News
Vatican

Robert Duncan

View Author Profile

Junno Arocho Esteves

View Author Profile



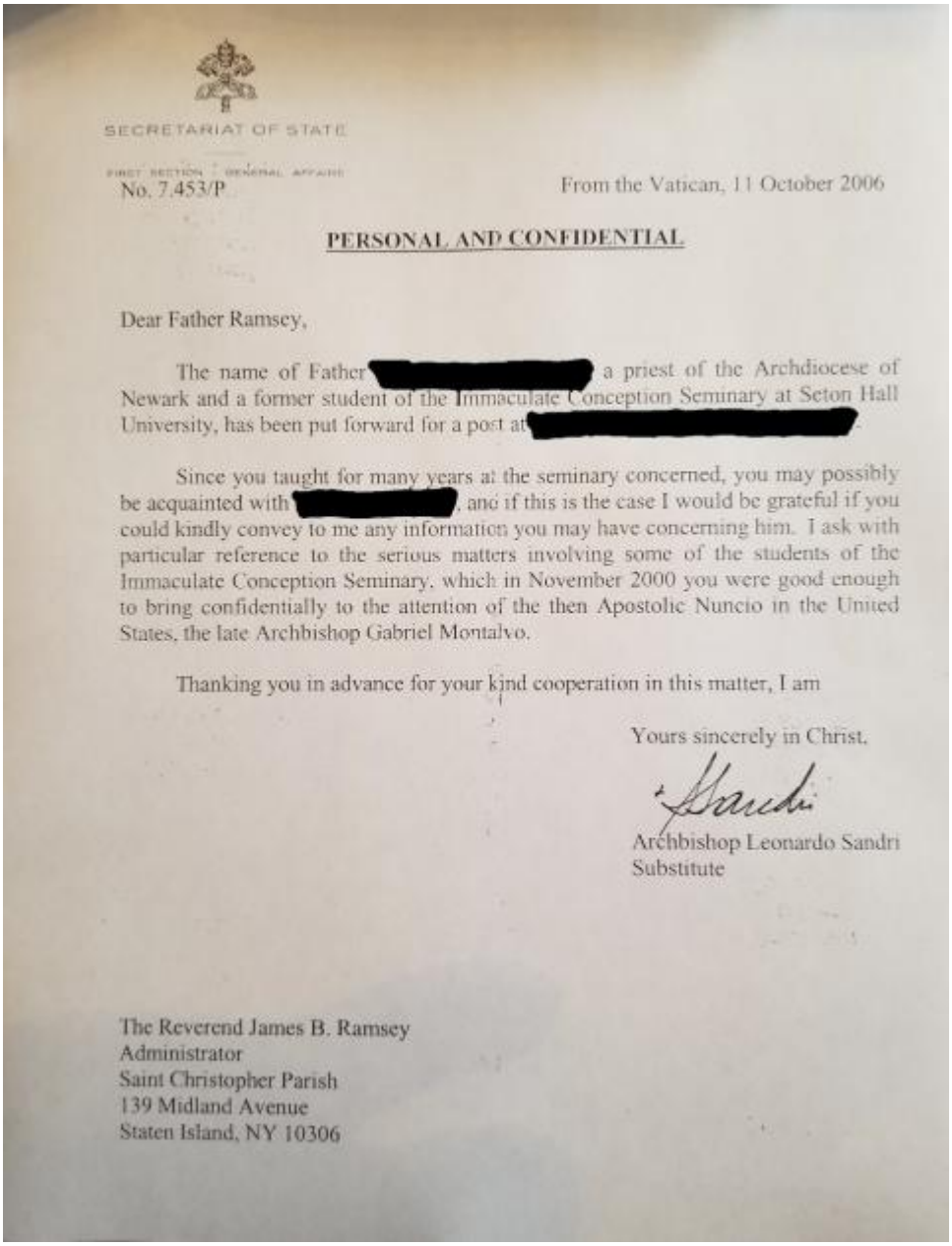
Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

## Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Vatican City — September 7, 2018
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint



SECRETARIAT OF STATE

FIRST SECTION - GENERAL AFFAIRS

No. 7.453/P

From the Vatican, 11 October 2006

**PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear Father Ramsey,

The name of Father [redacted] a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark and a former student of the Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University, has been put forward for a post at [redacted].

Since you taught for many years at the seminary concerned, you may possibly be acquainted with [redacted], and if this is the case I would be grateful if you could kindly convey to me any information you may have concerning him. I ask with particular reference to the serious matters involving some of the students of the Immaculate Conception Seminary, which in November 2000 you were good enough to bring confidentially to the attention of the then Apostolic Nuncio in the United States, the late Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo.

Thanking you in advance for your kind cooperation in this matter, I am

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Archbishop Leonardo Sandri
Substitute

The Reverend James B. Ramsey
Administrator
Saint Christopher Parish
139 Midland Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10306

A letter dated Oct. 11, 2006 from Archbishop Leonardo Sandri to Fr. Boniface Ramsey references a Nov. 2000 letter Ramsey had written warning about sexual abuse committed by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick. The letter was scanned and released by Ramsey to Catholic News Service Sept. 7. (CNS/courtesy of Fr. Boniface Ramsey)

A top official from the Vatican Secretariat of State acknowledged allegations made by a New York priest in 2000 concerning Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, according to a letter obtained by Catholic News Service.

Fr. Boniface Ramsey, pastor of St. Joseph's Church Yorkville in New York City, told CNS Sept. 7 that he received the letter dated Oct. 11, 2006, from then-Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, the former Vatican substitute for general affairs, asking for information regarding a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark who studied at Immaculate Conception Seminary and was being vetted for a post at a Vatican office. He made the letter available to CNS.

Sandri wrote to Ramsey, "I ask with particular reference to the serious matters involving some of the students of the Immaculate Conception Seminary, which in November 2000 you were good enough to bring confidentially to the attention of the then Apostolic Nuncio in the United States, the late Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo."

Ramsey had been on the faculty of the seminary from 1986 to 1996 and had sent a letter in 2000 to Montalvo informing him of complaints he heard from seminarians studying at the seminary, located in South Orange, New Jersey.

In the letter, Ramsey told CNS, "I complained about McCarrick's relationships with seminarians and the whole business with sleeping with seminarians and all of that; the whole business that everyone knows about."

Ramsey said he assumed the reason the letter from Sandri, who is now a cardinal and prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, only mentioned "serious matters involving " seminarians and not McCarrick's behavior was because accusations against the former cardinal were "too sensitive."

"My letter November 22, 2000, was about McCarrick and it wasn't accusing seminarians of anything; it was accusing McCarrick."

While Ramsey has said he never received a formal response to the letter he sent in 2000, he told CNS he was certain the letter had been received because of the note he got from Sandri in 2006 acknowledging the allegations he had raised in 2000.

The 2006 letter not only confirms past remarks made by Ramsey, but also elements of a document written by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, who served as nuncio to the United States from 2011 to 2016.

Advertisement

In an 11-page statement, published Aug. 26, Viganò accused church officials, including Pope Francis, of failing to act on accusations of sexual abuse, as well as abuse of conscience and power by McCarrick.

Viganò stated that the Vatican was informed as early as 2000 — when he was an official at the Secretariat of State — of allegations that McCarrick "shared his bed with seminarians." Viganò said the Vatican heard the allegation from the U.S. nuncios at the time: Montalvo, who served from 1998 to 2005 and Archbishop Pietro Sambi, who served from 2005 to 2011.

In late June, McCarrick, the 88-year-old retired archbishop of Washington, said he would no longer exercise any public ministry "in obedience" to the Vatican after an allegation he abused a teenager 47 years ago in the Archdiocese of New York was found credible. The then-cardinal has said he is innocent.

Since then, several former seminarians have claimed that the cardinal would invite groups of them to a beach house and insist individual members of the group share a bed with him.