

MIKULICH, JOSEPH RETIRED

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CONFIDENTIAL MATERIALS

Contains allegations by some adult woman in Montana who claims that she was sexually abused by Father Joseph Mikulich, a Croatian Franciscan, many years ago. He worked as a priest in the Archdiocese of Portland for c. 18 years. He was never investigated. The allegations were never investigated or substantiated. Father Joseph knows nothing of the correspondence herein.

Year of disclosure: 1985. + *The Grand*



The Parish Community of St. Bernard

Phone (406) 259-4350 • 226 Wicks Lane • Billings, MT 59105

November 8th, 1985

Dear Bishop Murphy,

... visited with me last evening and shared a tremendous burden she has been living with for many years. From the age of 12 til 21 she was sexually - abused by a franciscan priest: Joseph Mikulich.

We decided to contact his bishop or superiors and inform them of Joe's activity.

The priest was a close friend of her parents and would visit them regularly in Great Falls. During these visits he would take advantage of

The parents are still in Great Falls: .
lives in Billings.

Looking through the Catholic Directory we found no 1982-4c was located at St. Stanislaus in Portland, Oregon. I don't have a new directory, but Dave Dwyer says the man is not listed. Maybe he died or went back to the old country. He should be in his 60's according to . She is now 25, by the way.

How do you feel about this? I don't know anybody in Portland - would you follow up on this for . She doesn't want to hurt the man, but obviously is still very hurt herself by his actions. I'm the first prieat with whom she has shared this story.

Sincerely,

Dave Reichling, capuchin

REDACTED

PD 0153

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL!

Diocese of Great Falls - Billings
Church of Eastern Montana

"I have come that you may have life" - John 10:10

Catholic
Pastoral
Center

November 18, 1985

Most Rev. Cornelius M. Power
Archbishop of Portland in Oregon
P. O. Box 351
Portland, Oregon 97207

Dear Archbishop Power:

It was good being with you last week at the NCCB meeting in Washington, D. C. I trust and hope that your return trip proved to be a good experience. It was good to get back to Montana. The meeting just seemed to be a little extra long this year.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I received from one of our pastors in Billings which I received after my return to Montana. I thought it would be good to share it with you and to ask if you have any recommendation or insights you would want to share with me regarding the question he raises.

Thank you for your help in this matter. I hesitate to burden you with more challenges, but I was uncertain what else to do.

Be assured of my prayers for you and for the ministry you share. Please remember me in your prayers.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Thomas J. Murphy
Bishop of Great Falls-Billings

Encl.

Diocese of Great Falls - Billings
Church of Eastern Montana

November 18, 1985

Rev. David Reichling, O.F.M. Cap.
St. Bernard's Church
226 Wicks Lane
Billings, Montana 59105

Dear Father Reichling:

Thank you very much for your letter of November 8th, 1985 which I received upon my return from the NCCB meeting in Washington, D.C. I can appreciate the anxiety of _____ who shared with you the experience that she had when she was a young person.

I am sharing your letter with Archbishop Power of the Archdiocese of Portland to see what advice he would be able to offer and to see if he is aware of this particular person. As the situation develops, I will keep you informed.

Please assure _____ of my prayers for her and thank you for writing to me regarding this delicate matter.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Thomas J. Murphy
Bishop of Great Falls-Billings

REDACTED

PD 0155

December 10, 1985

Most Rev. Thomas J. Murphy
P.O. Box 1399
Great Falls, Montana 59403

Dear Bishop Murphy:

It was indeed a shock to read your letter of November 18, together with Father Dave Reichling's letter of November 9 with regard to the conduct of Father Joseph Mikulich, O.F.M., and

Father Joseph Mikulich came to the Archdiocese in 1963, and served as pastor of St. Stanislaus Polish Parish for approximately eighteen years. He retired about three years ago at the age of eighty-four. He is now living in retirement at Our Lady of Peace Retreat House, 3600 S.W. 170th Ave., Beaverton, Oregon 97006.

I have known Father Joseph since I came to Portland in 1974, and have found him to be an exemplary priest throughout these eleven and a half years. It was a shock to me to learn that [redacted] had complaints to make against him. He is a Franciscan priest from Croatia.

I am not sure what [redacted] wants from Father Joseph, or what she expects to gain from her disclosure to Father David Reichling. This is a personal matter between herself and the priest. If there ever was a case of child abuse - and we have only her word for this - the statute of limitations would prohibit any civil recovery, in my opinion.

Naturally, I will disclose none of this to Father Joseph. He has rendered good service to the Church, and I hope that there will be no public scandal, since apparently all of this happened many years ago.

With kindest personal regards, I remain

Faternally yours in Christ,

+Cornelius M. Power
Archbishop of Portland

REDACTED

PD 0156