

6/11/96

Bishop Norman McFarland
2811 E. Villa Real Dr.
Orange, CA 92667

Dear Bishop McFarland,

Many emotions run through me as I force myself to write this letter to you. This letter has been stirring in me for at least the past 3 years. I want to ensure you that I am of sound mind in the following recollections with nothing exaggerated or imagined.

I have known Father Michael Pecharich for about 13 years; back to his days at San Antonio Church in Anaheim Hills. I had regarded him as a friend when I met him as I enjoyed his personable sermons and mass. There were a string of incidents, however, that lead me today to feel many things other than friendship for him.

In the summer of 1984 my parents were divorced. At this time Fr. Mike was a priest at St. Juliana's. I was 14 years old at the time. On at least 2 occasions Fr. Mike had brought me into the rectory to counsel me on the divorce. At the end of each meeting, he would want a hug (too long) and a kiss on the lips (also too long). Needless to say, I began to feel a bit uncomfortable with him.

After mass one day, he took my dad aside and talked. My dad, in turn, approached me and told me Fr. Mike wanted to take me camping with his brother and family in the mountains. I told my dad "no." My dad talked to him further and Fr. Mike somehow talked my dad into it - into persuading me to go.

On the way Fr. Mike let me drive. We set up camp; his brother had a hard shell camper with an extra bed. Fr. Mike pitched a tent. After asking his brother [redacted] if I could sleep in his camper, Mike insisted I stay with him in the tent.

On the first night, we were in 2 sleeping bags. He thought a good idea would be to zip them together to create warmth. I reluctantly allowed it (I suppose by now you're getting the picture). Both of us were in our underwear. I believe the trip was 3 nights, possibly more. He proceeded to rub his hands all over me, grazing over my penis. On at least one occasion I remember him having an erection (because he rubbed it against me). On at least one occasion he touched my penis. He would kiss my face and neck, and on at least one occasion he requested that I touch his penis.

Though I felt uncomfortable, I trusted him. He was a "man of God," so I thought. I dreaded every night when it was time to go to sleep. He would allow me to drink alcohol;

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wine coolers, before we'd go in the tent, enough that one time I remember being drunk. The whole trip I tried to stay focused on his brother and family - I loved them. But when I returned home, I felt far worse off than when I had left.

I have given you these details for a reason. I want you to know what happened. I don't want everyone to have to hear about it. I trust you, being a man of God to make the decision the Lord would wish.

To be honest with you, about 2 or 3 years ago, when everything hit me, when God let me know this man was not a representative of his kingdom, I became enraged. I was on the verge of seeking legal advice, suing and ensuring that "pedophile" would follow him on every police record in the country. But God gave me peace. That's when this letter came to my mind. I trust the church, though it took me a long time, and I still struggle.

My hope is this: Remove Father Mike from priesthood, get him counseling and at least until he is through that - make sure he doesn't work with children. Know where he will be and be working; either through a legal contract with the church or whatever it takes to be guaranteed of legitimacy to his whereabouts and doings. Supply me with a record at least once a year of these facts. Hopefully the final step will be full reform.

To be honest, this letter probably wouldn't exist if he weren't at Santa Margarita right now. Those kids are the same age I was.

I also should let you know the camping trip was not an isolated incident. I will spare you any further details unless you request them.

My life, at first changed for the better by this man has been irreversibly harmed to the point that no words can express.

I hope you understand this matter clearly. As far as believing it: I was angry with God for at least 5 years, blaming him. But he showed me that this was a man of the flesh, not of himself. Though for 12 years I have prayed for these details to go away, they vividly remain and burden me, I believe for the sake of the students at Santa Margarita.

I am more than willing to meet with you to discuss this further. I do not want to see Mike because I still have a trust for him that scares me. In time, when he's realized what he's done, I will personally forgive him.

This part I don't want to write, but have to. If this matter goes unnoticed, I will be seeking legal representation. It's the last thing I want, that's why I've laid it all out. I have searched my heart and if you fulfill my hopes, my heart will rest easy.

I want to apologize to you Bishop McFarland for this bad news. I know you are busy serving the Lord in many capacities and matters like these may seem to set you back, but he is a forgiving God and only positivity dwells in His kingdom. I will pray for you in this decision-making. Please contact me at your earliest convenience.

God Bless You

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