

██████████ ██████████ ██████████
New York, NY ██████████

April 18, 2016

Bro. Joseph Dominick Bellizzi, S.M
Principal
Chaminade High School
340 Jackson Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

Dear Brother Bellizzi,

I attended Chaminade High School from September of 1967 through June of 1971. Beginning in the Fall of 1970, and continuing until my graduation in June, 1971, I was sexually abused by Mr. Frank Lind, the Communications Supervisor for Chaminade. This occurred almost exclusively on Chaminade High School property in Mineola, NY, and at a minimum of once per week, sometimes more frequently. There was also one occasion when Mr. Lind brought me to his home, which at the time was in Sayville, NY, and abused me there. By threatening to show my family and peers Polaroid photographs he had taken of the degrading acts he was making me perform, he was able to shame me into keeping silent about them. But now, after decades of difficult and painful emotional work, I know that the shame does not belong to me but to those who were responsible for my safety during my time at Chaminade and who failed to protect me.

In my Junior year (1969/1970) I joined several extracurricular activities, including the Amateur Radio Club and the CCTV crew. Brother James Leahy was the moderator at that time but when we returned to school after the summer of 1970 we learned that he had been replaced by Mr. Lind. Brother Leahy was a teacher in addition to his being a moderator, but Mr. Lind appeared to have had no other responsibilities, except maybe to get deals for the school on electronics equipment.

Mr. Lind may have sensed a vulnerability in my shyness and began giving me special attention. He would complement me while criticizing my fellow Radio Club members. By encouraging my trust in this way, he was able to lure/trick me into the sexually abusive relationship which lasted until I graduated. While on a Saturday field trip, taken in the Chaminade school van ostensibly for school business, having something to do with inspecting used electronics equipment for the Radio Club or CCTV Studio, Mr. Lind offered me a dare that he said no one else had been able to handle. He said that this needed to take place in the Radio Club room and once we were there he maneuvered me into a situation where he touched my genitals in an inappropriate way. He then used the threat of public humiliation in front of my classmates and embarrassment to my parents to frighten and shame me into not revealing what had occurred. Mr. Lind progressively escalated the abuse throughout the school year in order to reinforce my silence.

This abuse began in the Radio Club meeting room on that Saturday and was not to end until nearly nine months later. As Mr. Lind got progressively bolder and the abuse more frequent he became more concerned about discovery and moved us to the parts closet accessible only from the back of the Radio Club room. Later in the year, after

looking for somewhere to store used equipment, Mr. Lind discovered and somehow obtained the key to the dirt floor crawl space under the school. It was only accessible from a trap door located on the floor of a closet under the stairway on the west end of the school. A dirt pit in this crawlspace and the Radio Club rooms were the two locations on school property that Mr. Lind used to sexually abuse me.

At least once each week during the school year, though sometimes more, Mr. Lind would require me to stay late so he could have time with me after my classmates had gone home. The abuse escalated through the course of the school year. He began by having me masturbate him by hand. Next he would have me perform fellatio on him. His next escalation was to ejaculate into my mouth. Ultimately he forced me to swallow his ejaculate. Mr. Lind routinely took Polaroid photos at each stage of the abuse.

That school year I worked as a janitor's assistant on Saturdays to help offset my tuition. Mr. Lind took advantage of my being in school on Saturdays in order to arrange time to have me alone when the school was empty. At one point in that year I carried out a serious prank on my homeroom teacher, Bro. Frank Mullins, making sure I could easily be caught in the hope I would lose my Saturday job. However, Mr. Lind intervened with the Principal and got me reinstated, as if to give me the message that I could not escape from his power and control that easily. I continued to endure this for my entire Senior Year, my purpose and only goal being to survive until graduation when my hostage-like ordeal would be over and I could pretend it never happened. Needless to say, my studies and college prep work were completely derailed during this critical time in my life.

After graduation I believed that I had finally escaped, and as long as I never looked back, I could begin my life again. But it became more and more difficult to apply myself to my college school work. I dropped out of college within months and proceeded to struggle for several years. I could not hold onto a job for more than a few months at a time. At 18, I enlisted in the US Air Force but received an Undesirable Discharge nine months later after three AWOLs and 30 days in the stockade. Nor could I maintain any friendships or romantic relationships during this time. After a few more years, I settled down enough to hold a job which then became my career.

In 1978, I left the Catholic Church, converted to Judaism and got married. The [REDACTED] addiction I developed after high school interfered with intimacy in my marriage and with our efforts to conceive a child. In 1986 we adopted a baby girl from South America. I continued to struggle with compulsive spending, drugs and [REDACTED] during our marriage. We divorced when my daughter was only 5 years old, seriously impacting her and my wife's lives as well. At this point I began my 12 Step Recovery. It was only then that the memory of Chaminade and my experiences there nineteen years earlier first returned to me. Over the next ten years I moved six times, changed jobs three times, and was involved in two relationships. 12 Step meetings and therapy were a major part of my life.

In 1999 I met my life partner, M [REDACTED], and in 2000 we moved in together. In 2001 I had a relapse with compulsive spending and hit a bottom with my drug use and addiction to [REDACTED] which threatened our relationship. I began treatment at SATTI for my [REDACTED] addiction, consisting of two hour group therapy sessions every week and a biweekly individual therapy sessions. I have continued this program for 15 years.

Thankfully, today, only because of the work I have done and the help I have received to recover from my traumatic time at Chaminade, I am several years sober in all my programs. M■■■■ and I are Domestic Partners and are still together after 17 years.

My life has been an agonizing ordeal of self-hatred, shame, disappointment and failure that has had seriously negative consequences for not only myself, but for my friends, employers, and loved ones. I have been dealing with the consequences of that trauma for 45 years and have payed a tremendous price in time, money and emotional work to get to where I can tell my story and know that the shame of those events does not belong to me anymore.

I find it hard to conceive how this could ever be made right and I be made whole again. What happened to me cannot be undone, nor can the life I might have had be given back to me and my family. I do know, however, that the institutions that allowed this to occur must somehow take responsibility for it now.

I look forward to receiving your reply to the above.

Respectfully,

Brian Richard Toale

cc:

Most Reverend William Murphy, Bishop, Diocese of Rockville Centre
Bro. Thomas J. Cleary, S.M., President, Chaminade High School and Provincial, Province of Meribah
Madeline Singas, District Attorney, County of Nassau, New York
Thomas J. Spota, District Attorney, County of Suffolk, New York