



CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
DIOCESE OF ORANGE  
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August 23, 1986

Your Honor:

I am a Catholic priest of the Diocese of Orange and am presently working with Catholic Charities here in the County of Orange. I reside at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church which is located in the Hispanic neighborhood of Delhi in Santa Ana. I was ordained a priest in 1982 and since that time have had the privilege of working as an associate pastor at Saint Joseph Church in downtown Santa Ana as well as the opportunity, during the past two years, to pursue a Masters Degree in Social Work from Columbia University in New York City. My ministry has placed me in midst of many painful situations. As a priest, the choice to respond has always flowed from a desire to heal. This letter issues from that same motivation. The case involving Chris Andersen is a painful one reducing the lives of many people to a confusing mire of suffering. It is my hope that what I have to offer here might help to shed some light of understanding and thus enable healing to ensue.

Chris Andersen and I together attended Saint John's Seminary College and Saint John's Seminary. He and I developed during those years of study a friendship which was a great consolation to me especially during a very trying third year of graduate work. I grew to admire and respect Chris both for his insightfulness as well as the tender compassion he possessed for those who were suffering. As we entered the ministry together our friendship provided a mutual support during the fledgling days of priesthood and I saw him as a very capable and compassionate minister. He seemed to approach the ministry with a sense of confidence that was tethered by equal amount of humility.

Chris Andersen's present difficulties pain me very much not only because he is a friend but also because he is an associate in the ministry. Our work brings us into intimate contact with people's lives. In a time when the exchange of simple affections within the most intimate of circles has become a rare commodity our associations with others run the grave risk of being misunderstood by all parties including perhaps the priest himself. There is cause therefore to exercise prudence and right judgment while at the same time pursuing the mission of Church to bring healing and comfort. If Chris has failed in exercising such prudence or has in fact abused the privilege provided him by the People of God I would hope that the Court would seek some remedial means for dealing with the case at hand as opposed to extensive incarceration. Chris has attempted to serve both faithfully and with

great sensitivity the people entrusted to him. This I am sure has been his overriding inclination throughout his four years of ministry. What may have occurred is a regretful aberration of this commitment but the desire to serve persists. In recognition of such may the Court seek to render healing along with justice.

Respectfully yours,

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