

January 26, 1983

Rev. Joseph Janicki
2462 N. Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Dear Father Janicki:

I am writing this letter in regard to a priest who is, as of Sunday, "awaiting assignment" and is presently up in Wausau undergoing a series of psychological tests. I am referring of course to Franklyn Becker.

I have deliberated over the past few days as to the wisdom of writing this letter. However, since you seem to be the one who has taken personal charge of his case, I decided to go ahead and write you. Lyn has been a very close friend of mine and my family for over eleven years, ever since he was assigned to Holy Family parish in Whitefish Bay. I have tried over the years to be a supportive friend. At the same time I have not blindly condoned many of his actions and patted him on the head just because he was a priest. I have seen him create the situations which led to his many uprootings, from Whitefish Bay, to Waukesha, to West Virginia, to St. Louis, to San Diego and finally back to Milwaukee.

I summoned the courage to write you because I am genuinely concerned about him, first as a human being, and secondly, as a priest with a future here in Milwaukee. Since, as I understand it, you were a classmate of his, I am sure you are aware that Lyn has few, if any, really close friends of long duration among either his priest peers, or the people he has met through his various assignments. He withdraws from any intimate, close relationships that require any giving on his part. I am a tenacious, bull-headed German, however, and have managed to hang in there as his friend, stormy though the road has been at times. He is a very attractive, sensitive man, a person who can seem to take a real interest in people's problems and thus has no trouble in drawing an admiring group of supporters around him early in an assignment. As time goes on and people become more aware of the real Lyn Becker and his many problems, including those with young boys, his new-found friends either walk away and don't want any part of him or a remaining few continue to believe his "poor, misunderstood priest" story and are quite willing to feed both his and their egos by wining and dining him in the manner consistent with his lifestyle. It's relatively easy to "buy" your own personal priest, especially one with his tastes.

From lengthy conversations with him over the past few weeks, I get the impression that the Archdiocese is finally beginning to draw the net around him and take more drastic steps to deal with his problem, other than merely directing him to Dale Olen. I sincerely hope this is true. Anything less than this would merely be putting a bandaid on a bleeding sore to hid it from view without taking care of the sore. Therefore, my concern is that you might be misled by his "I'll play their game as long as it gets me a parish" attitude which I have perceived over the past weeks. While outwardly displaying acquiescence, I feel he is, on the other hand, still taunting you and others in authority. This was evidenced by his appearance at the deacon ordination

AMIL00338

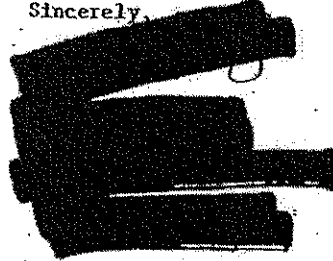
last Saturday at the Cathedral with the young boy he took on the cruise last November, which incident was partially responsible for his removal from St. John's. His sole reason for being at the cathedral was to witness the ordination of a friend and former parishioner from St. Margaret Mary, who was well aware of the circumstances of his removal from there. His appearance with the boy caused much comment. It again proved either his lack of judgment and discretion OR his intent to flagrantly wave his attraction to young boys in the faces of his fellow priests and/or former parishioners from St. Margaret Mary. I think this incident proves he is really back on square one as far as any self awareness or perception of his problems.

I would hope, and assume, Father Janicki, that the contents of this letter would remain confidential. I am sure that if he ever knew I had written you it would be the final termination of our friendship and I would hate to see that. I think he may in the weeks and months ahead, need a friend who is not only supportive but who can get away with slapping his hands and voicing disapproval of his acts of indiscretion. Our friendship has endured enough and is such that I can do that. It would be unfortunate, I believe, if this were taken away from him. My concern is that you do not turn him out into a parish as a pastor, or team member (which he seems to feel he has been promised by the Archbishop) until he is truly judged capable of handling it by very competent psychologists, psychiatrists, or whatever.

I'm sure you can recognize that Lyn can be a very creative, sensitive, caring and warm individual and can, on many occasions, function well as a priest. At present, however, he is incapable of doing this for any extended period of time on a consistent basis. And this he won't be able to do until he recognizes his problems and shortcomings and willingly takes steps to overcome them. He is far from this realization. Until then, any new assignment would be just another bandaid and an innocent parish could get hurt.

Thanks for listening. I am concerned about him.

Sincerely,

A large, solid black rectangular redaction covers the signature area of the letter.

AMIL00339