IX

AT THE TIME I HAD NO WHERE TO TURN, NO ONE TO TALK TO, AND THE FEAR OF NOT UNDERSTANDING WHAT WAS HAPPENING, OR WHY HE WAS DOING WHAT HE WAS DOING.

I WRITE THIS LETTER TO YOU BECAUSE YOU REMEMBER ME, MY PARENTS AND FATHER GHILARDI. THERE IS ALSO THE LIKELIHOOD HE MAY HAVE SEXUALLY MOLESTED OTHERS. I WILL FOREVER WONDER WHY FATHER GHILARDI ONLY LASTED ABOUT 3 YEARS AT THE BANDON PARISH, AND IF HE WAS NOT MOVED ON BY THE ARCHBISHOP.

IN CLOSING, I WOULD ASK FOR PRAYERS OF UNDERSTANDING, HEALING & CLOSURE ON THIS MATTER. THIS LETTER IS NOT MEANT TO DISTURB, BUT TO BRING TO LIGHT THIS EVENT BECAUSE IT INDIRECTLY OR DIRECTLY AFFECTED SOME OF THE PEOPLE IN THE PARISH AT THAT TIME. IT IS MY ABILITY NOW TO FACE THE ABUSE I SUFFERED AND DEAL WITH IT THE BEST WAY I KNOW HOW.

SINCERELY & RESPECTFULLY YOURS

CC: PERSONAL FILE

Holy Trinity Church
355 Oregon Ave.
Bandon, OR 97411

February 27, 2003

Dear

I received your letter dated February 14, 2003. I am deeply sorry to hear your report that you were so hurt by a member of the Church. That saddens and angers me a great deal that that would happen by a member of the Church leadership. I haven't shown the letter to ^{and am still pondering on whether I should or not, and whether now} would be a good time to or not. She is not well now, and is still healing from an emotional crisis from a few months ago. ^{I will be listening to see if there are any more stories to what you reported.}

Meanwhile, I spoke to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, through the Abuse Contact Coordinator, and to the Vicar General, Fr. Dennis O'Donovan. Fr. O'Donovan researched Fr. Ghilardi's file, and found no other report or accusation like the one you reported in your letter. The only things in his file that pertain to Bandon are a letter by Fr. Ghilardi requesting to be transferred from Holy Trinity to a smaller parish without a Mission Church. This was due to health reasons, since he was dealing with a heart condition, and loss of vision. He wanted to stay on the Coast, so he was transferred to St. John's in Reedsport in 1977. He was assigned there until he 1983, when he died of lung cancer. He was sick with cancer for the last year of his life.

I am keeping you in my prayers! God bless you and your healing process.

Sincerely,

Fr. Heiko Junge,
Pastor, Holy Trinity, Bandon