

February 5, 1968

Very Rev. Stephen M. Ryan, O.S.M.  
Servite Provincial Center  
5210 Somerset Street  
Buena Park, California 90620

Dear Steve,

I'm terribly sorry about the misfortune of Joe Sharkey. I really hadn't the slightest idea that he was a sadomasochist. When Joe Loftus was here, sometime after I was elected Provincial, we went through the entire roster of the Our Lady of Sorrows Province. At the time, Joe simply mentioned the fact that Joe Sharkey had, as I recall, "homosexual tendencies." There was no indication whatsoever that any of these had ever surfaced.

I believe I mentioned this to you - if I didn't, it certainly was a terrible mistake on my part.

During our Visitation I asked Joe rather bluntly if he had any trouble, or any aberrations. He told me that at one time he had, but he had happily overcome the whole bunch of them. There wasn't a word against him at Benburb.

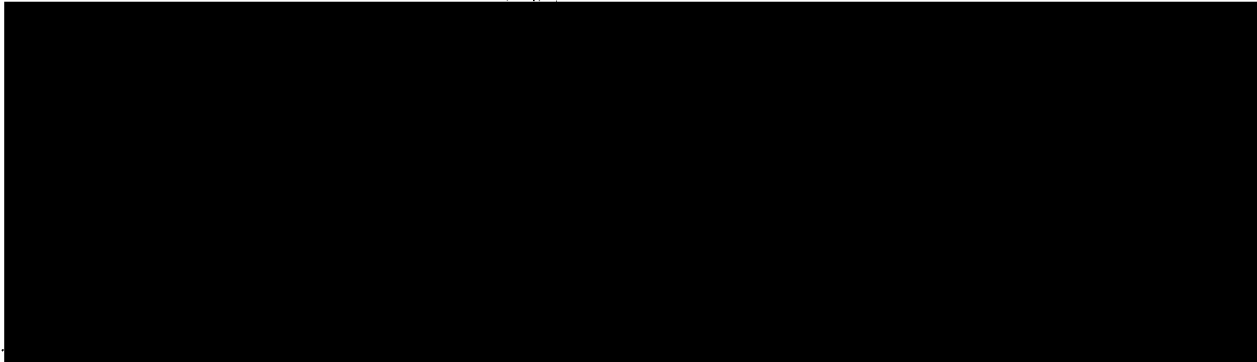
I've gone through his entire file, and can assure you that there isn't one word against him. I'm enclosing the copy of Louie Cortney's letter, which is about the most pertinent of all. The four quarterly reports from his Novice Master, who happen to be Andrew Rohan, were very, very favorable. The vote of the Community at mid-term and at the end of his novitiate (for simple profession) were both unanimously favorable to Joe.

I just finished talking to Louie Cortney, and asked him if there was anything subsequent to this letter that he can recall about Joe Sharkey. He remembers Joe from his visitations, and says that he never heard a word - as far as he knows, Joe was, and is, an ideal religious and Brother. (I told Louie absolutely nothing about the case, and Louie didn't ask. He's an ex-provincial, so he certainly understands.)

If there's anything that I can do to help the situation just let me know.



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Looking forward to seeing you in St. Louis, I remain

Sincerely yours in Jesus and Mary,

Very Rev. Terence M. O'Connor, O.S.M.  
Provincial