

2421 North Avenue
Niagara Falls, NY 14302
August 23, 1989

Bishop Edward Head
Diocese of Buffalo
795 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14217

Dear Bishop Head:

It is with great regret and concern that we write this letter. A revelation of past events have borne upon us a great responsibility to inform you and others of a potential danger to children in Sacred Heart Parish.

My sisters, Laura and Nancy Maroon, and my daughter, Sarah Webster, were sexually abused by the Youth Director at Sacred Heart Church, Remi Gonzalez, who is also my brother in law. My daughter was 7 at the time of her abuse, she is now 18 years old. My sisters were abused from the ages of 12 years old and are now, 30 and 28, respectively. These events were only made recently known to me two months ago. This abuse lasted a period of years in each instance.

Mr. Gonzales has not received any medical care or counseling for this problem but he has admitted to the fact the abuse had taken place. At the present time, there is no indication that he is going to get help. He feels that being a reborn Christian, he is free of the temptation of his weaknesses. Since these sisters, my daughter, and myself are in counseling, and all the different (we are all seeing different psychological personnel) medical experts agree that he is a time bomb that could sexually abuse again, hence the reasoning of this letter.

It is our responsibility to inform you of these tendencies. It is also our concern that while he may feel that he is volunteering his time and energies for the purpose of rectifying his past, we feel that by working with youth he is tempting himself and fate. There is no reason to take the risks of it happening again especially when there are other capable people available at Sacred Heart to fulfil the void.

The police are presently investigating the issues at hand but with the new school year starting we feel our responsibility is to make you informed. After informing Father Streng, Pastor at Sacred Heart, his concern was for Remi Gonzalez's reputation and the gap that would occur in Mr. Gonzalez's absence in his present roles at the Church. There is a certain dependence on Mr. Gonzalez, who is a very powerful personality, but we feel that the risk is too great to the children enrolled in the Youth

Group to have this dependence continue.

Because of the overpowering nature of this man, my sisters remained silent for many years. One sister was silent until just a year ago. When the question was brought up to me that my daughter could have been a victim, I asked her only to have my worst nightmare realized.

The nature of a pedophile is to control children, he is in the best position to do so in his present post as Youth Director. We do not know how many other children, now adults, are still silent. Our concern is for the children he 'counsels' in his dealings at Sacred Heart. He has no real training, and no real check up on his activities with the Youth since he is Director.

There are other ways for this man to reconcile himself with his past that do not involve putting other children in jeopardy. He does not have to give his time to Youth activities. There is no need to take the risk of it happening to other children.

Hopefully this letter will bring about responsible action by the Parish Counsel that is copied and the Pastor at Sacred Heart. Silence only silently allows child sexual abuse to continue. Revelation of child sexual abuse without responsible action only gives silent consent to the issue.

Please give us some indication of what action will be taken. Feel free to contact any one of us to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Yours very truly,

Theresa Kasper

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As per phone call 8/22/89

cc: Sacred Heart Parish Council
Father Streng