

Third Party Privacy Rights

February 19, 1990

Confidential

[REDACTED]
C-- Sister Cathy
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Could I just share the questions I had in mind and you could see if those would be appropriate, and give us an organized way of approaching it

1. What is it that happened? What did Brother Berard do? Where did it occur and when did it occur? How old were you and how often did it occur? What period of time and what capacity. And what capacity were you relating to him and he relating to you. Teacher, student, whatever, basically those would be the first questions. Would that sound alright to ask?

[REDACTED] What is it that Berard did? What actually happened?

[REDACTED] In light of the sexual abuse?

[REDACTED] Yes.

[REDACTED] Ok, it initially started out at the rectory at St. Ann's and it began with I feel an inappropriate touch and taking pictures of what was seemingly physical abuse that had gone on in the family.

[REDACTED] What do you mean by an inappropriate touch?

[REDACTED] Being told to lift up my shirt, take my pants down and after doing that and having the pictures taken and then seemingly caressing me to support me in the fact that I was physically abused in my family, that was the first incident.

[REDACTED] What does caressing mean?

[REDACTED] Holding

[REDACTED] And how would he hold you?

Tightly

Like a hug, embrace

Embrace, ya ya

And besides that, how long would that embrace last approximately?

About three minutes, to start out with.

And did he touch you in any other way?

Not at that particular time.

You mentioned he asked you to

To take my shirt off and take my pants down, and he would touch my arm, oh he would say is that really a bruise or welt.

Were there other undergarments that you were wearing at that time.

Yes

Did he ask you to do more than that?

Not at that time.

Ok, thank you. And if you'll just continue as best you can there.

Is it easier for you to just tell rather than just be asked?

Yes it is

I'm wondering about that, I think it might

We can do that at the end some place along the line If you can be specific about the details like I would be asking you.

Ok

Getting the kind of question kind of like right now this is what you need, have you had that in mind maybe just stop after you tell a little bit and then just see if there is more specifics. I think what we are getting into is real specifics

What I feel right now is it's like a challenge like I am having to prove myself.

I suppose ya

I going to follow; but would you keep in mind that The real specifics

Yes ok, ok, I'll give you real specifics. I feel that from that point

Excuse me, I'm going to do the same thing [REDACTED] How old are you?

I am in the 7th grade, ok so I would have been 13 13, 14

Yes 13 or 12 and a half and from that point then Brother Berard played a real significant role in the fact, that when ever there were family fights in our immediate family, he always seemed to have a sense of what was going on, and intervened and always came and picked us up. And at different points he would drop my brother off with the intention of wanting to talk to me as to what was really going on, and I feel that as I started to mature, especially like 8th grade going into the 9th grade that he completely took on a different role rather than just being a family friend or a mentor, he started acting more like a boyfriend and he would just drive around and park and act once again he was he was going to be consoling in the fact that what was going on at home and then offer hugs and caresses, and then it got into more of a fondling type of situation and what would happen as far as the overall touching it would happen like maybe once a week, twice a week, and then he would cool off and maybe things would lay low for like maybe three or four weeks maybe five weeks, it would be almost like rungs of a ladder, he'd start one thing, stop it and there would be a cool off period and then depending on the intensity of what was going on at home and how vulnerable we were in our sharing to him as to the physical abuse or the sexual abuse at home, it was almost I feel like that it was part of the grooming that he gained that trust as an avenue to sweep in and use his own form of sexual abuse, as a consoling means. If that makes sense. And so by this time now, probably the summer

of 8th grade and once again it was it's anywhere from one week, to three weeks, to six weeks, it just, I never did understand the reasoning of this patterning as to why he would seemingly be over and covert in his touches and it got to the point of masturbation and then he would back off, and I think given the opportunity it would have been full intercourse. It never was.

like masturbation, he fondled you?

He would fondle me and manually place my hands on him

On his penis

yes

ok

And generally speaking this would be in a parking situation, I can remember being at the rectory a couple times not, that wasn't a real profound thing there the most significant thing I do remember was in the seventh grade and that was with the pictures and I always thought that was kind of strange because this is in the rectory and so I see some of the effects of that in my own life now as to my views of clergy, my views of religion, my views of God, my views of trust, my views of intimacy, I mean it's really innumerable and at different points and time Brother Berard never really taught in grade school, he was just kind of, I don't know how to describe his role other than that he was like a grounds keeper and he did a lot of parish work but as far as a teaching role he wasn't a teacher, and after situations had occurred in my life, and I felt really out of control I just every time I knew my brother wasn't going to be in the situation I pretty much knew what was going to take place as to him moving in sexually.

Even as a child

Even as a child, ya it was real frightening to me it was, it was real paralyzing, and I thought what am I doing that causes this because this person is a representative of the church and certainly this person can't be bad, it's got to be me because of everything else that was going on with my family and, so all along I was intruding the guilt and

the shame, and blaming myself for it and in that not being able to set limits in boundaries of saying no, because I didn't think I had the right to say no, because here on one hand he was acting like a father in a sense, in a weird kind of sense of consoling and yet knowing both my brother and I were really vulnerable to being in a spot of needing to be loved and needing, just we were in a needy spot, and him recognizing that and I guess that's why I don't really think that I could, really had a good sense of why I couldn't say no, and that's been a hard one to deal with. Its been real painful to deal with, but yet on the same degree I feel that in that he is totally wrong, he over stepped boundaries that he never should have over stepped and it didn't always necessarily have to be physically abusive, you know even verbally I remember instances of basketball practice because up until the time that Brother Berard came to St. Ann's, they didn't have a real sports program and he was real enthusiastic about getting kids involved with out side activities and I remember at one point, and I'm kind of back tracking right now, I remember one of the first basketball practices that we had and he had made a comment about a young girl at that time who was embarking upon puberty and she was a little obese, but she wasn't wearing a bra and probably needed to wear a bra, but in light of that the comments he that he even drew attention to that, and I thought that this was really obscure that here this person is a religious, especially as a male, why is he drawing attention to this, you know as a kid I didn't think I had a right to challenge that, I just thought this is bizarre, And I that's been pretty recent that I even dealt with that issue, but it stands out in my mind that you him noticing, that, if anyone was to notice it I would have thought at that point would have been the two girl couches, they could have appropriately addressed it, and said something but it just seemed real out of line, and even just to me that's verbal abuse, in the sense of what was going on, and I remember him questioning me as to my own dating patterns, throughout this period, especially as I got into high school he introduced me to a family in St. Francis of the Cee Cee parish at that time and wanted me to go out with the son, and over the course of time he took us water skiing and I know the two daughters and the son of this family and Brother Berard was rather intent as to what my dating patterns were with this young man and just exactly how far and what limits I had with this

guy, and I thought that's really inappropriate, it's non of your business and so not only tying it with the actual inappropriate touch that he was exhibiting towards me, I feel that there was verbal abuse and to me that's a form of mental abuse too. And then there was a slacking off period, there was probably a good six months that there wasn't real close contact in our family, and then just out of the blue he ended up at Marycliff, which was really odd because the priest we had at the time was a diocesan priest and we never had fill in priest or brothers to teach our religion classes and I don't know whether, at that point and time, this is when I was a junior now, whether or not it was because he was aware that we had career path counseling going on at that time and we have some involvement with the school counselor and that because of the chaotic family situation that I was in that maybe I'd blow the whistle as to a lot of other issues in my life that were trouble making and real crazy making for me but just out of the blue this one week, it was one day in particular that he was teaching my religion class, and I thought this is really a paradox, and at that time I was really rebellious and I in class was verbally acting out in class and he didn't do anything to curtail my acting out in class, and I always thought that was really strange that he wouldn't, I mean there are ways of dealing with classroom situations classroom management but I always now look at that and say was he afraid I was going to blow him out of the water and say well, what right do you have to address me when in fact you have been doing you know the ummm.. inappropriate fondling, masturbation ummmm just a lot of inappropriate actions, and now you are standing up here teaching religion class. In with a classroom of girls. So time went on and situations in my family got a little bit more intense, at this time I am probably a senior in high school, this is a year later, and as I say the contact with him slowly was weaning out, there were two friends of mine at that time that were teachers at St. Anns that were in the judgment volunteer program that I spent alot of time with and Sally and Darlene knew Brother Berard and they had pretty much become like a sanctuary for me to go and stay when my family was really chaotic and I don't know if Brother Berard felt threatened by that I never did say anything to them in light of what had happened and I don't know if they even had a sense of what was going on, but it was like contact with my brother and I was slowly diminishing, and every once

in a while he'd pop into the picture and sing by our house, or he'd call and say do you want to go out and have a Coke, and then it came time for his Golden Jubilee and my mom at that time, this is when I started getting into drugs then and my mom said you have this invitation to go to his Golden Jubilee, and I said why would I want to do that and she just kind of looked at me, and said well he's been a really good person to you all this time, and I go let's get real and up until this time I had told my mom about some sexual abuse issues with step-dads that has been in our family and I was disbelieved and I said why should I spill my guts on this one and not be believed again, because I thought I am really going to be labeled this crazy for this, and I just left it and she say's, and then she addressed me and was saying, you're really an ungrateful person for not going and participating in this, and I said "I'm not going, and then after that I was pretty heavily into drugs, and he swung by my grandma's, I was at my grandma's at the time and he looked at me, and at that time I was down to about 95 pounds, and he says "Deb, you're really screwing up" he says "why are you messing up with drugs and stuff " and this was verbatim, these were his words, and I said I don't know why don't you tell me, you seem to have all the answers, and he said lets go for a ride, and I thought oh wonderful, let's go for a ride, and he said I have to do something, and I don't know what he did, but in that point and time took me to two guy's houses, they were also brothers from St. Frances of the Cee Cee and he said I am going to drop you off here and I don't know what his intentions was in that, both of these guys were on drugs, and I was just supposed to make conversation with two guys that I didn't know.

These were Franciscans.

No no these were two kids from St. Francis of the Cee Cee parish, and they to were from a disfunctional family situation and umm excuse me, and he left me there, and he came back, I don't know what his expectation was in that, if he thought that I was going to be really promiscuous with these guys, I had a real ill feeling that, here this person just kind of comes picks me up runs and does an errun, then is going to come back and pick me up again and I you know, I still don't have any continuity to that but then shortly thereafter he was transferred out of Spokane again but on and off

he would send birthday cards on and off he would drop a letter and then it was about, when he was in Provo, Utah and he was working in a mental hospital with kids that he came back to Spokane, and that was about in '79 again and I had told him that I was getting married, and he came up and I had point blank addressed the issue with him and I said Berard have you ever thought that the things that occurred in my childhood involving you were wrong, and he danced around it he didn't want to address the issue of sexual abuse, he didn't want to address anything, it was just like nothing happened, and that always left me with this crazy making in my head, like did this happened didn't this happen, why do I have these internal feelings, you know not being able to focus on what went on, and I really feel that in that crazy making, that my drug use prior to that time really escalated and my own drinking habits escalated, and some real fears, of men and fears of being intimate of being able to trust, really started to surface, and I couldn't put a label on these things as to why, being internal stuff, at that point I had left the catholic church, and had gotten involved with the fundamental church, which was a charismatic kind of church, and I remember him, says well, [REDACTED] some day you will come back around to the fact that the catholic church, is right, and I said why would I want to do that, after all of this and I was just kind of putting things out, feelers out to see what are you going to do with this stuff that I have laid out on the table, and it's just like total denial, with the fact that he did anything that was wrong, and so then after that point and time things continued, on and it wasn't until this last year again that I had any real contact with him, so that brings it to current day so, and going back to the motive for writing the letter I would think that not only would I feel it would be a real injustice, and a real torture for any other child to have to go through this again, and that's the motive for even addressing this.

Break in tape.

[REDACTED] That physically, mentally, spiritually, that he literally rape my spirit and that really bothers me and to me he's very spiritually sick, and in that sickness because of that insensual relationship caused a spiritual sickness in me and I feel comfortable enough now and I feel encouraged and I have hope that I am healing and I know that going

back to the motive for writing the letter, I don't want this to happen to anyone else.

when you talked to Brother Berard last May and confronted the sexual abuse issue by saying, I am being _____ because of sexual abuse, when he talked about having some therapy, that was

He said he had therapy in Oakland California or not Oakland but Berkeley California, when he was down there, and he also mentioned, this is what it was almost like a double on condra to me because immediately after he had ended the fact that he had received therapy he jumped two sentences later by saying, tying in his drinking habits, and I wasn't aware that he had a drinking problem whatsoever and he brought up the friend of his that he visited on the East Coast the several times, and he said you know _____ if you are drunk enough you could lay anything with four legs, and I thought that for somebody that's suppose to be remorseful in something that was just addressed and have tears in their eyes, are the tears so much for the fact that you have been caught and are going to be exposed or are the tears really tears of remorse and repentance, and that really bother me and just to make light of it,

Somehow he brought up his own drinking as if it might be an excuse to be promiscuous

Yes, yes

So, but, your concern is that , one of your concerns is that there some kind of sense that he has some treatment

Yes, because like I said, I don't know what has occurred, with my brother, I don't anything

Have you talked to your brother about this?

My brother is very close now, but Brother Berard had close relations with him, and took him under wing alot, and then there was a real cutting off point, and that startles me because my brother is right now very toxic as far as his drug use, his drinking, he is in jail right now, for a pharmacy robbery, and I can't help but think that there, not only with the family situation but I think there are other things that appear to me to be symptomatic as to the whys and why not to things, and but my

brother is very close now, I did talk to my mom a little bit and she had to conveyed to my brother about Brother Berard being transferred, and my brother just of the cuff goes, well, why are you talking to me about this and my mom never even brought up anything with sexual abuse, and he says, Did he rape [REDACTED] and he dropped it at that. That's really an obscure statement to make you now with just laying out on the table that he's being transferred and what did he think about it and I don't know the essences of the conversation other than that, and but as far as my brother disclosing it seemed to me he hasn't. But in the sense, even with the photography, what I remember of Brother Berard's office he had a collage of kid's school pictures and different other pictures and I kind of, I walked in on that with the memory that I had and I thought, you know different families that he would keep tabs on in his journeys, when we would go see people he would introduce us to people and I thought is was real interesting that with the families that I do know of that there are some blatant incidents where some kids have really spun out on drugs, and I you know this is my only speculation but it almost makes me wonder if they haven't been affected in someway shape or form by either being approached or physically, verbally, in some inappropriate way.

[REDACTED] Loren do you need, listening do you need some more specifics?

[REDACTED] Yes, if you're up to it

[REDACTED] Let's go back to that

[REDACTED] thank you again for offering all of this, at this time I would like to ask you what, could you be specific again, in what specifically did Brother Berard do?

[REDACTED] OK, starting with from the year 1968 to 1973 this is the period of the grooming and it started out with first the photo's, being asked if I had any physical abuse, and from that point he

[REDACTED] Debbi, could you talk about how many times he did photograph you, was it over a period, was it more than once?

[REDACTED] It was just the one time, but the thing that I do remember, that was his hobby, was photography and

remember other instances of him taken pictures but I remember being clothed, and

But in this situation were you clothed?

But in this, no I wasn't.

Ok, would you just be specific. What did he ask you to do?

He asked my to take off my shirt, lift up my shirt first and then to take off my shirt and then to take my pants off, he wanted to examine whether or not I had any bruises or welts, and from that I got dressed after that

Were you wearing anything else besides?

My underpants, yes

A top of some sort.

I had on like a T-shirt and slacks, jeans and he asked me to take those off, and he wanted to see if I had bruises on my arms, bruises on my back, bruises on my legs, and as he was asking if I had these he was touching to see if I did, it was a fondling type of touch and it felt inappropriate I don't have any other word, then that it just was I knew it was wrong, I felt it was wrong

A touch on you

A touch on my arm, a touch on my back, touch on my side, a touch on my leg, and then after, he says well I think we should take some pictures of this in case anything ever comes of it, as, I, what I was 12 and half years old, and it really didn't click as to what was going on, I didn't think he was going to do anything, I really didn't think he was doing anything really bad, it just didn't feel right, that was the sense about it, as a child, it just didn't feel right, and so then I got my clothes back on and I remember as I got dressed and he kind of gave me this little dialogue, On this is too bad that this is going on in your home and then pulled me into himself and the odd thing about it was as he pulled me into himself I could hear his heart just pounding, to me it seemed he was aroused at the situation, because his breathing was alot heavier than what it should be, and I thought that was really strange

Even as child?

Even as a kid, I though, this is not safe, I mean I had been around other situations and I thought this is not safe, but I thought this guy is suppose to be safe, this is a sanctuary that I've turned to, that I can trust, and so then from that point I was 12 and a half.

Did this happen in his bedroom?

In the rectory, from his office, into his bedroom, it first started out in his office and he started talking about the physical abuse that was going on in the family, and how much drinking that was going on and then he said well why don't you step in here, and he said why don't you take your top off, why don't you take your pants off and we can check to see if there is any physical evidence of what's going on

Do you still have underwear on the top and bottom

I had underpants on, at that time I was not wearing a bra, and I just thought, there was something inside of me that just didn't feel right, I thought he's not suppose to be doing this, and

You had no clothing on from the top up.

Right,

And it wasn't OK

No it wasn't, It wasn't OK I just felt really bad, I guess it's the feeling like when my ears start to get red, if you get embarrassed and your ears and your neck ya know, and that's what I'm feeling right now, It's just kind like this wasn't right

We want you to know this wasn't right, it shouldn't have happened to you

Ya ya and I think that is something that I really want to address is that what ever the intent was in how it started out, and this where I intend to get lost in my own identity was I remember statements along the line like even in his questioning of my dating practices what I did with the guys that I went out with ya know I don't think it was so much as concern as to whether I was this wholesome

catholic girl as to how far have you really advanced in your sexual techniques to this point in life and ya know that really bothered me because to me that another form of abuse and like with the situation with our step dads they would always say there were two step dads in particular that we had had and this was the same time frame and they said this Brother Berard guy is kind of a flaky kind of guy ya know he must be screwing around with you and your brother, and so then there was this cover up to protect him in a sense like "well no he's not" he wouldn't do anything like that, so you know it's like perpetuating another lie

You would _____

Yes, yes yet this one step dad in particular who was very physically abusive to my mom as well as to my brother and I, I mean he hit it right on the head, he knew exactly what was going on because this guy was a sexual abuser as well, and you know that the irony of it to me, and so at 12 1/2 it progresses, and Brother Berard started taking more liberty in a sense that he would take both my brother and I together to like basketball games, baseballs games, take me to my baseball practices, and this is the odd thing that I just can't get the puzzle part to as to how he had so much liberty to do this, how he won you know fast recognition to be able to just to cart us all around all the time you know this, I am settling a question that I have and it wasn't

Why your mother would let him take you

Yes and the same thing was real evident because there were other kids in the parish that he pretty much had full rein with, and I just thought this is real bizarre, this is, I mean as an adult now I can say this is really bizarre that this man can just walk in and say I am going to take your kids and do such in such and take them such in such and really have no restraints no boundaries and so moving from 12 and 1/2 and going back to the basketball games and baseball games and meeting other catholic families whether they being from within St. Anns parish or whether they would be in from St. Francis of the CeeCee parish or just outlining parishes that he had some contact with other kids, he would take liberty to take us to Taco Time and then find out you know kind of pump us as to what was going on

He would take you and your brother

Yes, he would take my brother and I and kind of get a feel as to what was going on and feed into the family well what happens when there is drinking, what happens ya know is there sexual abuse is your mom abusive is your step dad abusive and just kind of like it seemed the more information that he could acquire it was like he would take those very things and use them as a spring board as a means to touch on our vulnerability,

And is that what you mean by grooming

Yes, and in that and once he developed the trust because it took alot to disclose to somebody and I say that whole heartily especially the adults that were in our life to disclose the reality of what was going on at home and not be shamed in that and then he knowing that situation, betrayed that trust by starting by the inappropriate touch, I can remember standing in the school yard this was right around the picture time, which I would have been 12 years old and it's kind of a picture you would see of a Franciscan monk I mean I am stereotyping now of course but it would be like you had all these kids around but and he was real tangible and pulling kids into himself and at times it just didn't feel right and

How did it not feel right

In a sense of how his closeness in his hugging in his it just didn't feel safe it was like this guy is getting off on this

are you saying as a child looking over with Brother Berard that the kids around him that you could stand over here

Yes. Even being one of those kids and just how he would take kids in and there is a safe space and I could hug either one of you and know that there is a safe space in that, but it would be more than, it would be kind of like there was no breathing space, in between there you know and didn't even have to be a forward type hug, but it could be a just backward pulling into that person and you know I can't really articulate other than the feeling wasn't right, and so moving from that in already after having said the fact of having gone to the basketball games, and the baseball games and this

and that, then he got on this kick to where he would take us around and show us the sights of the city.

■ You and your brother?

■ Yes, my brother and I and then he would make up some lame excuse as to why he would have to talk to me and drop my brother off at home and my brother would go and say ■ is going to talk to Brother Berard, in which seems really obscure to me here I am 13 year old and any right minded parent would have challenged that, I mean I would challenge that, well I would, and well he would continue and; well ■ I would really like to talk to you more about the family situation as to what's going on and so he would drive to some ummm I remember is there a Rimrock up here somewhere

■ Yes

■ And he would say oh lets drive and I'll just keep talking, well inevitably he would get to Rimrock and I don't know the name of it, it's up above the five mile, and he would always find these convenient parking spots, and he would start out his little dialogue by saying it's so bad what's going on in your family and you know this must be really painful and give specifics of things we had told him as to what was going on with the step dad's, are mom's drinking was escalating at the point and where was it going to go, and you can always trust me, and then saying some what of a dialogue then physically moving into give a hug and then a begin to a real tight hug and then either begin fondling or caressing and kissing

■ Under your clothes?

■ Under my clothes, Initially it would start off on top of my clothes then under my clothes you see it would be a progressive type of thing like I said before like rungs up a ladder it would start up like one rung you know to see how far we get with this, if there is going to be any resistance to it and literally, physically I would just numb out and I wouldn't know what to do, and in all honesty like I said before I didn't have any boundaries to really know that it was ok to say no to this person

■ this difficult, if you can even be more specific than that, it will be helpful.