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Dear Parishioners,

It is with a profound sense of sadness, regret and self-reproach that I write. Obviously my extraordinary lack of prudence in talking to the reporter and revealing personal struggles with the commitment to celibacy, and his interpretation that I was challenging the law, represent some big issues that need to be addressed. I am deeply contrite and very ashamed, and apologize for the great hurt to you, my beloved community, my fellow priests, and scandal to the community at large. As I confront my issues, know I am being cared for and helped and I thank you for your great gift of prayer for me and for my future.

Please know my great concern at this moment is for you, the wonderful community of St. Edward parish and school, and for all we have planned and achieved together. It is my fervent wish and prayer that you will continue to build with all dedication and energy the spiritual and physical vision that with prayer and discernment we have worked so hard together to craft.

Know that in responding to a reporter, I sought only to correct false accusations and exaggerations. Over the years unscrupulous reporters in search of a sensational story have propagated unchallenged disingenuous and damaging accounts of an incident 23 years ago. Any discussion of priestly celibacy was purely philosophical, off the record, and never an admission of multiple sexual involvements. I waver between trying to grasp how I was that naïve, as an intelligent person, or had some unconscious inner cry that needed resolution. With professional counseling, prayer and reflection, over the next few months in a safe place I hope to emerge as one molded by God's grace into a greater likeness of Christ and know His will for me.

Please stay the course we have set, building Christian Stewardship in every way and in enhancing the multitude of ministries, services, prayer and fellowship opportunities that make St. Edward such a vibrant community. Above all, I pray that spirit of love, hospitality and unity will continue to flourish.

Avoid all bitterness. I believe the Lord has a plan that will be unveiled. This present darkness cannot be compared to the light that is to come.

I miss you to the point of tears. I look forward to seeing you sometime in the future.

With all my love,

F. John

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