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**MEMORANDUM**  
**PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL**

TO: His Eminence, Bernard Cardinal Law  
FROM: Most Reverend William Murphy  
DATE: April 29, 1998  
SUBJECT: Reverend Dennis Keefe

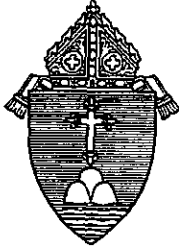
Following my letter of December 1997 to Father Keefe, finally we were able to have a meeting together on April 24, 1998. At Father Keefe's request the meeting was at Saint Mary Parish in Waltham with the Pastor of Saint Mary's, Father Wendell Verrill, in attendance. The meeting lasted one half hour.

*I greeted Father Keefe who was sitting there in a sport shirt and slacks with a pad of paper in his lap. Father Keefe was very formal toward me calling me always "Bishop Murphy" and only once "Bill". I began with an attempt for conversation which was met pretty much with silence on the part of Father Keefe. It seemed to me that there was not much opportunity for informal talk and so I proceeded to address the issue at hand. I told him that you and I were most eager to try to resolve this and that I believed we could resolve the issue so that he could return to active ministry. I stressed in several ways your desire that he return to active ministry and that this situation be put behind us. I told him that I was willing to explore with him possibilities to resolve it which in my judgment could be effected without too much difficulty so long as we both had good will.*

Father Keefe replied by saying that he had done what the Cardinal had asked him to do from the very beginning and obeyed the Cardinal's instructions and returned home, ceased wearing clerical clothes and had not celebrated public Mass. He pointed out that this had caused great pain for him including the inability to bury relatives and to minister to people who were close to him. In addition, particularly since the cut-off of any money, he was reduced to very limited circumstances. In contrast to the Church which has great resources at hand, he had little or nothing for his own life. He has gone through a time of great pain and upset. He wants to get on with his life. If there is any proposal from the Archdiocese, that should be done lawyer to lawyer. He added that if I wished to write to him directly he would receive that letter but that the response would come through his lawyer. He further stated that if this was the purpose of my coming, namely to try to resolve that difference, then there was no further purpose to the conversation. Anything of that sort should be done with the lawyer. Although he repeated that he would receive any letter from me he would refer it to the lawyer and then I would receive a reply.

I struggled to find other ways in which I could try and reintroduce the subject but it was clear that there was nothing further that he would entertain in that area. I emphasized to him time and again that we were committed to try to find a resolution of the situation. I agreed with him however that he was right to say that he should get on with his life.

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At that point it seemed to me that there was nothing further that I could do in that area and so I suggested that we might change the topic. I suggested that we might talk in general terms about how he was doing. Father Keefe replied that in contrast to me he was unable to make those kind of facile switches from one area to another. He therefore could not easily do what I had just requested. In the ensuing five to ten minutes I tried to find various avenues to keep a conversation going. I was unsuccessful in doing that. I closed by repeating to him that I would be sending to him the best possible proposal that I could work out after reflection and prayer to try to resolve the issue at hand. I went on to say to him again that I agreed with him that he needed to move on with his life. Therefore I offered my services in any way that was appropriate to meet with him, talk with him, deal with him, in any forum in order to help him to resolve any other situations and move on with his life. Because he does not choose at this time to indicate what "get on with my life" means I cannot make a specific proposal. I need to have him respond and to give me some opening so that I could be of whatever help I might be. However I emphasized that it is with great respect for him as a person and as a priest that I offer to be of whatever help I can be in this matter.

I asked Father Verrill if there was anything he thought that he would want to say to either one or both of us. Father Verrill said no although he could see both sides of the situation. At that point I shook hands with Father Keefe and Father Verrill showed me to the door.

It is clear to me that any proposal that would involve his going to counseling would not answer his basic position which is his declaration of innocence. We would have to begin with him on the basis that we agree that he is innocent and then try to work something from there. Given the fact of the allegation which is in our files, I think we can agree that he may be innocent but we cannot act on that agreement unless we can clarify the situation in the files. Therefore it seems to me that the only way forward to resolving this would be if we could reopen the allegation and seek either corroboration or denial by the person who made the allegation.

I still think it would be worthwhile making an effort to reach out to him. Therefore I would propose first that I talk with Father Bill Murphy and those who are involved in the situation. I would ask them if there is any possibility of re-interviewing the young man who now is three years older or of making a clear - determination of the extent to which this is a credible accusation. At the same time, if that could be done, I think it worthwhile to write to Father Keefe and say two things. First I would suggest that if he were willing to undergo an outpatient assessment then I would be very happy to arrange that with the appropriate doctor. There is no doubt in my mind that he will reject this. In the same letter we might however, if we are able, indicate that we are trying to resolve this issue by looking more deeply into the allegation itself to determine if perhaps there were elements that could lead us to rethink our current position vis a vis its credibility.

Please let me know your counsel and direction in this matter.

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