

June 18, 2020

To: US Ordinaries, Seminary Rectors, Vocation Directors, and Safe Environment Coordinators

All of you were informed that I received allegations of misconduct on the part of NAC vice-rector Father Adam Park that I requested Cardinal Timothy Dolan and the NAC Board of Governors to investigate in a letter sent by US Mail and email dated April 22, 2020.

When no response was forthcoming and it appeared that the “responsible parties” may be covering up homosexual predation as so many bishops have been guilty of doing for decades, I sent an email to every US Ordinary warning them of the alleged risk to NAC seminarians, while calling on them to demand an investigation of Cardinal Dolan and the NAC faculty in keeping with *Vos estis lux mundi*, *Christus vivit*, and the NAC’s *Expectations of Ethical Conduct*.

When you read a copy of my June 15, 2020 letter below to Sister Mary Patrice Ahearn, the NAC staff psychologist, you will discover that only one US Ordinary responded by writing: “Out of concern for other seminarians now at the NAC, and in the interest of justice, I have passed your correspondence along to the Apostolic Nunciature.” Unfortunately, as you will read, the Vatican appears to be handing this case the same way it dealt with complaints that religious sisters were being raped by African priests. Instead of investigating these claims, the Vatican sent the complaints back to the bishops who were covering up what was going on based on their belief that the chances of contracting AIDS were reduced if their priests had sex with nuns instead of with prostitutes.

Even though Sister Mary Patrice opened and read my letter at 9:15 am (Rome time) on June 16, 2020, she has yet to reply. In light of the fact that by law she is a mandatory reporter when it comes to allegations of sexual abuse, and insofar as seminarians are legally “vulnerable adults” given their superior-inferior relationship with both their formators and ecclesiastical superiors, her failure to act upon these allegations could pose very serious legal consequences for her.

This communication is being made available to the media, clergy, laity and other interested parties online at [www.gomulka.net/Ahearn.pdf](http://www.gomulka.net/Ahearn.pdf)

I trust you will find the following letter of interest in bringing you up-to-date on the progress I am making in my investigation. Feel free to offer any comments.

June 15, 2020

Sister Mary Patrice Ahearn, RSM  
c/o Pontifical North American College  
00120 Vatican City State

Dear Sister Mary Patrice,

I am confident that by now you have been informed that I am undertaking an investigation into allegations involving clerical misconduct at the North American College (NAC).

After contacting your motherhouse in Alma on 11 June 2020 at 12:35 PST, at which time I was assured of a response from you which as of present I have not received, I am reaching out to you for a second time via email.

The evidence I have gathered to date after speaking confidentially with different current and former NAC seminarians, priests, and laity, led me to write Cardinal Dolan, the NAC Board of Governors, and all US Ordinaries, requesting that an impartial investigation into concerns about the victimization of NAC seminarians and cover-up of this victimization be undertaken.

As a licensed psychologist employed at NAC, I am hoping you can answer a few questions that might prove helpful in my investigation.

1) After reviewing an audio recording from a January 2020 formation conference on sexual abuse of power that was made by an unnamed student, one may perceive the NAC student described as “crying out for help” who spoke at length following your presentation on sex abuse as actually reporting abuse that was occurring in his own life at NAC. Given the lack of response on the part of Church leaders regarding the accusations of clerical misconduct at NAC that have surfaced, how can mandated reporters justify the discrepancy between protocols stated in *Vos estis lux mundi*, *Christus vivit*, and the NAC’s *Expectations of Ethical Conduct* and the absence of an investigation into these accusations to date?

2) Are you familiar with the work of New Jersey psychiatrist Joseph Barone, who over a seven year period tested “dozens” of NAC seminarians for AIDS and found that “1 in 12 tested HIV-positive”?

3) Did you know that Cardinal Edwin O’Brien “coincidentally” arranged for then-Monsignor James Checchio to replace Monsignor Kevin McCoy early just before McCoy was scheduled to make a report to then-Archbishop O’Brien who was carrying out an investigation of all US seminaries?

4) Did you know that Argentine Bishop Gustavo Oscar Zanchetta who was accused of sexually abusing a number of seminarians and who claimed that all nude selfies of himself on his cell phone were uploaded by someone else, has just recently been “resurrected” by Pope Francis similar to the “resurrection” of ex-Cardinal McCarrick that occurred after Jorge Bergoglio was elected to the papacy?

Allow me to explain how your answers to these questions may shed light on my investigation.

1) After Anthony Gorgia witnessed inappropriate touching of a student by vice-rector Adam Park, Gorgia received disclosures not only from the student he witnessed being touched, but also from other seminarians. Based on what he saw, heard and received in written form, Gorgia had reason to believe that Father Park might be preying on seminarians, including those who report to him as their formator. While in New York, where Gorgia returned on a pre-approved leave from NAC to undergo non-elective surgery, he received communications from seminarians that heightened his concern that his fellow seminarians might be succumbing to victimization at NAC. Cardinal Timothy Dolan not once, but five times refused to discuss the allegations surrounding Father Park. Given that the seminarian whom Gorgia witnessed receiving Father Park’s inappropriate touching was Park’s formation advisee, Gorgia’s concern only grew when he heard that a formation advisee of Father Park spoke at length in a very emotional manner following your presentation to the student body. Later Gorgia was told by a student that Father Park was now showing “interest” in a younger student.

When I myself investigated these claims, I was informed by another NAC seminarian of a pattern, such that Father Park is attracted to athletic, handsome students who tend to be somewhat naïve. I bring this to your attention, since you as a licensed psychologist are a mandatory reporter who is required by law to report allegations of sex abuse involving minors and vulnerable adults. Obviously, NAC seminarians are not minors, but might they be considered “vulnerable adults,” a designation concurrent with a communication sent by Father Harman himself identifying them as “vulnerable?”

I would argue that seminarians are “vulnerable adults” based on the following case: In 2002 I reported a chaplain for having a “live-in-boyfriend” to his ecclesiastical endorser, then-Archbishop Edwin O’Brien. Just like Cardinal Dolan who refused to look at the evidence of alleged clerical misconduct that Anthony Gorgia tried to serve him 5 times, so too did O’Brien refuse to look at the evidence I brought to his office about Chaplain John “Matt” Lee. Five years after Lee went on to serve at the US Naval Academy and Marine Corps Base Quantico, he was arrested and charged with conduct unbecoming an officer, aggravated assault, sodomy, and failure to inform sex partners that he was HIV-positive. When contacted by the media, O’Brien lied by leading them to believe Lee’s

active gay sex life was never reported to him. Lee is currently serving a 30 year sentence in a Federal Prison. The point is that even though the sailor Lee lived with when I reported him and the Midshipmen and young Marines he seduced were technically adults, they were considered to be “vulnerable adults” in so far as Lee enjoyed a superior-inferior relationship with them.

This opinion also seems to be shared by former NAC rector, Bishop James Checchio, who maintains that a priest or seminarian is *de facto* a “vulnerable adult” per the Dallas Charter, and therefore not in a position to give actual sexual consent when it comes to a person who wields authority over him. In so far as a seminary faculty member, particularly a formator, could have a seminarian sent home never to be ordained (like was done to Gorgia), he certainly is “vulnerable.”

The “vulnerable” aspect is all the more serious in this case insofar as one NAC seminarian, who wished to remain anonymous, told me that after hearing what another student said with great emotion, he was concerned about what might happen to this fellow seminarian in the future. The former also mentioned the possibility that his peer, as a victim and a priest, might later speak out against this behavior as Chicago Father Paul John Kalchik is doing after having been raped when he was 19 by a gay priest. Finally, we also discussed the possibility that if the seminarian who appeared to be “crying out for help” truly is an abuse victim, he might later attempt suicide as has been known to happen among victims of abuse.

Those considered “vulnerable” amid accusations of misconduct at the NAC include not only present NAC seminarians, but also future generations of minors, seminarians, and other vulnerable adults whom studies have shown are at higher risk of suffering predation by those who themselves have incurred predation. The NAC seminarian who contacted me seemed to know that some people who are preyed upon later imitate that behavior as priests with others, thereby becoming predators themselves, a finding already noted in the work of A.W. Richard Sipe when he wrote of his knowledge “from many priests about their seduction by highly placed clerics and the dire consequences in their lives that does not end in their victimization alone ... This abuse paves the way for them to pass the tradition on – to have sex with each other and even with minors.” Sipe’s statement has already been confirmed when an article published in *America* described a 1994 letter to Bishop Edward T. Hughes from a priest who reported enduring “sexual and emotional abuse” at the hands of ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick and contended that these experiences “had left him so traumatized that it triggered him to touch two 15-year-old boys inappropriately.” Interestingly, seminarians abused by McCarrick have reported suffering some of the same physical behaviors as those now being alleged of Father Park, who himself was a seminarian and was ordained by McCarrick.

2) Dr. Joseph Barone was involved in HIV-testing with NAC seminarians and priests during the time when then-Monsignor Edwin O’Brien was rector. Only this week, a seminary rector with whom I studied in Rome shared with me that it was after he left NAC and was ordained a few years that someone told him about where gay seminarians engaged in sex at NAC when we were there between 1971 and 1975. While the average number of gay sex partners decreased at the height of the AIDS epidemic, the development of new drugs to treat HIV seems to have led to higher partnering rates again. If Dr. Barone’s statistics are correct that “1 in 12 tested HIV-positive” as late as 1993, one year before O’Brien was replaced by Dolan, and two years before AIDS deaths peaked in 1995, then one might expect the percentage of infected seminarians to be even higher today owing to less fatal consequences surrounding gay sex that Dr. Barone identified as the major cause of seminarian and priest HIV infections.

If Church leaders say that “men with homosexual inclinations should not be admitted to the seminary,” then how can one explain the presence of so many HIV-positive seminarians at NAC given that seminarians are tested before coming to NAC?

3) As you know, O’Brien was followed by Dolan in 1994 who was followed in 2001 by Monsignor Kevin McCoy. While I received one report presently under investigation that Dolan dismissed a heterosexually oriented seminarian who reported two classmates for engaging in gay sex in the room

next door to his, I found nothing to indicate that McCoy tolerated either seminarians who engaged in consensual sex with one another, or gay seminarians who were reported for propositioning heterosexual seminarians. Everything I have been able to uncover about McCoy at this point in my investigation is positive. For example, one person wrote, "He was a good father. The people that worked at the seminary loved him; he was like a pastor to them."

Although McCoy was offered a five year contract to serve as rector, then-Archbishop O'Brien and the NAC Board of Governors announced in late 2005 that he would be relieved early in January of 2006 by then-Monsignor James Checchio. Based on O'Brien's past record, one can surmise the reason behind this sudden and early mid-year change of command.

In late August of 2001, I published an article in *America* ("Home Alone in the Priesthood") that made a passing reference to five Catholic chaplains under my supervision in the early '90s who committed "offenses that resulted either in their imprisonment or separation from the military." Instead of writing me himself, O'Brien forwarded me a letter from a Monsignor Patrick Brown that questioned the accuracy of my article. My response to Monsignor Brown documented that "Five Catholic Chaplains (10 percent of the RC chaplains serving with Marines) committed UCMJ offenses (four involving homosexual behavior and one involving pedophilia). Three of the five RC Chaplains were incarcerated (one received a 12 year sentence for pedophilia) and two received other than honorable (OTH) discharges."

When O'Brien received a copy of my attached response, he had his auxiliary bishop, John Glenn, write a letter to the editor. Glenn avoided stating that four priests were disciplined because of homosexual behavior, but he simply wrote that they "had serious problems." He also left out that there were not four – but five problem priests including the one who was sentenced to 12 years for pedophilia. His biggest lie was to make it seem as if what I reported was an anomaly, and that no problems like that ever happened before or after those I reported. He wrote, "Nothing as serious as that had ever happened before in the history of the military ordinariate. I can testify that such a situation has not recurred."

When O'Brien was required to report the number of abusive priests within the Archdiocese for the Military Services who abused minors between 1950 and 2002, he wrote, "As to our Archdiocese, two such cases have come forward where active-duty priest chaplains have been found guilty of engaging in immoral acts with minors." When I read his letter, I could not believe how he thought he could get away with such a boldface lie. When I confronted him for this misrepresentation, he revoked my ecclesiastical endorsement as he did Chaplain Tom Doyle's endorsement a few months earlier as a reprisal for his testimony at abuse trials throughout the country. Bishop accountability has identified not 2, but over 150 military and VA chaplains credibly accused of abusing minors and vulnerable subordinate military personnel.

In light of O'Brien's history of underreporting and covering-up abuse mainly involving homosexual predation in the Archdiocese for the Military Services, I maintain that it follows he would want to cover it up in seminaries. When I reported to O'Brien in 2002 that a sailor I recommended for the priesthood left the seminary after six months when the administration failed to discipline the gay students who were propositioning him for sex, O'Brien did absolutely nothing. Had O'Brien been as interested in recruiting heterosexual candidates as he was homosexuals he was documented to have attempted to recruit, he would have inquired as to what seminary the former sailor attended.

O'Brien learned that McCoy reportedly took the Church's teaching on homosexuality seriously and did not hesitate to expel sexually active gay students. Rather than having to alter the data provided by McCoy to paint a very rosy picture of NAC, it appears he had McCoy removed early with the excuse that he was needed to fulfill the time of his contract by returning to the US to head the completion of NAC's capital campaign. With McCoy out of the way, O'Brien was free to conduct his sham of a seminary investigation with Checchio who, with little information of his own, would allow O'Brien to report whatever he wished. Unlike McCoy who upheld the Church's teaching on homosexuality,

Checchio was reported by a former NAC seminarian as discontinuing his studies when this seminarian refused to attend the diaconate ordination that year because Checchio and the faculty endorsed ordinandi he knew to be sexually active gays. In view of the outcome O'Brien may have hoped to contrive in his study on seminaries, might he also have feared some calling into question how many homosexual seminarians expelled by McCoy might later have been recruited and ordained by Ordinaries of other dioceses or communities given how some seminaries in the United States have been shown to recruit known-homosexual candidates?

Unlike former rectors like O'Brien, Dolan, and Checchio who were rewarded and promoted to the ranks of the episcopacy for covering up homosexual predation and behavior, McCoy is back working in a parish in the Diocese of Sioux City, Iowa. McCoy is able to sleep well at night knowing he protected his young men from clerical predators like McCarrick, Bransfield, Zanchetta, Gatto, and so many others guilty of sexually abusing seminarians.

4) When Dolan refused to meet with Gorgia and examine the evidence he had that Park might be preying on NAC seminarians, Gorgia sent evidence to the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Christophe Pierre; the Congregation for the Clergy; and Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga. Pierre wrote back to Gorgia claiming that this case was outside his jurisdiction even though, in keeping with *Vos estis lux mundi*, allegations involving abuse cover-ups by Metropolitan Archbishops are to be reported to the Nuncio to then be investigated by the Vatican. Neither the Congregation of the Clergy nor Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga offered the courtesy of a response despite confirmation that their offices were in receipt of the evidence.

It appears that the Nuncio and Vatican officials are handling the Gorgia case the way the documented abuse of nuns in Africa was handled. When a mother superior complained that the local bishop wanted her to make her sisters available to have sex with his priests lest they become infected with HIV and die of AIDS, instead of disciplining and removing the bishop, the Vatican forwarded the complaint to the bishop who had the mother superior removed. When one nun was impregnated by a priest, he forced her to have an abortion which resulted in her death. It was the priest who got her pregnant who then conducted her funeral Mass.

Anthony Gorgia, who is fluent in Italian, learned from a high ranking prelate in Rome that his case was forwarded to Dolan, who to this day has failed to take action upon the reports he has received. So, like the case involving the mother superior in which the Vatican wanted to cover-up the abuse of religious women in Africa, so too does the Vatican want to cover up the abuse that may be going on not only at NAC, but at many other seminaries around the world.

Gorgia probably never would have written to Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, the leader of the pope's advisory council, had he known that Maradiaga slammed seminarians for exposing homosexual predation and behavior inside his archdiocesan major seminary in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Another reason Gorgia wasted his time appealing to the Vatican is because Pope Francis himself has protected bishops like Gustavo Zanchetta credibly accused of abusing seminarians. The Argentine prelate opened the "St. John XXIII Seminary" in his diocese in 2016 with six seminarians. The following year Gustavo resigned after he was accused of sexual abuse by three seminarians, some of whom were minors. Press reports suggested that Zanchetta used diocesan funds to buy the silence of young seminarians he allegedly subjected to "masturbation, groping and psychological pressure."

It was recently reported on June 11, 2020 that Pope Francis has welcomed Zanchetta to live and work in the Vatican as if nothing ever happened. This should not come as a surprise seeing that no action was taken against him when "naked selfies were reportedly sent to the Holy See's embassy in Argentina along with testimonies regarding Zanchetta's misdeeds."

It is also clear to me that what happened to Anthony Gorgia at NAC that I addressed in "[Gorgia v. Dolan](#)" is not an isolated event. When Michael Rose published *Goodbye! Good Men* in 2002, he addressed "how seminary 'gay subculture' and its 'heterophobia' drive away healthy heterosexual men." Unfortunately, it appears that nothing much has changed – and perhaps has even gotten worse – over the past twenty years. In the sense that *history repeats itself*, it is a well-founded observation that NAC seems to be on the same path that led to the closure of the American College of Louvain (ACL) in June of 2011. ACL was reportedly plagued by accusations of homosexual misconduct on the part of the vice-rector, Father Michael Nash, who was later dismissed from the priesthood. It was also reported that the rector, Father David Windsor, retaliated against a seminarian for refusing to comply with the alleged homosexual subculture. These scandals contributed to a decline in the number of seminarians nominated to attend ACL by sponsoring Ordinaries.

When Dominican Father Tom Doyle co-authored a sex abuse report in 1985 while working at the Nunciature in Washington, DC, the Vatican and US Ordinaries responded the very same they are responding today to "[Gorgia v. Dolan](#)" which they have all received. Just as they moved Doyle to do something else with his life after he wrote an in-depth report about the abuse cases that had been coming across his desk, so too did Dolan, the NAC Board of Governors, and all save but one US Ordinary do nothing after Gorgia was coerced into leaving NAC owing to his possession of evidence of alleged clerical misconduct at NAC.

Only one US prelate, Bishop Edgar da Cunha from the Diocese of Fall River, had the moral courage to respond by writing, "Out of concern for other seminarians now at the NAC, and in the interest of justice, I have passed your correspondence along to the Apostolic Nunciature." In keeping with *Vos estis lux mundi*, da Cunha knows that a Metropolitan Archbishop like Dolan who is alleged to have covered up alleged abuse can only be investigated by someone appointed by the Vatican. Cardinal Sean O'Malley likewise recognized how *Vos estis* is supposed to work when he too reported Dolan to the Nuncio for keeping a credibly accused abusive cleric on the job in New York for years despite a large settlement paid to one of his victims.

What NAC officials, Cardinal Dolan, and all prelates who have been in receipt of these allegations and failed to act upon them should realize is that they are now under questioning for jeopardizing the vulnerable adults under their care by *omission*, which is legally defined as "a failure to act which can give rise to liability when the law imposes a duty to act and the defendant is in breach of that duty."

Knowing from personal experience how whistleblowers may unjustly be treated, and knowing too how people with certain incriminating evidence might also be either pressured to keep quiet or be dismissed, allow me to advise you to document any conversations and safeguard any communications you might have with the rector or any church officials in regard to this case.

As you ponder how you might respond to my inquiry, please remember how many thousands of people could have avoided being abused had the bishops and the Vatican not covered-up Father Doyle's 1985 report, and how many sailors, Marines, and Midshipmen might not have been abused had then-Archbishop O'Brien not covered up my report regarding allegations of homosexual behavior on the part of Father John "Matt" Lee who, like Father Adam Park, is a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington.

As a licensed psychologist, you are well aware of the fact that some people who have been sexually abused, including seminarians, have been moved to commit suicide. The next time you find yourself in St. Peter's Square, you might want to look at the Papal Palace to your right and recall how former German sister, Doris Wagner, who was repeatedly raped by a priest in the Vatican, said she almost committed suicide one day when she was high up on a balcony inside the Papal Palace, right in front of the pope. It would be regrettable if one of the NAC seminarians whom you were employed to care for were to take his own life as a result of abuse that was covered up by NAC officials and all the US Ordinaries (save Bishop Edgar da Cunha).

I look forward to hearing back from you and ask God to bless you in your work and keep you safe.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Gene Thomas Gomulka*

Rev. Msgr., CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.)