

November 2, 1998

HIS Eminence Aloysius Cardinal Ambrozic,
1155 Yonge Street,
Toronto, Ontario
M4T 1W2

Private & Confidential

Your Eminence:

Once again, I come knocking at your door begging your indulgence. After many months of Prayer, reflection and even counselling, I have reached a point in my life, where I feel that justice must be served. I quote Luke 18 (1-8) A widow seeking justice was finally granted that justice by a judge. Also Sirach 35 (15-17, 20, 22) "The Lord will not ignore the supplication of the orphan or widow".

I am well aware of the history and policy of the Catholic Church regarding Victims of the Clergy. However, I would hope that a priest who used his power and position to start a commercial business, with monies borrowed from a widowed parishioner would surely be called to answer for his actions.

The understanding remarks " God Bless you" and "God Love you" from Bishop Doyle of the Peterborough Diocese, does not help in paying my rent.

Please bear with me while I relate to you the entire story.

In Late July of this year, (1998), I received a call from Fr. Buckley informing me that he had applied for a position with the Separate School Boards in the Toronto Archdiocese as a Priest/Teacher. In order for him to be hired, he required your approval, which you apparently were not willing to grant because of his previous questionable activities. I am assuming that the information upon which you based your decision came from the parishioners in Grafton. Fr. Buckley was asking me to write to you on his behalf to make it appear that he had intended no wrong doing. This favour would help him obtain an income, allowing him to begin making restitution for the \$208,000.00 which He owed me. His quote "You are entitled to live comfortably in your old age" (73 years old). How very considerate of him when he is aware of my financial situation.

The sad and tragic part in the above scenario is that I was so trusting and gullible in lending this amount of \$ 208,000 to a priest. However, as a lifetime Catholic, I was taught to respect and trust our priests. In Feb., 1995 I was approached by Fr. Buckley in the front pew of our church after mass and asked to lend him money to buy a pet store. You can appreciate the fact that being recently widowed, I was not in any emotional state to be making a decision of this latitude. Fr. Buckley was well aware of my emotional state as he attended to my deceased Husband, administering the Last Rites of the Church and attending to his burial.

Again, begging your indulgence , I would like to present to you a short synopsis of Fr. Buckley's ministry while at St. Mary's Parish, Grafton. Fr. Buckley arrived at St. Mary's in the summer of 1993. He immediately began renovations on the rectory. Admittedly, it did require some improvements. When he arrived St. Mary's Parish had on hand in the Chancery \$ 140,000. When Fr. Buckley left St. Mary's, there remained approximately \$ 32,000. The following changes were made during Fr. Buckley's stay.

1. A building was renovated to house cages for the purpose of raising birds.
2. He then purchased rabbits, ducks, turkeys and angora goats and finally pure bred doberman dogs for breeding purposes.
3. He also purchased 2 riding horses for his personal use and boarded them at a riding stable.

The parishioners began questioning the large amount of money being spent on the renovations and apparently approached Bishop Doyle regarding this activity.

I had been serving on Parish Council during Fr. Keeler's appointment at St. Mary's. No changes were made when Fr. Buckley arrived and I continued to serve in the same capacity. I was asked by Fr. Buckley in December, 1993 to aid in raising funds for Youth activities, improvements to our Mission Church and for other purposes. I was instrumental in raising \$ 30,000 toward these projects, using Bingo profits.

In 1994, I was helping the Parish Volunteer Accountant with the weekly collection and bill paying. Since this was after my husband passed away, I was grateful for the opportunity to assist in this manner.

In the fall of 1994 Fr. Buckley ran for the position of school trustee for the Separate School Board. I was asked to campaign for him which I was willing to do.

In May, 1995 Fr. Buckley purchased a pet store in Peterborough, informing me that he had received permission from the Bishop to do so and there was no reason for me to question this, since I was not familiar with Cannon Law. In October, 1995, he opened another pet store in Cobourg and at the same time hired a Secretary at the Parish office. This antagonized the parishioners as they felt that he was neglecting his ministry and Parish duties. In December, 1995 he held an open meeting with the parishioners attempting to justify the business ventures and monies being spent.

In January, 1996, Fr. Buckley went to Mexico for a weeks vacation. He returned for approximately 10 days, then left again for a two week trip to Hong Kong, Hawaii and San Francisco. A few days after he returned from this vacation, he approached me about loaning him an additional \$ 50,000, suggesting that I could place a mortgage on my home to raise the money. I made a decision not to do this. In March, 1996 he informed his parishioners that he would be attending a retreat

in Ottawa for a week, however this was not so as he returned to Mexico. Upon his return it was evident that the pet store businesses were more than Fr. Buckley had bargained for. It took many hours of hard work and it was not producing the revenues hoped for.

In April/May, 1996 Fr. Buckley spent time helping a friend, Sean Overy, with the opening of a beauty salon in Whitby. In July, 1996 Fr. Buckley bought and furnished a cottage on Little Lake. At the same time he began applying for a position in the private sector (Human Resources Field). He also applied for a position as Chaplain at a Catholic Bowmanville High School. In October, 1996, a female parishioner opened a restaurant in Grafton. Fr. Buckley could be found there daily cleaning, decorating and secured a male cook for the business, housing him at the rectory. The above activities were in turn questioned by the parishioners.

January, 1997, Fr. Buckley returned to Mexico for another 3 week vacation. When he returned, I had a "Statement of Claim" served on him through the courts as it had become evident to me at this time that his businesses were failing and were not being managed. He immediately declared bankruptcy. In the bankruptcy filing statement, an amount owing to the parish of \$10,000. was declared along with my debt which was mistakenly declared at \$202,000. and should have been \$ 208,000. This of course legally frees him from his financial debt. Morally he owes me. This is the reason that I wrote to you on his behalf. I truly believed that if he obtained a job, he would begin to repay me as he promised. But not so, I now find myself betrayed twice.

It seems to be apparent that he has no intention of making restitution. It appears once again that the Bishop is aiding Fr. Buckley in avoiding his responsibilities.

Your Eminence, I ask your forgiveness for being part of Fr. Buckley's deceit by writing that letter to you. I was desperately hoping that Fr. Buckley was going to be an honest and honourable priest-not so. I have been informed the there is an on-going OPP investigation regarding parish revenues.

I am grateful for the time you have allowed me. My faith has been badly shaken, but with prayers and daily mass plus the support of a faith community, I struggle on.

There is so much more to this sad tale but my point has been made. Thank you for your anticipated support and I await a reply.

Sincerely,

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