

SUMMARY OF PASTORAL ATTEMPTS
BY THE RELIGIOUS ORDINARY OF JUDE HAHN

Father Jude Hahn, a member of the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph, was engaged in soliciting sexual activity from an adult male in August of 1992. This was brought to the attention of his religious superior, Kenneth W. Reinhart, O.F.M Capuchin, Provincial Minister of the above-mentioned province. I interviewed Jude after this was brought to our attention and suggested that he go for some therapeutic help and an evaluation. He cooperated with this. He was embarrassed and regretted his actions and seemed sincerely penitential. At the same time, I felt it was necessary because of the atmosphere in the United States that he would not be allowed to function as a priest until he had resolved these issues of his sexual behavior and that he could not return to the high school seminary where he was a teacher because it was such a high risk. He found this discouraging but was cooperative. At this time, he did talk about possibly leaving the priesthood and Order and I had discussed it with him at length, encouraging him to remain. He agreed to this.

5. In December of 1992 and January of 1993, new allegations of inappropriate and sexual behavior came to our attention. These allegations were made in regard to activities with male children under the age of 18, which by United States law is a felony and is punished by prison time. Jude Hahn was in a therapeutic program at the time these came. These were presented to him as information I had received. He did not deny these. I also became aware that the Milwaukee Journal, a newspaper in the Milwaukee metropolitan area of Wisconsin, was aware of some of these allegations and was threatening to print them and make them public. I informed Jude of this matter. He again indicated that it might be better if he left the priesthood and religious life. I said that would not be necessary, that we could find ways for him to function in a different area of the province and in an internal ministry where he was not in contact with children.


Shortly after this, I received a notification from the director of the therapeutic program that Jude did not seem to be cooperating anymore with the therapeutic process. He wanted to leave and come home. I told him that he could not return, that he had to remain in the therapeutic process. Throughout the month of February and the beginning of the month of March, Jude continued to resist his remaining in the program for any therapeutic help that would enable him to return to correct behaviors and possibly resume some ministerial activity as a Capuchin priest.

5. On March 12th I communicated to Jude through the mail that he was to be transferred to St. Bonaventure Friary in Detroit, Michigan and to work in an internal ministry. He would not be allowed at this time to function publicly, because he had not accepted the illness that led him to the inappropriate and sexual misconduct behaviors. While there was no immediate public scandal, there was much talk about his behavior in the village in which he had done these behaviors in the 80's. I felt it was necessary that we remove him from that area. I also believed because of the legal ramifications in the United States, I could not allow him to function publicly as a priest.

Jude refused to accept this obedience and to move to Detroit. I asked him to come over to speak with us. He did come over and I and the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Gerald Kafer, pleaded with him to remain in the Order and accept the obedience we had given him. He absolutely refused and demanded that he be allowed to leave. If we did not process his indult for laicization, he said he would leave without it. It is his intention to go out of state to the western part of the country and to live with his mother.

I believe in conscience that we have done everything we can to convince Jude to change his ways to heal the illness that is within him and to remain with the Capuchin Order and as a priest functioning on limited terms. He has rejected these and has chosen to leave the priesthood and religious life.

Our last meeting with Jude, at which I begged him to reconsider his decision, was on March 26th, 1993. He once again handed me his request for a dispensation and said that he would not reconsider.


Reverend Kenneth W. Reinhart, O.F.M. Capuchin
Provincial Minister



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