

February 2, 2019  
Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Jennifer L. Kane, OCDS  
[address]

Re: Your letter dated 14 December 2018

Dear Ms. Kane,

Thank you for your letter which I received over the Christmas holidays. As you suggested, I gave considered thought and prayer to your feedback and requests. Your participation in the life and well-being of the Diocese of Buffalo is important. Your concerns need to be investigated and appropriately addressed. This letter will hopefully update you on some actions that have been taken.

You requested that your letter to me be added to the file of the once seminarian, now priest. The seminary transfers its formation files to the respective diocesan office after a seminarian completes his studies. The seminary continues to maintain academic records for all previous students. After receiving advice of how I should best handle your concern for him, I scheduled a meeting with the Chancellor of the diocese, the person who oversees the files for priests. We met on Monday January 28th. She listened carefully, received the original copy, and said she would see that your letter be added to the priest's file. Yesterday, February 1st, she sent me an email confirming that the original copy of your letter to me had been added to his file as you requested. From what I understand, the diocese is considering what other actions to take. The diocese would see to any further investigation of that case, while the seminary would see to any future incident under its supervision.

From your comments, my essay from early December obviously did not meet your expectations of what you thought should have been included. My essay addressed what many had asked the seminary to address: life in the seminary in general and any changes that might be forthcoming, not specifically the sexual abuse crisis.

As mentioned in that essay, the new *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, promulgated December 8, 2016, will bring significant adjustments to seminary life. The USCCB will hopefully complete the incorporation of this document soon into a newly revised Program for Priestly Formation (PPF), which would then act as the guideline for all seminaries in the United States.

In answer to some of your questions: yes, our seminarians are safe at CKS; yes, they can report abuse to seminary officials without jeopardizing their future. One of the seminary officials designated to receive reports is a member of our executive staff, a lay retired law enforcement manager who is trained in the objectivity and discipline needed. As to your question of whether

we are safe with the priests CKS recommends for ordination, I can only say that we do everything in our power to ensure that we are. But we must always rely on the help of God in that discernment. No one can guarantee that someone will not commit any specific sin or crime. Thus, we must continue to pray and rely on the help of God, as well as do our best to educate, inform, and ensure the necessary safeguards are being followed during and after seminary life.

Please continue to pray for our seminarians, students, faculty, and staff of Christ the King Seminary, and be assured of my prayers for you in your witness to Carmelite spirituality.

Blessings and peace,

Rev. John M. Staak, OMI  
Interim President-Rector  
Christ the King Seminary

CC: Rev. John Adams  
Sr. Regina Murphy, SSMN