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October 17, 2013

**AN OPEN LETTER TO:**

Christian Brothers North American Region  
Province Leadership Team Members  
Brothers Hugh O'Neill & Kevin Griffith  
742 Monroe Avenue  
Elizabeth, NJ 07201-1641

Dear Sirs,

I am in receipt of a letter from James Stang, Esq. sent to me by three different people. This letter is attached and informs the recipients of a series of four meeting sites for survivors of the various travesties that precipitated the present “Christian” Brothers bankruptcy proceedings.

When I first saw this letter my initial reaction was one of hope... that turned to wonder... then doubt, and finally to outrage. Having considered your apparent attempt at “reconciliation” (if indeed that is how you choose to represent these meetings), I find myself stunned by the insensitivity and self-serving nature of these proposed encounters.

I was, on reflection, disturbed to receive this letter in the way I did. I cannot help but ask why did not the Order offer this directly? Why did I have to hear from an attorney who I did not hire about this offer through third parties?

What I, and others, endured at the hands of the “Christian” Brothers back in the 60’s cannot even be thoroughly documented now - a half a century after the fact. Even the precious few brave men who have come forward to tell their stories represent only the tip of the iceberg of the damaged done by the members of the Order.

The copies of the letter I received from the lawyer, James Stang, Esq., offered only “face-to-face” meetings of **sexual abuse** victims... it did not elucidate the reasons behind the meetings. I found myself asking the question, “Just who are these meetings for?” Are they for us, the survivors of only sexual abuse? Or do they serve the Order as it seeks to assuage guilt and provide positive public relations?

I asked around and discovered that these meetings will fall under the restraints of Paragraph 17.1.5 of the (proposed?) “Plan of Reorganization for the Order.”

*17.1.5 After the Effective Date, a member of the Province’s Leadership Team shall meet with each **Sexual Abuse Claimant** who desires to meet with a member of the Province’s Leadership Team. The Sexual Abuse Claimant may be*

*accompanied at the meeting by one person. The meeting shall be subject to all privileges related to mediation proceedings and settlement offers. The Province's Team Leader shall schedule meetings, at reasonable times and places, in each of the following locations (the "Meeting Locations"): St Johns, Newfoundland, Canada; New Rochelle, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Seattle, Washington and New Jersey (mutually agreeable location to be determined). All meetings shall be concluded within one (1) year after the Effective Date. The Province's Team Leader shall select a reasonable time and place for such meetings. Sexual Abuse Claimants who filed proofs of claim shall be informed of the date, time and address for each Meeting Location within thirty (30) days after the Effective Date and shall have up to 30 days to schedule a meeting at any of the Meeting Locations.*

My question about recording these meetings was brought before the Order's attorney of record, Tony Dougherty, Esq. I was informed that no recording of these meetings would be allowed "*subject to all privileges related to mediation proceedings and settlement offers*" – as stated in the absurd legalese of this 28,000-word "Plan of Reorganization."

I was also dismayed to note that these meetings were limited to only those men who were "sexually" abused and made no provisions for the men who were physically abused. I could not help but think of one of my classmates who had three of his teeth knocked out by the hand of a "Christian" Brother;... How many episodes of physical assault and battery did we witness in Bergen Catholic High School in the sixties? Far too many even to recall in many cases. What are you thinking? or more likely refusing to acknowledge? Criminal violent assault was an almost daily occurrence in the "Christian" Brothers schools back then; it certainly was in Bergen Catholic. Do you mean to suggest that the victims of serious physical criminal assault and battery are unworthy of a face-to-face meeting?

This whole proposal for these meetings seems to me to be nothing more than an elaborate charade designed to offer some imagined "healing" or "closure" for the "sexually" abused injured parties and to serve as public relations gimmick for the Order. Nobody asked me for any input in the creation of this "Plan" – I had no part in it. What about the hundreds of kids who were permanently scarred by violent beatings and assaults?

Please specifically tell me how these meetings are supposed to "serve" me and the other "survivors"? To attend one of these meetings, either in New York or New Jersey, I would have to do the following: Make an appointment during time convenient to the Order within a prescribed time frame not of my choosing, drive close to a thousand miles for the privilege with my service dog, spend money for gas, tolls, meals and lodging and two days of my time. For what? To meet with two men representing the Order who weren't even a part of the organization when the abuse occurred?

No, I'm sorry, this is a tremendous imposition on my time and practically non-existent resources. Unlike some survivors, I was never a financial success in life. I spent much of my time in religious pursuits including volunteer prison and death row chaplaincy as a

Rinzai Zen Buddhist monk living in poverty. I am classified as 100% disabled by the Social Security Administration. My only income is a monthly Social Security Disability payment. I have no substantial tangible assets; I own no property. My biggest asset is a sixteen-year old car. I have no savings and no inheritance (thanks to my father's reaction to my speaking out about what we were subjected to in Bergen Catholic)... I live hand to mouth – month to month – barely scraping by.


For these reasons I am declining your invitation for a face-to-face meeting. I feel that what you are doing will in no way serve me. In fact, I find your offer an insult after long ignored and denied injuries. I know I am not alone in entertaining such feelings.

I feel, that it is you who should be coming to meet with us, the injured parties, on our “turf” at our convenience, and on your “dime.”

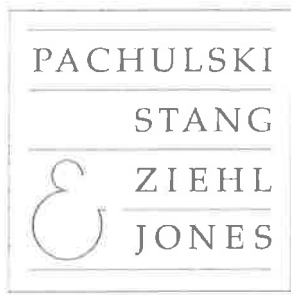
In fact considering the circumstances, I would entertain the concept of the Order representatives appearing at our doorsteps on their knees... asking for forgiveness. How many times did members of the Order force us as kids to our knees in so-called “acts of contrition”?

More than food for thought...

Signed,

Kobutsu 

Rev. Kobutsu Malone  
Survivor of “Christian” Brothers abuse.



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James I. Stang

October 8, 2013

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**Via U.S. Mail**

Counsel for Abuse Survivors and  
Unrepresented Abuse Survivors

**Re: The Christian Brothers' Institute and The  
Christian Brothers of Ireland, Inc. - Meeting with  
Members of the Provincial Leadership Team**

Dear Sir or Madam:

Meeting sites for the face-to-face meetings with Keven Griffith and Hugh O'Neill, members of the Christian Brothers Provincial Leadership Team, have been finally determined for Seattle, Washington and Chicago, Illinois and are set forth below.

**October 18 & 19 - Seattle, WA (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)**

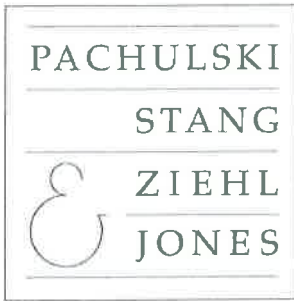
Shoreline Conference Center  
18560 1st Ave NE  
Shoreline, WA 98155

**October 25 & 26 - Chicago, IL (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)**

Catholic Theological Union  
5401 South Cornell Ave  
Chicago, IL 60615

**November 1 & 2 - New Jersey (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)**

Woodcliff Lake Hilton  
200 Tice Boulevard  
Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677-9998  
(Meetings to take place in the Ramapo East  
Conference Room)



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**December 13 & 14 - New Rochelle, NY**  
(10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Radisson Hotel  
One Radisson Plaza  
New Rochelle, NY 10801  
Meetings to take place in Room 519

If you are interested in having this face-to-face meeting,  
please contact Rick Fowler at (709) 765-0631 to set up an  
appointment.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



James I. Stang