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Hedmore Richmond 3121

Dear Gerry,

Thank you for your time and your concern the other day, and for taking on the painful task of letting me know of [BTL]'s hurt, and of letting me know too of the way he remembers me - the "me" I was then, - from those days.

Dearest God, I knew nothing of any of this! I'm desperately sorry for the pain his letter to you expresses. All these years our paths have not crossed, but if they had I would have expected that to be a happy occasion. From his letter, I know now how wrong such an expectation would have been. He speaks of me as "causing a rent in the fabric of his life" (if I've remembered it correctly). What a terrible thing! It fills me with remorse, even horror, to hear that someone whose friendship I rejoiced in has felt such deep wounding through it.

I respect and understand his wishing not to meet me or hear from me again; still, some minutes with him - in your company - might enable some degree of reconciliation. But as that seems unlikely, please express to him my deep sorrow and my longing for a degree of forgiveness as his hurt is now mine, and for life.

Gerry, I knew nothing of sin, or of wrong-doing, in my whole life. I knew nothing of sexuality either. In pre-seminary years there were a number of girlfriends and would-be girlfriends but never any sin - except perhaps the wanting of it! But the "not-wanting" was always more...

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important to me, and deliberate. In picking and being accepted for the seminary, and in due course for the priesthood, I was aware of a big sense of "gift" of myself (holy me!!) and of loss of expectation of marriage, family, sexual life, partnership, etc.

Somewhere in all of this, there is emotional immaturity, reasonable innocence, and great ignorance. I can't quite sort it all out, but

BTL's letter has established - for me anyway - that ignorance prevailed, and blindness, and perhaps in general over-doing everything, as I always seem to have done!

If it is appropriate, please let BTL know of my profound self-reproach and anguish now, as for the first time I discover the distress he has experienced because of me then. Even then I had no knowledge of sin, nor would ever have wanted it.

Gerry, for the moment I have run out of words.

I think it better that this letter be for you, not for BTL - other than that, if he would see you, you may read it to him as you see fit.

Thank you again for fronting the situation with me: it's always better that way, however difficult for all involved.

Best wishes, Gerry,

Bill Baker.