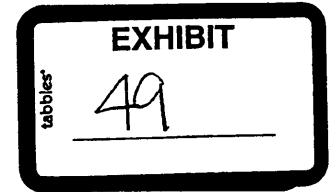


AFFIDAVIT



STATE OF IOWA )  
 ) ss:  
COUNTY OF SCOTT )

For the record, I called your office and spoke with you on 21 November 03. I have known for several months that you are representing some people who claim they were molested years ago by some Catholic priests in the Davenport Diocese. After introducing myself, I asked you if Father Francis Bass was named as one of the molesters. I was not surprised when you told me he has been accused. Father Bass attempted to molest me, and many of the unsavory memories are still clear enough to recall through the blur of over four decades.

I am not asking for any court actions on my behalf. This is not to say that Father Francis Bass caused me no suffering. He did, but the young boy he tried to molest many years ago escaped his web and is now an old man. I have met many miscreants, tyrants, and perverts since then, and Father Bass simply helped me prepare to deal with them. What hurt the most then, and troubles me even today, is that nobody I have ever spoken to from the Davenport Diocese would stop him.

I was born in Davenport, Iowa on [redacted] 1945, and attended Saint Mary's Catholic Elementary School from grades 1-5. I was enrolled in a public school for sixth grade, and soon joined forces with a couple delinquent peers. We convinced a classmate to take money from his parents' safe and share it with us. We were caught, and I was placed on probation in May 1957. The judge ordered me to start attending church again. At around that time, I began hanging out with some boys from Saint Joseph's. They introduced me to Father Bass, and he contacted my mother to assure her that he would help guide me back to the moral life. With the power of the court and my Mother's full support behind the arrangement, Father Bass powered his way into my life.

Thus began a series of encounters with Father Bass that seemed to span around two or three years. The major events that remain the clearest included a trip to his parent's farm in Nebraska, a night swim at Saint Ambrose College, an overnight stay at a camp next to the Mississippi River, and a particularly unsettling trip to Chicago. There were also the visits to my home. Sometime shortly after meeting Father Bass, my family moved to the Garden Addition in the West end of town. Father Bass would arrange to stop by when my parents were gone.

Like many young boys in Iowa after World War II, I was introduced to wrestling at an early age. I was small. Fortunately, so was Father Bass when I found myself alone with him in my room. He began to tussle with me as if to wrestle, but he had no knowledge of it. I escaped him, but recall him attempting to rub his face on mine. The stubble of his beard repulsed me. These "wrestling incidents" eventually stopped as I became more aggressive in my response. One night, he took me and some other boys to Saint Ambrose College to swim in the pool after hours. I do not recall the events that got me into the

situation, but I did not have swimming trunks. Father Bass convinced me to swim in the nude, and at some point he began wrestling with me in the water. I fought him off with particular force that night, but did not realize at the time what he was trying to do. I only recall feeling that what he was doing was wrong.

When I was around fourteen years old, Father Bass took me and a few other young boys for a weekend in Chicago. It was overcast, cold and very windy. First Father Bass took us into a tall building with a very fast elevator, and then we drove to the rear of the Cook County Hospital and went into the morgue. Somebody he knew met us. All had been arranged. As we moved deeper into the maze of dark passages, the smell of death grew thicker. There were bodies on carts parked against the walls. Father Bass had arranged for a guided tour.

The morgue was being renovated. We arrived at a temporary wall with two doors about eight feet apart. "Take your pick," Father Bass said to me. I opened the door on the right. A yellow light immediately flooded the room, and I stood facing a gauntlet straight from hell. The room was stark, long, and narrow. Bunks end-to-end lined the outside walls and a double row of bunks filled the center, producing a U-shaped trail of horror ending at the door to my left on the other side of the room. The bottom bunks hit me at the about the waist, and I was just tall enough to be eye-to-eye with the bodies on the top bunks. They were lying on what looked like large cookie sheets.

Each corpse seemed more horrible than the last. Some were decomposed. Others were frozen in bizarre and terrifying postures with their eyes and mouths wide open. Our guide stopped us often and provided details. He showed me some babies. When it was over, Father Bass took us boys out to eat Italian food, and eventually we arrived at his uncle's house in a suburb. I do not recall where it was, but we passed by a castle-like place he said was owned by the Mars Candy people.

That night we boys were told to sleep downstairs, but at around bedtime, Father Bass called me upstairs to his bedroom. Father Bass produced a long white-knotted cord he called a purity string. He said God would guide me if I wore it. Then he helped me put it on properly. The cord, he explained, had to be directly against the skin, so we had to undo my pants and lower them in order to tuck the purity string beneath my underwear. Father Bass said it had to be close to my private parts because it was supposed to protect me from sexual sins and help me to know what is right.

Then it was time for confession. I had come to doubt the concept. Father Bass would always want to dwell on sexual issues, and confession dragged on. It was late when we finished, and Father Bass told me it was too crowded downstairs, and that we should share his upstairs bed. It was less a request than an uncomfortable demand. I went with it, but not long after the lights went out, Father Bass spooned me while reaching around into my crotch. I gave him a solid rear elbow to the ribs and jumped out of bed. Father Bass turned on the light and warned me not to "scandalize" him. I quickly escaped and went downstairs to spend the rest of the night awake and on guard.

Once back in Davenport, I began telling people what Father Bass tried to do to me. I felt stupid because I had not realized what he was up to before, and I wanted to stop him from trying to molest others. I told my mother first. She was a devout Catholic and told me to stay away from him. I recall going to Saint Mary's rectory, telling one of the priests, whom I assume was Father Jay Janssen, what Father Bass was doing and asking the priest for help. I specifically mentioned the incident in Chicago. The priest from Saint Mary's told me my suspicions were not correct. I never heard anything further from that priest or anyone else from the Diocese. Time passed, I abandoned the church, and pushed the whole ugly incident to the back of my mind.

In approximately 1974, I called the Davenport Diocese and recall telling a representative of the Diocese the same events as I describe in this Affidavit. I heard nothing further. The conversation was brief and the person was not interested.

I left Iowa in 1979. In June of 1992, I saw a show on Larry King TV about priests abusing minor children. This prompted me to again contact the Catholic Diocese and warn them about Bass. At the time, I was an assistant professor at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. I called the Bishop's house and provided him with the information I have described on Pages 1 and 2 of this affidavit. I heard nothing further and called one week later and talked to M. J. Morrissey, whom I believe was the Vicar General of the Diocese of Davenport at the time. I was sure at the time that Father Bass was probably still hunting for victims. As one who escaped his net, I felt it was urgent to warn others.

I returned to Iowa in January of 2001 to become the Health and Physical Education Consultant for the Iowa Department of Education in Des Moines. As the number of child molestation cases in the Catholic church grew throughout the country and people came forward, I began wondering if Father Bass had ever been stopped. I learned that he was living in Davenport and called the Catholic Diocese sometime in 2001 to warn the leadership, again, about what had happened and that in my opinion, he was a pervert. I was shifted to a couple of unresponsive people, and, finally, spoke with someone who apologized and assured me that Father Bass would not be around children anymore. Until I had initiated the telephone call, I had heard nothing further from the Diocese.

I called again approximately a year later and spoke with a Father Schaffer. I identified myself, told him of my experiences with Father Bass and asked that the Diocese create and deliver a training module for students in Catholic schools that would prepare them to deal with molesters. Shortly after our conversation, the Superintendent of the Catholic schools in that area of the State contacted and came to visit me in my office at the Department of Education. We had a pleasant discussion, but I was never notified that any such program was developed.

At no time did I ever request, or am I requesting, that my name be kept confidential or secret. I pleaded with the Davenport Diocese to take action to stop Father Bass. I believe the names of victims should be kept confidential, if necessary, from public disclosure, but believe the victims' attorneys should have access to this information, as should all law enforcement officials in order to hold the priests and Diocese legally responsible for their

actions. I am a mandatory reporter under the Child Sex Abuse Laws in the State of Iowa and under such law, a victim's name will remain confidential, but I am required to divulge it to law enforcement officials. I see no reason to treat priests and representatives of the Davenport Diocese differently than teachers, school counselors, nurses or doctors. We all must do everything possible to protect our children from predators.

{109}

Subscribed and sworn to before me this  
23rd day of February, 2004.

Deborah M. Langhian  
Notary Public in and for  
The State of Iowa